

Parkway Christian School

Q&As related to Fall 2020 Reopening

Financial Related Questions:

I appreciate the idea of hiring more staff to create more room/more support staff, but will that equal an increase in tuition?

The hiring of more staff will result in a large increase in total costs. There will also be an increase in equipment and supplies needed to comply with sanitization requirements and needs. However, we do not intend to increase tuition at this time. We will be increasing our efforts to gain financial support from businesses and individuals, and trust the Lord to supply those increased costs. Please be in prayer with us for this need.

Are you going to open the school back up and when? I am especially concerned with tuition given that online education is very different from in-school education.

We will open the school when the state allows us to open the school. Because this is a health issue, the health department will give the final say. To be completely transparent, if and when the state determines schools have to move to online, we have to comply. Our teachers actually work much harder in the online learning environment, and because we don't pay rent for the building, any potential savings if/when we go online are negated by the extra expenditures of the online process. Next year, any potential savings will be overcome by the extra expenses of complying with the state and meeting the needs of our community.

Date and Time Questions:

Is school still slated to begin on August 31st?

Yes, we do not plan to change our start date.

Will school start and end times remain the same?

Start and end times will be staggered to a certain degree, but this will be in terms of minutes, so no major changes are expected.

When do you expect to know which plan will be implemented for fall?

We anticipate local governing authorities to provide official school opening mandates sometime in August. In the meantime, administration is preparing for multiple possible options.

Personal Protective Equipment Questions:

Will the students be required to wear masks?

The wearing of masks will depend on the guidelines from the state, probably the health department. If masks are required, please feel free to choose between either a face mask or a face shield as some children might feel more comfortable with a shield. A local business has offered to supply Parkway with enough face shields for our students and staff free of charge. If masks are not required by the health department we will encourage everyone to do what they are most comfortable doing.

In regards to face masks I have concerns in regards to leaving that as “optional” (if that’s your plan) as I’ve already seen incidents where people feel pressured not to wear them. I’m really concerned this would be a huge factor among kids and/or they could be “singled out” for wearing them. This could be a real issue if the choice is left up to the parents and it’s not a school wide practice.

We will encourage the use of face masks and encourage the acceptance of face masks for those who choose to wear them. But remember, we will follow the guidelines of the health department. In talking with parents, we have many who do not want masks and many who want masks. There are varying opinions, studies and recommendations from our governing authorities on this matter. However, the immediate concern is slowing the spread of the virus in order to continue face to face instruction, so we will address those concerns first.

If masks are required, will you be enforcing that at recess outside for the younger children or will it only be indoors?

We will follow guidance from local and national medical communities on this matter.

Some parents have read articles regarding the negative impact of long term mask use, will we have to succumb to this?

Given that this is a novel virus, the medical community is learning in real time, and we will continue to monitor the most up to date suggestions as well as follow any government mandates for reopening.

If masks are enforced at some point and the parent isn't okay with it due to the child's age, will the \$750 withdrawal fee still be implemented?

No. We understand parents have an incredible amount of information to sort through and are facing new decisions because of Covid-19 and the responses and measures in place to combat this virus. If your family comes to the decision to withdraw based on concerns relating to COVID-19, no withdrawal fee will be assessed.

Social Distancing:

Small children love to hug and are not aware of personal space, how will staff handle social distancing for young children.

Teachers will need to be very sensitive and loving. We do not want our children feeling punished because they want to play with their friends or stand close to a teacher. We are working on solutions to allow more staff to assist with this issue.

Will partitions be placed between students' desks? I have seen an article stating that this is an option in some schools.

We have looked into this possibility, but have not made a decision. A lot will depend on recommendations from the health department.

How will you socially distance the Kindergarten class? Will there be enough room/ separate desks to keep the children at that age apart? Separate toys, art supplies? Will children have the option to wear a mask?

Our kindergarten classes will be set up in our larger spaces to ensure that they have the ability to spread out while continuing to engage in center-based learning. We will need to develop a way to rotate toys and centers, then disinfect as per our new protocol every evening so the toys and centers can eventually be used by everyone. I am not saying it will be easy, but we have very creative teachers and administrators.

