

FBCMI Academy's Safety Policy in response to COVID-19

We understand that this is a great time of uncertainty for everyone. We would like to give you information as to what our response is as a school. First of all, we are a private entity, not controlled by the decisions of Georgetown County School District. We know that as you watch the news and discuss matters within the community, information can get very confusing and overwhelming. FBCMI Academy has sought input and advice from other Christian schools and Health Care Professionals. FBCMI Academy makes its decisions INDEPENDENT of the Georgetown County School District. We are being very intentional and prayerful about our decisions about the upcoming school year. We will be taking preventative measures as to hope to prevent any cases or possible outbreak of COVID-19 in our facility. We do feel strongly that children need to be back to 'in-person' schooling. The following is an outline of the protocols that will be in place as school opens. Please understand that the time may come that we must add procedures to this policy. If that happens, we will notify you of any updates/additions via email. I will break this policy down into sections for an easier understanding:

WHEN WILL SCHOOL START AND WHAT WILL OUR DAY BE LIKE?

*FBCMI Academy will open back up on August 19, 2020 for instruction of grades K-2 through 4th grade with normal school hours. We will follow our regular calendar previously sent out for the 2020-2021 school year.

*We will continue to offer outside recesses as normal. However, we will stagger recess times as to control the number of children on the playground at one time.

*'Specials' including PE, Art, and Spanish will continue for the Elementary students.

*All Elementary students will eat lunch in our normal lunchroom. We will stagger lunch periods to enable spacing of students in a responsible manner.

*We are reviewing the set-up of all classrooms and are spacing as much as possible in our space. We will be eliminating some types of toys (soft items, small/intricate items, etc.) that may be more difficult to thoroughly clean.

*We will not be meeting for Chapel. In addition to their regular weekly bible curriculum in the classrooms, teachers will add music time to their week to enjoy worship in the classroom.

SCREENING/HEALTH PRECAUTIONS & SANITATION:

*We will have new drop-off procedures to start our school year. A parent/guardian will need to park and walk their child to the Chaos room to 'check-in' for the day. Temperatures will be taken of the child being dropped off. If any student that's checking-in and/or any siblings that are Academy students have a temperature of 100 degrees or higher will not be permitted to stay. They will not be permitted to return to school until they have been FEVER FREE/UNDER 100 DEGREES FOR 48 HOURS WITHOUT THE AID OF ANY FEVER-CONTROLLING MEDICATION. We may also implement additional temperature taking half-way through the school day.

*All teachers/staff members' temperatures will be taken every morning. Anyone having a temperature of 100 degrees or higher will not be able to stay for school that day. They will not return to school until

they have been fever free/under 100 degrees for 48 hours without the aid of any fever-controlling medication.

*We ask that our parents and families join us in the process of screening your child (ren) for any signs or symptoms of sickness. It has never been acceptable to send your child to school sick. We will monitor students daily for any signs or symptoms of sickness. If any child shows obvious and consistent symptoms of coughing, sneezing, sore throat, loss of taste/smell, fever, etc., a parent/guardian will be asked to pick the child up immediately. Until they are picked up, they will be removed from the classroom and will wait with an appointed assistant or the director. No child should come to school if they have had diarrhea, vomiting, or fever within a 48-hour period. All of these actions are extremely important not only for stopping the spread of COVID-19 but also other illnesses that may arise during the school year (Flu, Strep, etc.).

*If any student has a fever for 3 days or more, they may choose to be tested for COVID-19 and will need to have a negative test result before returning to school or they may quarantine for two weeks before returning to school.

* We are pleased to announce each classroom will have a Health Way Air Purifier. Health Way technology is effective at capturing 40x smaller size ultrafine particles than HEPA, efficiently removing 99.99% of particulates @ 0.007 micron making HealthWay the most efficient air purifier available. It protects against dust and dander, pollen, dust mite waste, bacteria, mold, fungi and viruses. This revolutionary technology reduces bioburden and inhibits microorganism growth through Microbiostasis condition and each machine is independently tested and certified to guarantee better than HEPA efficiency. It is estimated that the air in our classrooms will be purified every 10 minutes providing surgical room quality air to our children and teachers.

*We will maintain exceptional DAILY cleaning of our facility including bathrooms, classrooms, hallways, and common rooms/areas. We will emphasize sanitation of areas such as doorknobs, light switches, doors, hard surfaces, etc.

*We will encourage regular soap/warm water handwashing when available as opposed to hand sanitizer. However, hand sanitizer will be available for use when needed.

