



VERITAS
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY



'20-'21 SCHOOL YEAR

REOPENING UPDATE





A Higher Goal

GOAL: To reopen Veritas Christian Academy on a five-day abbreviated schedule following CDC guidelines for a safe on campus school reopening.

This document supersedes the previously published Parent-Student Handbook.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND	5
Guiding Principles	5
CORE SUBJECT OPERATING SYSTEM	7
LEADERSHIP	9
Committee Members	9
Administration, Faculty, and Staff	9
Communication Plan	9
INFRASTRUCTURE	10
School Calendar/Schedule	10
Teacher Professional Development	10
School Lunch	10
HEALTH AND SAFETY	11
Planning for Health and Safety of Individuals (when in the building)	11
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	12
Contact Guards	12
Social Distancing	12
Hand Washing/Sanitizing, Sneeze, Face-touching Precautions	12
Plan for shared classroom materials/resources	13
Drinking Fountains and Water Bottles	13
Temperature Scanning	13
Locations for Sick Students/Staff	13
Building Entry and Exit	13
Afternoon Dismissal	14
Traffic Flow in the building.	14
Cleaning and Disinfecting	14
Visitors in the Building	14
INSTRUCTION/STUDENT LEARNING	15
Plans for In-School, Face to Face Instruction	15
Plans for Remote Learning	15
Goals of Remote Learning	15

Emphasize Teaching and Learning.	15
Required Attendance	16
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CARE	17
Identify Student and Family Needs	17
Emotional Connections for Students/Families while Remote	17
EQUITY	18
Testing & Tracing	18
Biblical Relationships	18
Support of Students with ISP/HSP	18
Disciplinary Action	18

BACKGROUND

Fulfilling the Mission of Veritas Christian Academy to train the minds, develop the Christian character, and enrich the spiritual lives of its students through quality academic programs is the foremost in planning a return to school. Its purpose is to glorify God by teaching a Biblical worldview of life in a Christ-centered environment. 2 Corinthians 10:5. Above all else we acknowledge that God is sovereign and in control of all things. God: Is above all things and before all things. He is the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. He is present everywhere (Revelation 21:6). Created all things and holds all things together, both in heaven and on earth, both visible and invisible (Colossians 1:16). Knows all things past, present, and future. There is no limit to His knowledge, for God knows everything completely before it even happens (Romans 11:33). Can do all things and accomplish all things. Nothing is too difficult for Him, or impossible with Him (Jeremiah 32:17). God is in control of all things and rules over all things. He has power and authority over nature, earthly kings, history, angels, and demons. (Psalm 103:19). We also acknowledge that COVID-19 caused major disruptions in our lives including the delivery of educational services to students during the 2019-2020 school year. We also recognize as difficult as the transition to remote and continuous learning was last year, the possibility exists that we may experience similar disruptions in the 2020-21 academic school year.

The Veritas faculty and staff worked tirelessly transitioning our instruction from on campus face-to-face instruction to remote learning with little previous experience or planning. While effective in our efforts, we desire to continually improve on our delivery efforts in order to ensure continuity of teaching and learning regardless of what public health emergencies or other disruptions may be encountered in the future. This Reopening Plan has been designed to assist Veritas in planning for, and delivering, instruction to students for the 2020-21 school year. It is designed to address continuous learning efforts, whether in-person or remotely. It is also designed to address issues related to the health and safety of our students, their families, and our faculty and staff; to describe how communication of information to key stakeholders will occur; and to outline other pertinent details related to how the school will function in the 2020-21 school year.

More than anything, our desire is to ensure the health and safety of our students, faculty, and their families. This desire is driven by a love for our students, school families, and staff. When Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment in the Law was, He answered in Matthew 22:37-39, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” Loving our neighbors during a global pandemic means we will have to do things differently. Keeping a healthy distance from one another, wearing masks or protective devices in classrooms and hallways as needed – all of these are extraordinary actions that show love, care, and compassion for our neighbors. Our desire is to demonstrate that love in all that we do in the coming year. This document is intended to address a variety of issues related to the re-opening of Veritas Christian Academy for the 2020-21 school year. It is modeled and organized based on the NJ State Department of Education’s return to learning guidance documents. It does not address all of the issues outlined in those documents since many of the issue areas required of public schools are not germane to Veritas.

