

***BCA Parent Information Meetings were held on August 18 and 20 to answer specific questions raised. Below are the questions that were submitted and the answers that were provided.***

### **Introduction by Dr. Green, Bethel Lead Pastor**

The purpose of tonight's meeting was to provide information and answer questions that had been submitted. Thanks to those who submitted questions and those who were able to attend in person. A link to the recorded meeting will be available in the next couple of days. However, we decided to send out the answers to the questions raised so that everyone would have them as soon as possible.

- Our decision to re-open was made after much consideration of input from parents (a spring survey conducted), a special task force, and various regulatory agencies.
- Our plan is to institute a similar structure as that being used by the NBA to create a successful "bubble" by screening staff and students upon arrival. It is critical that students who are sick not come to school. No visitors will be allowed into the building.

### **Enrollment Options**

As we have stated, our intent is to provide the best options for the most people recognizing that we cannot provide everything that each family may want.

- **Is BCA going to be able to provide the same high standard of teaching and required support and guarantee continuity of this format based on what Howard County School System may elect to do after the first semester?** We believe that our plan will allow for students to receive the very best academic instruction in a safe and positive environment. We are not basing what we offer on decisions made by the public school, but rather what we believe offers the best options for the most families within the constraints of our staff resources. We expect to continue offering the remote option throughout the year as parents continue to desire it.
- **Why is there no remote option for 4<sup>th</sup> grade and below?** BCA simply does not have the staff to support both in-person and remote AND remote learning is not the best learning situation for young children

- **Is there a deadline to register for homeschooling?**

We have been meeting with families and materials have been ordered for them. Due to the process of registering, scheduling the required meeting, and ordering materials the **last day to register for homeschooling will be Friday, August 28.** Families who register between now and then will have to wait to begin until materials can be ordered for them. Families who begin on campus and then want to switch to homeschooling will be accepted if there are sufficient personnel resources to provide effective support.

**Can I sign up for Homeschool Plus?**

The Homeschool Plus option MAY become available once we have started school and determined: 1) if there is enough demand, and 2) if we have teachers who are willing to create the videos. We will let you know as soon as that is determined.

- **What type of advance notice must I give to switch from one option to another?**

For both off-campus options, the intent is that students will not switch back and forth. Homeschooling has a legal aspect that prohibits that and the need for classroom continuity is a concern for the remote students who may be coming in. Therefore, the time required to make the status change is dependent on which program and which direction the student is going. The best thing to do is to contact one of the administrators if you are interested in a status change as soon as you make that decision.

- **Is it possible for the teacher to provide videotaped lessons and collect and score the student work?** No, this would be a form of remote learning that we do not have the staff to support since the teachers will be in the classroom teaching full-time.

- **Is it possible to stagger on-campus learning to reduce class sizes?**

We have decided not to adopt this type of “hybrid” option for several reasons that were explained several weeks ago in our email communications. Two of them are: 1) We do not have the large class sizes of the public schools that were considering the option, 2) To stagger instruction makes 5-day instruction impossible and thus limits the options available. It is simply not possible to offer every option that every family may prefer.

- **Is it possible to fund raise for the purchase of laptops for younger students to participate in the remote learning option.**

There is no need for this since remote learning is not available for younger students. Also, there was not a significant need for technology to be provided in the spring.

- **Is there a scenario where young students would resort to virtual learning for the duration of a school semester?** There may be, but we cannot entertain all of the “what if” scenarios that may be possible. It is our intent to do all that we can to keep school open safely and productively.
- **If a parent left BCA, then heard the school went full virtual, could they return during the school year?** This would depend on space in the classrooms, and that family would have to now re-apply for admission and go through the admission process.

### The Facilities

- **Why is Bethel consolidating buildings at this time when physical distancing is so beneficial?** The plan to consolidate campuses has been in the works for years. Space is not the issue if there are not enough teachers to oversee additional classes.
- **Has attention been given to the HVAC system?** Yes, the system has been upgraded and filters are being changed more frequently.
- In addition, sanitation stations and water bottle filling stations have been installed at each campus.

### Traffic Concerns

- **What kind of traffic direction will be provided due to multiple entrances and temperature screening?** Trained staff will be in front of each building directing traffic. It is critical that everyone be PATIENT and follow the directions. There will also be signs indicating where each grade level is to be dropped off. The thermometers that have been purchased work very quickly, and as we all work together, we believe it will be possible to get all the students into the building efficiently.

