



RIVERSIDE
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Rooted in Christ. Ready for Tomorrow.

2021-2022
Fall School Operations Plan

First Day of School: August 30, 2021

721 Keys Rd. · Yakima, WA 98901 · (509) 965-2602 · Fax (509) 966-7031

www.riversidechristianschool.com

Riverside Christian School is dedicated to the mission of rooting students in personal Christian faith and readying each one for their tomorrow. That mission is centered in the transforming gospel of Jesus Christ and is the bedrock of our school. It is not subject to alteration for any reason. The *circumstances* in which that mission is carried out fluctuate as conditions in our world, nation, state, and local community ebb and flow. The conditions in which we carry out our mission include times of relative ease and times of challenge; times of cultural stability and times of cultural change; times of civic unity and times of communal discord. The *constant* for Riverside Christian School is the mission. No wavering: Rooted in Christ - Ready for tomorrow.

The COVID pandemic has been and continues to be a significant time of challenge for the world, nation, Washington state, Yakima valley, and our RCS community. The good news is that we will again be back on campus for in-person instruction as we were all of last school year. The better news is that, although there are some health protocols that the state is requiring all public and private schools to follow, that list is significantly shorter and modified from last year. Riverside will open school this Fall with many school operations that are normal or nearly so. Teachers and staff are excited to welcome students *and* parents back to campus under the operational conditions summarized below.

In its information release dated July 28, 2021, the Washington State Department of Health (WDOH) updated K-12 Schools COVID-19 Requirements for the 2021-2022 School Year. These requirements are legally binding by virtue of the broad 'emergency powers' granted Washington state's governor under RCW (Revised Code of Washington) 43.06.220. "These requirements apply to public and private schools serving kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12)" - WDOH document pg. 2. It is our belief that each family should have freedom to make educational and health decisions they deem best for their children and our desire is to extend those rights to parents with regard to COVID restrictions and requirements as soon as, and in every area, that we are able to do so. However, at this time, just like all other public and private schools in the state of Washington, these requirements are legally binding. RCS leadership has sought legal counsel, conferred with other like-minded schools, and digested information available from the Washington Federation of Independent Schools but no alternative is currently available.

As such, ***Riverside Christian School will follow these legal requirements with situational flexibility determined by administration.***

As mentioned above, It is important to note that this Fall will not be a duplicate of the 2020-21 school year with regard to COVID health protocol operations. There are many significant areas of school operations that will be quite "normal" as school opens on August 30th (see below). *The wearing of face coverings indoors, while students are present, is the most significant carry over from 2020-21.* Occasional situational flexibility in the implementation of this policy will allow administration to lessen the anxiety and frustration that students and teachers sometimes experienced with this protocol last year.

RCS will continue to seek every lane of liberty and flexibility that becomes available to us. We also recognize there is a wide range of opinions with regard not only to mask wearing but vaccinations and all other COVID related issues. For the sake of unity in the Body of Christ, as represented by the Riverside Christian community, our desire is to avoid the political and religious controversies over these issues specifically with regard to our communication and interactions with each other and those outside RCS. Let us show mutual respect to those with whom we disagree and honor to the Lord as we treat each other with the kindness that our culture so desperately needs.

Overview of Operational Measures

Indoor Mask Requirements

Students are to wear a cloth face covering or acceptable alternative when indoors and while riding the school bus. Acceptable alternatives include a clear face shield that extends below the chin, wraps around to the ears, and has no gap at the forehead.

Staff, volunteers, and visitors are to wear a cloth face covering or acceptable alternative when on campus indoors and students are present. **(Updated August 23, 2021: a state wide indoor mask requirement covers indoor public spaces. Exceptions include small gatherings where all individuals are vaccinated).**

Outdoor Mask Requirements

Face coverings are *not* required outdoors.

Related topics/measures:

- Masks are not required for recess
- Masks are not required for outdoor class sessions
 - (Teachers are encouraged to conduct class outside whenever possible, subject to weather conditions, and within their lesson plan parameters)
- Masks are not required for participants or spectators for outdoor sports practices/games/meets/matches

Physical Distancing

RCS will maintain physical distance of 3 feet between students in the classroom to the degree possible. Classroom desks are not generally placed closer together than 3 feet so this arrangement will be largely “normal”.