Guiding Principles

- Uphold and continue to deliver on the Mission of Veritas Christian Academy.
- Provide a safe learning environment for students and staff

- Ensure continuous learning through a variety of potential teaching and learning scenarios whether in-person or Remote.
- Ensure any remote learning schedule that is implemented addresses issues of access and equity and is supportive of family and student needs and scheduling
- Where possible, provide learning pathways for students with unique learning needs (e.g., student or family health issues)

CORE SUBJECT OPERATING SYSTEM

Veritas will operate on a core subject operating system during the 2020-21 school year. Conditions for the school's operating status and other health and safety procedures will be continually monitored and changes communicated to all families. As with all things related to the pandemic, this list is not exhaustive and is subject to change. Additionally, there may be state or local requirements for schools that supersede our site-specific operating system.

Veritas students will return to classes in person following NJDOE and CDC health guidelines.

Some changes to the regular schedule include:

- Shortened school day that accommodates core-subject learning 8:30 am - 2:20 pm.
- Organized entry plans that screens for COVID-19 and other health-related symptoms.
- Illness screening during the school day.
- Observing healthy social distancing rules as set by the CDC.
- Providing an isolation room for students or faculty who show signs of illness during the school day.
- Daily faculty and student cleaning of desks, chairs, tables, and other common area items.
- Veritas, in cooperation with SEFC, will ensure that all daily cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing will be in compliance with CDC and state guidelines.
- Educating students about the transmission of disease and a healthy response to personal responsibility.
- Requiring student masks. Access to hand sanitizer in every class and lunchroom. Developing a formal practice of handwashing.
- When inside the building masks must be worn as students move about the classroom and hallways.
- Teachers will wear masks or other protective devices unless health issues certified by a healthcare professional prevent this. Teachers who cannot wear face protection must socially distance from students.
- PE - For the fall only non-contact PE activities on a 60 minute once a week class schedule.
- Sports - practices and scheduled games TBA when more information is available from the CDC and the State of New Jersey.
- Textbooks - To the extent possible, student textbooks will be available digitally. Students will retain a set of hard copy books at home and use eBooks while in classes.
- Student table space will be eliminated, and the use of backpacks will be allowed in classrooms. Students will only carry their lunchbox, Chromebook, binders/folders and notebooks for scheduled classes.

Arrival at VCA - upon arrival students and parents can expect that a VCA official will:

- Take student temperatures.
- Check for a mask for students entering the building.

All students will wear masks when moving about the building for classes, lunch, or restroom breaks.

Lunch locations and practices

- While the weather is warm students will be directed to eating outside in the fresh air.

- In the event of weather that prevents outdoor dining, students will eat in the gym following required social distancing guidelines.
- Students may bring lunches or order from available vendors.
- Students will not share their lunch with peers.
- Tables will be wiped down before and after lunch is eaten.
- Students will dispose of any paper or plastic goods related to their lunch in designated receptacles.
- At this time, pizza lunch will be suspended pending a vendor who can create individual serving boxes.

Isolation Room (#203)

- Students who during the school day show symptoms of illness or who have a temperature of >100.3 or more will be isolated in a designated space until parents are contacted. Students will be asked not to return to school until they are cleared by a doctor.
- Students arriving on busses or who drive to school and show symptoms of illness will be isolated until a parent is contacted and a plan for return home is established.

Classrooms

- Only rooms with windows will be used to allow for airing out at regular intervals.
- Inner rooms will be used for isolation rooms and administrator use.
- Tables will be wiped down upon entry and exiting.
- The use of hand sanitizer will be available in every classroom.