Scheduling and Curriculum Questions:

Has it been determined yet what 'specials' will still be offered for both Elementary and Middle School? For Level 2 and Level 3? If there are less specials able to take place, it seems like the school day could be shortened, has that been considered?

All of our current specials will continue to be offered in plan level 2 and 3. There might be a lessened amount of time students spend in these classes to allow for more time in core

subjects. We want to have as many instructional hours for these subjects to help reduce issues should we be required to go to online instruction once again. Additionally, smaller class sizes will result in more sections that our specials teachers will need to interact with, making it necessary for them to have less time in more classes. Given those reasons, we are not considering a shortened school day. At this time we do not know what the schedule will look like, but will plan over the summer.

How will Electives happen?

Most electives will happen in the classroom, with the teacher coming to the classroom. This will require very careful scheduling. We have not yet determined a plan for vocal and band, since doing those in the classroom would disrupt other classes.

Will there be changes to the Physical Education curriculum?

The only changes will result from our potential need to use the gyms for classrooms, and the need for social distancing should that be a reality. If we are not using the gyms, then social distancing will be the only determinant. Our teachers will spend the summer thinking of ways to still provide what is needed for PE, and how to make that happen with whatever constraints may be in place.

If students remain in the same class how will participation in advanced classes be affected?

Advanced classes will be handled on a case by case basis but will still occur. Honors and AP classes will still occur in MS/HS as well.

Can I send my child to Parkway 3 days a week and homeschool the other 2 days?

We will need to discuss this possibility, but a lot would depend on the grade of the student.

How about school only 4 days a week?

We did discuss this, but it would still leave parents with the problem of what to do on the off day if both parents are working, which is the case for the majority of our parents.

Why is Parkway not considering a hybrid approach?

We feel not offering in person schooling five days a week would be difficult to manage long term for many of our families, so we measured our facility and have worked out ways to lessen class sizes and use all available space to provide quality in person education even if social distancing is necessary.

Sports:

Will there be Fall sports?

We don't know yet. The state has just opened up practices outdoors with social distancing in place.

At what Phase will Parkway reinstitute it's sports programs?

As soon as we can. Our AD, Miss Sprang is monitoring this situation and is in frequent contact with the MHSAA and the MIAC. Specific sports will be determined by the state.

Lunch:

Will hot lunches be affected by Level 2 and Level 3?

No, hot lunches will be delivered to classrooms on carts.

If kids are eating in classrooms for lunches, will the peanut policy change?

Yes, the peanut policy will have to change. We haven't discussed how we will keep those with allergies safe, but will let you know as soon as we formalize a plan.

High School Specific:

How will high school be handled?

We do not have all particulars, and that will depend on what phase we are in. However, I can say we've discussed staggering hallway and locker time. HS students will continue to move between classrooms in order to facilitate a variety of student schedules. We will continue to plan and finalize ideas over the summer.

How will high school lockers be handled?

We have not developed a plan yet, but will before school begins.

Online Learning Specific:

Over the last 3 months, it was difficult to keep up with the specials and the routine daily work. Will there be a different schedule to factor in specials? For example, one day off of daily work and instead schedule all specials on that day.

One of the difficult parts of designing an online program is the different levels of need for individual students. Many students were not challenged enough, while many felt overwhelmed. We are going to use input from parents, students, staff and administration to develop a new plan that will address those disparities in need to the best of our ability.

Knowing that you all are still considering online education options, will children virtually participate during actual class times where they can view their teacher/fellow students in class OR will there be a separate designated online teacher?

We have not determined this. Once we have a chance to gather data from parents, students and staff we will work out a plan that will fit the unique needs of our community.

Building Access and Pick Up/Drop Off Procedures:

Are parents of K and Pre-K coming into the building to drop off and pick up?

If we are in phase 2, no. We will work on a system where you can bring your child up to the building to be picked up by either the teacher or paraprofessional, depending on where the classroom is located. If we are in phase 3, we will try to work out a system that keeps everyone safe.

How will school be dismissed at the end of the day (to insure appropriate social distancing rather than everyone exiting at the same time)?

We will institute a staggered exit. One of our teams will develop a system and that will be conveyed to parents before school begins.

When students enter the building there will be staggered times and different entrances to maintain social distancing? Is that correct?

Yes, we will be working on creating a new drop off and pick up procedure over the summer.