WHERE WE STAND ON CERTAIN ISSUES:

*We will not require students to mask. If you wish for your child to mask, you are welcome to do so. We will have rules in place for this as to prevent taking off to show others, etc. Anyone's decision to mask will be fully supported and respected.

*Our teachers and staff will not be required to mask. Any staff member's decision to mask will be fully supported and respected.

*'Social Distancing' is not a realistic task when it comes to children. However, we will stagger recess times, lunch times and work to maintain orderly hallway 'traffic.' We will not allow sharing of certain items that can carry additional germs, such as crayons, markers, pencils, etc.

*We will limit the access of non-students to classrooms throughout the day to help maintain limited exposure. Parents will not be permitted into the school hallway or classrooms. Any speech therapist/instructors will have their temperature taken before being allowed into the school.

*We will not be allowing parents/family members to attend classroom parties. Also, only prepackaged food or delivery food items will be served at the parties.

*All large gatherings will be suspended at this time until further notice. However, Open House will still take place; but times will be staggered.

WHAT IFS?

*What if the government mandates school closures?

FBCMI Academy will seek the best decisions possible apart from government intervention. If we are not able to legally stay open, we will provide an excellent 'at-home' learning option. We learned a lot this past school year, and feel prepared for the future if this situation were to arise again.

*What if a student or staff member would test positive for COVID-19?

If any student tests positive for COVID-19, they will not be permitted to return to school until they have a negative COVID-19 test result with a Doctor's release to return to school. If any teacher/staff member tests positive for COVID-19, they will not be permitted to return to school until they have a negative COVID-19 test result with a Doctor's release to return to school. All families from any class where a student or staff member/teacher tests positive will be contacted immediately. Necessary cleanings will take place, and school will resume the next day.

*What if multiple students in a particular grade/classroom tests positive at the same time?

If two or more students in a particular class test positive for COVID-19 at the Same time, then we will ask that all students and the teacher of that particular Grade/class quarantine for two weeks away from school. Necessary cleanings Will take place.

Liability:

*We do acknowledge that this virus is real and can be very dangerous to some. We know that to carry out living a 'normal life,' can pose certain risks. With the risk combined with varying opinions on the issue, we are asking for all families, teachers, and staff to sign a liability release agreement. We do trust that the Lord will protect our school through this time as we seek and do His will. Our goal is to make the wisest and most biblical decisions possible. This is no easy task, and we would appreciate your prayers as we start this school year.

What we want to make sure you know.....

*We do fully acknowledge that COVID-19 is a real virus and has affected many, some more severe than others. We do not wish at any time to make this into a political issue or an argumentative issue. We are seeking guidance from Health Professionals and other trusted Christian school administrations. We are prayerful and intentional about our decisions. We do understand that it can be easy to become fearful, but we recognize that we must not live in fear. We must be smart and informed, but not let fear drive our decisions.

* Much new information is being released (International statistics about contact tracing, studies from the YMCA, Johns Hopkins University, Brown University, and data from other nations) indicating that the risk of contracting COVID-19 remains very low in children.

*We strongly feel that a child's social and mental health is directly related to their daily routine and being able to interact with their peers.

*We are placing many 'common-sense' guidelines for this school year. We are meeting with our staff to ensure everyone is on the same page.

*We have been operating our Summer program since June 8th using a lot of the same practices listed in this policy and have NOT had any COVID-19 positive student or staff member during this time. We are thankful for that and also that we have been able to have students back together during this time.

*We look forward to this school year. We understand that it may include new types of challenges, but we will seek the Lord's guidance throughout the whole process. Our goal of this school year is to keep our students, staff, and families healthy and to stay open for the entirety of the school year. We fully trust that God puts a certain group of people together during a certain time for a specific reason. I look forward to what God has in store for all of the families in attendance at FBCMI Academy!

*It is extremely important that families are vigilant in monitoring their child's health at home at all times, especially in the mornings before coming to school. Families MUST contact the school if your child tests positive for COVID-19 immediately. We must work together to maintain the overall health of everyone. Our goal is for everyone to stay healthy and for the Academy to be able to remain open for the entirety of the school year.

Lastly, thank you for choosing FBCMI Academy and entrusting your precious children to us. We count it as a privilege to partner with you in this most important time in your child's life! Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Doing it ALL for HIM,

Brooke Surface
Director of Operations
FBCMI Academy

John 14:26-27

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let your hearts not be troubled, neither let them be afraid."