Field Trips

All field trips will be virtual until authorities open locations and active disease indications diminish.

Chapel

- Chapel will continue every other Wednesday.
- Chairs will be set up to accommodate social distancing rules.
- Speakers will have the option to be virtual or in person and adhere to entry screening protocols.

Music, Art, and Support Programs

- Band and Choir will be put on hold for September. We will watch for what the Governor and CDC allow as we move forward.
- Contemporary Ensemble will continue but will revert back to an audition format and keep a cap on the number of students. CE will be once a week for 45 minutes.
- Art - will be on hold until the Spring semester to allow for early dismissal.
- Virtual Study Hall Support will be available to support student needs.

LEADERSHIP

Committee Members

In order to build a Return to Learn plan that addresses the necessary issues related to instruction, teaching, and learning; health and safety; communication; and other associated needs, the following committee was assembled to provide input, draft, and finalize the plan.

Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Head of School - Thomas Argersinger

Administrative Assistant/Parent - Jennifer Qarmout

Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment/Teacher - Donna Bentson

Director of Guidance and Special Education/Teacher - Deborah Fucci

Board President - Paul Vincenti

Board Members - Dave Vander Groef, Armand Milanesi, Eric Wilson, David Marine

Communication Plan

During the 2020-21 school year, communication – both internally and externally – will be critical. We desire to communicate the most accurate information related to school operations, health and safety, and other pertinent health and safety information to families, students, and staff on a regular basis. We understand both the need to provide relevant information but also the need to not inundate staff and families with too much information.

- School staff will receive internal communications as needed related to pertinent COVID-19 issues (e.g., information from state and local health officials, school operations, building closure, etc.). These messages will come from either the Head of School or the Administrative Assistant with the subject line: COVID-19 Update.
- Veritas families will receive, at minimum, weekly updates on COVID-19 issues in the Veritas Vine each Thursday. Additional urgent information (e.g., steps to promote health and safety, event cancellations, school closure notice, etc.) will occur on an as needed basis via email and/or text (Parent Alert) under the subject line: COVID-19 Update.
- Additionally, teachers will be communicating regularly with parents regarding classroom activities, social distancing, cough and sneeze protections, and any other issues that arise within the classroom through RenWeb/email as necessary.
- Expect that communications from the school will intensify during any direct infection of students, classroom, or school closure. We will make every attempt to limit these communications but also want to ensure families are aware of all necessary information.

INFRASTRUCTURE

School Calendar/Schedule

Veritas Christian Academy will operate on our previously agreed upon annual schedule of September 1, 2020 - June 12, 2021. Our desire for the 2020-21 school year is to occupy the building and provide direct, face-to-face instruction to the greatest extent possible, in the safest way possible.

In the event direct instruction cannot occur due to a government mandated COVID-19 school closure, Veritas will make the switch to Remote Learning. Because the State has mandated all schools – public and accredited non-public schools – must have a remote learning plan that includes required student learning, Veritas will require student attendance and participation during any remote learning instruction and maintain our standard grading procedures during remote learning. Our goal for any instructional time outside the building is for real teaching and learning to occur, with real results and accountability. Teachers will provide assignments, issue grades, monitor student progress, and engage with students regularly during remote learning periods. While attendance is expected during remote learning, we also know that accommodating family needs and schedules during remote learning can be complicated. As mentioned in our plan overview, grace and love will guide our actions. If attendance becomes challenging, we will communicate and work with families to determine how best to support student(s) and family needs. Addressing the needs of students with unique learning issues will be specified at the end of this document.

Teacher Professional Development

We know from our spring 2020 Remote Learning experience that teachers used a variety of different technology tools and communication methods during our time out of the building. In order to streamline our efforts and provide a central student-learning tool across all grades, Veritas is currently implementing a Google Classroom learning environment and the RenWeb Learning Management System for all grading, attendance and behavior documentation, parent and student communication. Teachers are engaging in professional development activities over the summer to maximize their use of the Google platform (both for in-school use and potential remote learning applications) to be ready for use in the fall.