What will the policy be regarding building access?

With plan 2: parents will not be in the building. Staff only. This will significantly reduce the chances of exposure. With plan 3: parents will be allowed in the building by appointment only, and will have temperature taken and will need to fill out a questionnaire.

If there are multiple drop offs times and doors, will kids still be marked tardy if they have siblings and everyone is waiting for clearance to enter.

No, we will take this into account as we are creating a procedure.

Class Assignments:

How many children will the Kindergarten classes have?

This will depend on the number of students allowed in the rooms allocated to kindergarten, but will not go over our limit of 18. We have measured all of the rooms that could possibly be used for a classroom. The number of students in a room will depend on how many will fit for the social distancing guidelines we are given. We have enough rooms to accommodate our current students, plus more for new students. We are still discussing how to address our early childhood classes. Students in this age group do better with tables, which means we will need more tables and the additional space to accommodate the tables..

Are elementary classes being capped at certain numbers? Is the total enrollment going to be capped?

This will depend on the number of students able to be in a classroom. The total number of students may be affected by this, but our calculations indicate we can handle more than we have this year while still social distancing. It just requires the use of every available room and creative scheduling, should plan 2 or 3 be in place.

In an effort to prepare students for the fall, when will homeroom teacher assignments be provided to parents?

I do not anticipate having this answer any earlier than usual. This always depends on enrollment, and this year most schools are seeing a slow enrollment and re-enrollment response. Ours is the same, which makes planning very difficult. We can't anticipate classroom needs until we have an idea of enrollment. At some point in August, we will need to just go with the numbers we have and build our budget, staffing and scheduling needs on that.

General:

If there is a COVID-19 vaccine introduced between now and the opening of school, will PCS require the vaccine to enter school?

We have always felt the decision to vaccinate is a parental one and have no plans to change that at this time.

Will Latchkey be available before and after school for plans 2-4?

Latchkey will not be available for level 4 because level 4 means we have been required to close the school. However, it is our intention to continue latchkey with the other levels. If we are using the cafeteria for classrooms, we may have latchkey in the gyms, but that decision will not be made until we know what level we will be in.

In plan 2 and 3, would there be any thought to having Vocal concerts and plays?

Yes. If the state allows groups of 100 or more, we have discussed having multiple events and have fewer in the audience, all using social distancing.

In Plan 1, 2 and 3, what will happen with ministry groups?

We will need to work out an alternative way to still have these groups. They are so important to our program.

Will there still be busing through Utica?

We have been in contact with our local school districts regarding busing, and at this point, they are still planning to include routes for parochial schools. We understand that public schools will be encountering significant budget cuts, and if anything changes, we will inform our community immediately.

What will the Utica bus situation look like? Will there be enough space on the buses to accommodate social distancing?

Utica School District will determine how buses will enforce social distancing. Busing administrators are still meeting to develop their plans.

If there is a covid case in a child's classroom what will be the protocol? Will the school be shut down or would just the class be shut down for sanitizing?

In the event of a Covid case, we will follow the recommendations of the Health Department and the CDC. They have not determined what those regulations will be, but at the very least, the classroom will be thoroughly sanitized. Parents would also be notified. I would anticipate the CDC having a requirement and plan for this. I will also say, this will become a daily prayer focus.

How will the school handle sanitizing on a general/daily level on a “normal” basis?

We have developed a new protocol for all cleaning and sanitization based on the recommendations and mandates from the CDC, OSHA and the health department. Todd Carley, a board member and Building Director at Bethesda Christian Church, has worked to develop a document to train all current and new staff with these protocols. In addition, we will be hiring someone who will have the exclusive responsibility to oversee and implement the sanitization portion of this document.

Is the Washington D.C. trip for 8 grade mandatory?

The Washington DC trip has always been mandatory because we believe it is a vital part of any US government curriculum. Please discuss with Mrs. Brady if you have specific concerns.

If we cannot hold events at the school, how is that going to affect parent volunteer requirements?

At this point we do not have a clear enough picture to know how much this will impact volunteer requirements; however, if extensive social distancing measures need to be implemented for the fall, we will need significant help preparing the building during the month of August.

If the church side has to be used, will it be the elementary students or higher grade students?

At this point, the plan is for high school only.