### Cleaning and Sanitation

- Additional staff has been hired to go through the buildings cleaning frequently touched surfaces throughout the day.
- Procedures and cleaning materials will be based on the guidelines from the CDC.

- We are not hiring a cleaning company to do the cleaning; the maintenance staff is being trained.
- **The Clorox wipes listed on the student supply list are difficult to find in stores. Is there a substitute?**  
Hand sanitizer and wipes that are listed on the student supply list are welcome, but if you cannot find them, we will make sure that we have enough for every class.
- **Will students and staff be directed to wash hands every 2 hours?**  
No, we are not able to guarantee a specific time period for handwashing. Handwashing will be encouraged at appropriate intervals.
- **Will computers be sanitized after each use for the computer Special?**  
Yes.

### Academics and the Classroom

- **How will BCA handle Preschool/PreK students coming for the first time?**  
We are working on a plan for a staggered Meet & Greet time during the newly scheduled **ORIENTATION WEEK from August 31 – September 4**. You will be notified of your scheduled time. We will also consider having parents of young children walk them to the classroom the first day. We will also have staff members available to guide and direct them as well.
- Class cohorts will be utilized to minimized cross contact of different groups. No visitors will be permitted for at least the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter; only BCA staff such as Specials teachers will come into the classroom.
- **Exactly how large are the classes going to be?** Please note that the public school's consideration of a rotating schedule was due to their desire to reduce their normal class sizes to OUR normal class sizes. While we have stated that we will not place more than 16 students in a class, it is more likely that the class will have 10 – 12 particularly as we begin. However, that number is continually fluctuating as parents inquire about enrollment at BCA. We will do our best to keep classes as small as we can and remain financially solvent.
- **How far apart will students be in the classroom or computer lab?**  
As recommended by the health department and CDC, desks will be 3 – 6 ft apart *as much as possible*. A classroom environment cannot guarantee that students will not be close to one another at any point.

- **Will students be sharing supplies in the classroom?** No, they must have their own. The school supply list is available on our website.
- **Will students be at small group tables for reading or math groups?** No, we have configured the classes to have individual desks/tables and most of the instruction will now be focused on teacher-led rather than cooperative activities.
- **Will teachers ensure that students are 6 ft. apart at recess?** It is not possible to guarantee that students will always be 6 ft apart. They will be allowed to play together and will share the class recess equipment which will be cleaned after use.
- **Can 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students use their own Google accounts?** No, the restrictions of Google Classroom do not support students from outside the BCA domain. Students will receive a Bethel account that is restricted to school use and communication with their teachers only.
- **What is the back-up plan if the school must shut down in-person schooling?** BCA is prepared to dynamically transition to remote learning as was done in the spring.

### Masks

- BCA is requiring masks when a 6-ft. distance cannot be maintained. The Continuity of Learning Plan includes a page and a half about masking policies.
- We will respect the parents' wishes regarding a student keeping his/her mask on.
- Not in the plan is our determination that the popular "gator masks" are not considered effective and will not be acceptable.
- We do not want our teachers and staff to spend time "policing" masks. Although designs are fine, please refrain from having students wear masks with any messaging other than something biblical. If a mask is disruptive or distracting, the student will be asked not to wear it again.

### Handling Covid-19 Cases

- **How will BCA handle situations in which a student contacts Covid-19?**  
We will follow the guidance of the health department regarding the need to close a building or require a class to quarantine. If your student is affected by a need to close, you will be notified via email with clear instructions.
- **Is BCA going to be doing contact tracing?**

BCA will follow the requirements of the health department for any specific situation.

## **Conclusion**

**Please consider having your student remain at Bethel during this time.** We are doing all that we can to provide your child a safe, productive, positive, excellent learning experience in the midst of much challenge. We want you to work with us.

- **We understand that the pandemic has resulted in financial challenges for many families. It has also impacted BCA quite a bit.** If you have a financial questions or needs, please contact the finance office. Mrs. Davina Green is happy to assist you.
- **What if I call and no one calls me back?** As we're sure you can imagine, everyone is quite busy handling a multitude of things. We will do our best to respond to you within 48 hours but appreciate your patience.
- **What if we don't sign the Health & Safety Waiver?** Since we are asking everyone to sign the waiver to attend, we would have to assume you are making the decision for your child not to attend BCA.
- **How do I dis-enroll?** Provide your decision to dis-enroll in writing to the finance office and we will discuss any financial obligations that you may incur.

We know that every family must consider their situation and we respect the decisions that are being made. If you have any further questions, you may contact Mrs. Dant or Dr. Green and we will be happy to speak with you. Thank you again for coming.