School Lunch

We are working with our lunch vendors to determine the feasibility of providing box lunches for our school lunch program. Students may still bring their own lunches from home. In order to limit the traffic in the building, we are asking that parents do not drop off lunches.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of our students and staff are primary concerns. While it is impossible to plan for all potential scenarios that could take place due to COVID-19 (or other similar emergency situation), this section outlines current planned procedures that will govern school operations while occupying the school building. Veritas is committed to using all available resources in our efforts to protect students and staff including, but not limited to, resources from NJEA, The State of New Jersey's Department of Public Health, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Guidance and recommendations from these agencies will continue to inform Veritas' operations and efforts. In determining when to close the building during the 2019-20 school year, state leaders made decisions about school closures outside of Veritas' control. In the coming year, such closures may occur again; however, in the 2020-21 school year, state governors and local leaders are less likely to make such blanket decisions unless the public's health and safety are at immediate risk. Decisions on school closure related to COVID-19 will need to be made on more localized issues and data. Veritas will work with our local and state health departments in making any decisions about short and long-term school closures. The Head of School will make all final decisions regarding operational changes – including school closure – and communicate them to parents and staff through our communication channels.

The following guidelines will help inform our operating status and decisions:

- When active cases of COVID-19 are present in Sussex County, Veritas will operate under a cautionary status.
- If students or staff have been directly exposed to individuals with the virus, those individuals should seek care with their local health care provider, self-report to the Head of School, and self-quarantine until advised by a doctor that they are allowed to return to school.
- Veritas will consult with local and state health agencies and may consider moving to a more restrictive status if advised. If students or staff contract the virus, Veritas will operate under a further reduced schedule and:
 - Consult with local and state health offices and determine all appropriate next steps to close short term for cleaning and disinfecting of the school building
 - Move to Remote Learning for a period of not less than two weeks.

Planning for Health and Safety of Individuals (when in the building)

Teachers and staff will spend a significant portion of our return to school discussing and reinforcing appropriate protective and preventative behaviors (e.g., social distancing, sneeze and cough protection, etc.) to ensure the health and safety of students and staff. Veritas staff will use the guidelines outlined below to limit the spread and potential infection in our school community.

- Home Monitoring and Self-Reporting. The most effective way to prevent the spread of any virus is to isolate infected individuals. Monitoring your own children's health and taking preventative measures at home is the first and most important step in fighting the spread of COVID-19. If your child has a fever of 100.3 or greater, please do not send them to school. All students and staff will be temperature scanned before entering the building.
- As has been Veritas' practice in the past, we will notify parents of elevated temperatures.

Additionally, people with COVID-19 have a wide range of symptoms – ranging from mild to severe. If staff or students display any of the CDC's COVID-19 symptoms, please do not attend school:

- Fever

- Persistent cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The CDC's guideline on PPE has proven effective in limiting the spread of COVID-19. We also recognize that PPE can present challenges to students and teachers in the educational environment. Balancing between safety and effective instruction is challenging and we want to do our best to ensure both. Veritas teachers and staff will be required to wear facemasks and/or face shields during school hours while inside the building in common areas. Teachers may choose to utilize face masks or face shields while in their respective classrooms. Students are strongly encouraged to wear facemasks/face shields but are not required to do so in the classroom unless socially distancing rules cannot be maintained. Students should plan on having a facemask available for small group work or other occasions where social distancing isn't possible. At any time if a student is walking about the classroom or in hallways a mask must be worn. Visitors in the building will be limited and those required to enter the building (e.g., limited volunteers, UPS/FedEx deliveries, maintenance workers, etc.) will be required to wear facemasks while in the building. Veritas will purchase masks and clear face shields for all staff members to utilize in common areas and/or their classrooms. Veritas will make disposable face masks available for visitors who must be in the building and do not have a facemask upon entering the school.