Related topics/measures:

- Lunch will be served in the cafeteria for all students. Outdoor eating will be utilized whenever possible based on weather, age, and available supervision of students
- Before and After School dropoff/pickup will be back in its traditional times and locations at the front (elementary) and east (secondary) sides of the building
- Lockers will again be available for use by secondary students
- Secondary passing periods will return to normal times and frequencies
- Elementary and Secondary Chapel will resume weekly
- RCS community gatherings like Fallfest, Christmas program, Parent/Teacher Conferences, etc... are scheduled to take place throughout the year

Vaccinations

WDOH: "While vaccination is not a requirement for in-person education at K-12 schools, it is the strongest protective measure against COVID-19 available to individuals 12 years of age and older".

WDOH: "Fully vaccinated students and staff who do not have symptoms do not have to quarantine when exposed to COVID-19 and may not require COVID-19 testing".

Vaccination status will be verified only for any person identified as a 'close contact' (see definition below) of someone diagnosed with COVID-19. Vaccination status will affect what protocol is next followed for possible quarantining and return to campus. **(Update: Washington State Governor Proclamation 21-14.1 requires all K-12 employees to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or obtain a religious or medical exemption by October 18, 2021. See attached for Riverside Christian School's process for verifying employee vaccination status)**

No Daily Attestation forms or screenings

Daily health attestation screenings are not required and will not be conducted by RCS.

Staying Home When Sick

Staying home when sick is essential to keep COVID-19 infections out of our school.

Symptoms of COVID-19 can include:

Class A Symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4+
- Persistent Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- New loss of taste or smell

Class B Symptoms (if unrelated to chronic illness or allergies):

- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

- Students and school employees who have any Class A symptom should *stay home* and seek medical evaluation.
- Students and school employees who have two or more Class B symptoms should stay home and seek medical evaluation.
- Students and school employees who have a single Class B symptom should stay home. If the single Class B symptom resolves within 24 hours the student or employee may return to school

Responding to Cases or Suspected Cases of COVID-19

Any student or staff member who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 at school will be isolated and sent home as soon as possible.

- If a person exhibits symptoms but tests negative for COVID-19 they may return to school under normal school illness management policy as long as they are not a close contact of someone diagnosed with COVID-19
- If a person tests positive for COVID-19, with symptoms or without symptoms (i.e., “asymptomatic”) they can return to school when the following criteria are met:
 - 10 days since symptom onset or since positive test date (if asymptomatic) AND

- 24 hours after fever resolves without the use of fever-reducing medications AND
- Symptoms have improved
- If a person exhibits symptoms and does not get tested for COVID-19 or see a healthcare provider they should follow the same isolation guidance as people who test positive for COVID-19 (see above)
- If an unvaccinated person is a close contact with a person who tests positive for COVID-19
 - Unvaccinated close contacts need to quarantine at home for 10 days from exposure to the infectious person. The infectious period for someone with COVID-19 starts two days before the onset of symptoms or is estimated as two days before the positive test date if the person with COVID-19 is asymptomatic.
- If a vaccinated person is a close contact with a person who tests positive for COVID-19
 - Generally, vaccinated people do not need to quarantine (see below under 'Quarantine')

Terminology:

Quarantine is when a 'close contact' stays home and away from others for the recommended period of time in case they were infected and are contagious.

Generally, a '**Close Contact**' is someone who was within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes over a 24 hour period when the person with COVID-19 was infectious. The infectious period of someone with COVID-19 starts two days before the onset of symptoms or is estimated as two days before the positive test collection date if the person with COVID-19 is asymptomatic.

People who may be exempt from quarantine:

- Close contacts who are fully vaccinated and do not have symptoms do not need to quarantine
- Close contacts who had confirmed COVID-19 in the past three months, have recovered, and do not have symptoms do not need to quarantine

Additional Operational Details

Additional measures that will be taken by RCS include:

- **Ventilation:** Offering more outside time, open windows, open doors, and other miscellaneous measures to increase the amount of outside air entering the space
- **Hand Washing:** providing frequent handwashing time for all classes
- **Cleaning and Disinfecting:** Intermittent surface cleaning by teachers during the day and custodial personnel in each classroom each evening