



A “Normal” Return to School



We know 2020 and 2021 were anything but normal. Many parents want to know what school will look like for the new school year. Will it be normal? What is normal? Will we have full on-campus school? Will all COVID precautions be in place? Will *some* COVID precautions be in place? The answers to these questions won't be here. But we would like to help you prepare for a “somewhat normal” return to school.

Without focusing on the specific procedures at your child's school, what are some things you can prepare for? As a parent or grandparent, it may be strange to send your child to school this year. You probably do not agree with every decision that has been made by the school's administration, and you obviously care for your child. The emotions you feel are normal. If you have experienced limited crowds for the past 16 or 17 months, then any type of parent meeting or orientation may feel strange. Being in a room with strangers is something you may not have experienced in a while. Some may wear a mask while others may not. Try to prepare yourself emotionally for this. Also, seeing your child with a crowd of children may be stressful. If the school had some precautions last school year, then the size of the group may have been smaller.

It is also important to seek the information beforehand and do not assume the school's procedures. When your child returns to school this fall, things will likely be different from last spring. Check the official school website, call the office directly, or check the school's social media. You do not want your children to be embarrassed because they didn't know what to expect.

This is a good time to sit down with your child and talk about the beginning of a school year. Even if many things at the school have returned to “normal,” it is important to remember that we have *all* lived through trauma. The students, parents, teachers... everyone has lived with the pandemic and the responses to the pandemic. When students from multiple homes are in a classroom, there will be many opinions. Encourage your child not to argue or complain, but to be a positive influence. With 20-30 families represented in a classroom, there has likely been death, job loss, many disagreements, fear, misunderstandings, loss of friendships, and more.

Your child can be an ambassador for Christ in a new way this year. He or she can reach out to other students who have experienced



hardship and offer friendship. Most teachers and school employees have had the most stressful year and a half in their lives. Your child can share a Christ-like attitude and help the teacher whenever possible. We have had little control over the pandemic and the response to it. But we can control our attitude and the words we say.