Contact Guards

Guards will be installed in the school office and will be considered in other high-density areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least 6 feet apart.

Social Distancing

In addition to PPE, we know that distancing from one another helps reduce the spread of COVID-19. Within the common areas of the building (e.g., hallways) students will be required to:

- Maintain appropriate distances from one another.
- Teachers and staff will monitor, remind, and correct students as needed during times when students are in common areas.
- Classroom tables will be spaced as much as the physical space of our classrooms permits to encourage distancing of students.
- Lunches will be outside in fair weather and socially distanced when in the gym.

A plan is currently being developed by Administration to stagger morning recesses to reduce student interaction between classrooms and reduce potential exposure from student to student. This plan will include allowing students an outdoor break between either second and third block or third and fourth block as determined by grade.

Hand Washing/Sanitizing, Sneeze, Face-touching Precautions

Some of the most effective measures related to combating the spread of COVID-19 are precautionary. Staff will work to ensure the following safety procedures are taught and used throughout the building.

Planned activities include:

- Providing instruction and signage on how to properly wash hands and use hand sanitizer. Planning for students to wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer after coughing/sneezing, before and after meals/snacks.
- Providing hand sanitizer in all classrooms and including time into instructional transitions for students to wash and/or sanitize hands.
- Providing hand sanitizer to all students when entering the building (e.g., before school, after recess, after group activities, etc.) and encourage frequent handwashing.
- Working to regularly disinfect hard classroom surfaces throughout the day.

Additionally, posters reminding students and staff of handwashing and sneeze/face-touching etiquette will be displayed throughout the building and frequent reminders made to our school community.

Plan for shared classroom materials/resources

Within the educational setting, there are occasionally shared materials among students in the classroom (e.g., math manipulatives, science equipment, etc.). Ensuring that these materials are properly disinfected and cleaned will be an important step in slowing the spread of the COVID virus. Each classroom will establish a routine for limiting the use of shared materials and for wiping down shared spaces and equipment. This will vary across classrooms but will include such areas and equipment as:

- Students and teachers wiping down shared spaces within the classroom.
- Assigning classroom textbooks to each student to bring home and providing digitized versions of textbooks for classroom use.
- Ensuring there is a procedure for wiping down and disinfecting laptops.
- Determining a method for cleaning shared classroom furniture.
- Creating a 2-3 minutes gap at the end of the instructional period for students to wipe down desk surfaces before leaving the classroom.
- Ensuring students have ample writing instruments and paper in their possession.
- Eliminating classroom sets or bins of writing instruments. Students should come prepared to class and will not be allowed to share any materials.

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottles

Students should plan to bring bottled water to school. Drinking fountains in the building will be roped off to avoid the potential spread of the virus.

Temperature Scanning

Veritas will scan the temperature of students and visitors entering the building. Current school policy is to notify parents if their student presents with an elevated temperature. Students who present with a temperature at or above 100.3 will not be allowed to enter the building. In the case of students whose parents may have left campus, the student will be isolated, and parents called to pick up their child. Veritas visitors will be temperature scanned before entering the building. Any visitor who presents with a temperature at or above 100.3 will not be permitted to enter the building.

Locations for Sick Students/Staff

Students who come to school with or develop a temperature greater than 100.3 during the school day, will be isolated from other students and staff in room 203 (vacant classroom). The room will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after each use with EPA approved products that meet CDC guidelines for COVID-19.

Building Entry and Exit

- All people entering Veritas must proceed to the second-floor office to be checked in.
- Staff will be present in the morning to greet students, ensure they enter the building safely, scan temperatures, and provide hand sanitizer prior to entering the building.
- Dismissal will be staggered to allow for social distancing.

Afternoon Dismissal

To accommodate a staggered dismissal:

- Students will remain in their classrooms and be released by grade.
- Students who have driving privileges may exit school after their last class and move to their vehicles.
- In order to limit the number of individuals in the building and decrease the risk of spread of the virus, Veritas will limit entry to the building. Parents will not be allowed in the building during drop off or pick up. Carpooling should follow the guidelines in the Parent-Student Handbook.

Traffic Flow in the building.

- Students will remain on the right side of the hallways at all times while moving from place to place.
- Signage will show the traffic flow for all students and staff.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Veritas, in cooperation with SEFC, will ensure that all daily cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing will be in compliance with CDC and state guidelines.
- Throughout the day, staff and students will work to disinfect high touch areas in classrooms and common areas: door handles, light switches, etc.
- Surfaces will be disinfected with an EPA approved product that meets CDC guidelines for COVID-19.
- Any classroom or space used by a student or staff member who directly contracts COVID-19 will be closed and returned to service only after it has been cleaned and disinfected utilizing EPA approved products that meet CDC guidelines for COVID-19.

Visitors in the Building

During the 2020-21 school year, Veritas will limit entry to the building to students, staff, and essential visitors only (needed volunteers, deliveries, maintenance, etc.). By implementing this change, the school hopes to limit the potential introduction and/or spread of the virus in the building. Practically, for parents this means:

- Parents will not be allowed in the building during drop-off or pick-up of students (see Entry and Exit Points section).
- Parents will not be allowed to bring lunch to their student.

- Teachers will be eliminating/modifying certain class activities where parents would traditionally be in attendance.

The health and safety of your children and school staff are paramount this year.

INSTRUCTION/STUDENT LEARNING

As noted in the Professional Development section, teachers will be working to identify gaps in student learning, prioritize content by reviewing curriculum guides, and plan for priority content for the coming year.

Plans for In-School, Face to Face Instruction

The results of our parent survey revealed the vast majority of respondents (92%) favored being on campus for in-person instruction and 8% of respondents reported being comfortable or very comfortable in sending students back to the building. We have approached our return to learn planning with the expectation that occupying the building for in-person instruction is our desired goal.

Veritas implemented a Google Classroom environment last school year that will again be utilized to support direct instruction. Teachers will work with students early in the year to ensure student (and parent) understanding and usage of the Google environment. Teachers will utilize Google Classroom both for on-site and, if necessary, remote learning and utilize the platform for weekly assignments, homework submissions, files, quizzes, formative assessments, and/or student posts to the Classroom Stream. All tests and major paper due dates will be posted in Google Classroom and RenWeb at least two days in advance for both on site and remote learning.

Teachers will also spend a significant portion of our return to school evaluating individual student needs and prioritizing instructional supports to ensure maximum student success. During in-school instruction, teaching and learning will focus on priority content standards. Additional priority will be given to ensuring students are familiar with technology that may be needed for remote learning and understanding login procedures, passwords, and other general requirements that facilitate remote learning efforts. Return to school activities will include significant focus on learning expectations – for both in school and remote learning. Veritas teachers and staff will work to ensure that students understand the significant challenges the nearly five-month absence from the learning environment places on student learning. Importance will be placed on classroom and remote expectations for learning, required attendance, daily work, etc.

Plans for Remote Learning

Teachers worked during the summer months on professional development activities to better prepare themselves and their students for remote learning. While we hope and pray this option is not required, we are prepared to implement remote learning if required to do so.

Goals of Remote Learning

If necessary due to a COVID-19 outbreak, Veritas will move to required continuous learning (Remote Learning) for students. A remote learning plan is a requirement of the State of New Jersey for the 2020-21 school year. Our goals for remote learning will remain similar to those we outlined last spring during our spring Remote Learning efforts:

- Focus on the Mission of Veritas Christian Academy and expect excellence in all that we do.
- Our Mission to partner with parents has not changed.
- We will continue to deliver on our promise of providing an academically challenging, Biblically faithful education to students.

- Make instruction relevant, engaging, and meaningful for all students.

Emphasize Teaching and Learning.

- Teachers will treat remote learning as real school, with real work.
- Students should be ready to engage and learn.
- Use technology to enable learning, not hinder it.
- Embrace new opportunities. Teachers will focus on priority content but also try new and innovative teaching methods to introduce new content during remote learning.
- Keep student screen time and work expectations reasonable.
- Keep instructional aspects and parent engagement reasonable; our desire is not to overwhelm anyone – student or parent.
- Students should have time to engage with parents, siblings and others socially – and safely – and get outside for fresh air. Our desire is to balance learning with family time.
- Keep everything in perspective. We cannot replicate everything remotely. Bear with us, share concerns, and let grace abound.

Required Attendance

- If all schools are required to move to remote learning, attendance will be required (with flexibility and grace provided where possible).
- Instruction will be continuous and include both synchronous (e.g., scheduled instruction via WebEx or other video service) and asynchronous (videos and flexible off-line and online assignments without direct teacher interaction) learning opportunities.
- Student progress will be monitored and grades issued.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CARE

Veritas realizes our previous COVID-19 school closure was difficult on many students and families – it was difficult for teachers and staff as well. A priority of Veritas in any future Remote Learning effort will be to ensure the social and emotional care of our students and families. Research suggests that students with a high sense of belonging are happier, healthier, and more engaged learners. We know that students who feel connected to school are less likely to have emotional distress, be involved in fighting or bullying behavior, and be more engaged in their community and family. While challenging, we want to ensure that we are connecting and engaging students during any remote learning scenario as much as possible.

Identify Student and Family Needs

Early in the 2020-21 school year, Veritas will strive to survey parents and students to better understand family needs during remote learning (e.g., technology and equipment, self-care, coping strategies, prayer/devotion needs, etc.) that will help staff identify ways the school can continue to support families during any remote learning activities.

Emotional Connections for Students/Families while Remote

The healthiest way for students to interact with technology (especially screen media) is if an adult is physically or virtually present and participating in usage with the child. In order to support this healthy technology interaction, Veritas teachers will engage with students regularly and adapt learning activities, virtual lessons, and remote social-emotional care to foster connectedness while away from the school environment. Teachers will use a variety of different activities to engage students:

- Daily or regular virtual/video instruction
- Virtual meetings and devotions for students and families
- Virtual Chapel
- Regular teacher virtual or video check-ins (office hours)
- Virtual class field trips, scavenger hunts, classroom/school video creations, parent nights, and other efforts to promote and support school-student-family connections. Online classroom discussion boards and chats.
- Formal and informal School Counselor virtual office hours
- Regular student check-in surveys sent out by the School Counselor.
- Virtual and – when possible – in-person acts of kindness, notes of gratitude and appreciation, and other efforts to remain connected to students and families.

EQUITY

Veritas Christian Academy desires to ensure all students have access to the learning supports and technology necessary to participate meaningfully in remote learning.

Testing & Tracing

- All employees will be tested for COVID19 once a month
- Veritas will cooperate with the CDC and government officials in their tracing efforts.
- Families can opt out of this by completing the COVID-19 Tracing Waiver Form.

Biblical Relationships

At Veritas priority in emphasizing Biblical principles of “preferring one another,” and “loving your neighbor” are imperative (Matthew 22:37-39).

- At no time will any family or child be made a victim of hazing in relation to their position on COVID-19.
- Individuals choosing to adhere to stricter standards for self-protection will not be condemned, marginalized or made fun of at any time.

Support of Students with ISP/HSP

Veritas is working with the Sussex County Educational Services Commission (SCESC) to ensure that students receiving special services through the SCESC can continue to receive those services during remote learning times. In the coming year, since all schools will have required continuous learning support in place, Veritas expects our students to continue to receive those services during any remote learning effort. In addition, Veritas has prepared a plan for a government-mandated school closure that provides specific services relevant to the unique needs of our special learners.

Disciplinary Action

Students failing to obey these guidelines as set forth by Veritas Christian Academy will be subject to those consequences outlined in the 2020-2021 Parent-Student Handbook.