



July 9, 2020

Dear St. Patrick School Families,

I pray that you and your children are well and enjoying the summer break. I know this has been such a stressful time for all of us: parents, students, teachers, and even administrators. Let me tell you, though, I would NEVER have wanted to go through these last few months with anyone else but you! From day one, you have been open, honest, supportive, and caring. The St. Patrick School family is without a doubt the best in the world! I have said it before and will say it again and again, I am truly blessed to be here, and I thank you all for all you do for the school.

As you are aware, the COVID-19 TASK FORCE has been working tirelessly to create the best reopening plan for your children. I am so grateful to all of the parents, faculty, and parish staff who are on our Task Force, as well as all of the parents who have contacted me or other members of the Task Force with questions, comments, and concerns. You are helping us create the best plan for our school family. While we have received guidance from Governor Murphy and the NJ Department of Education, we still await final guidance from the Diocese of Paterson Catholic Schools Office so we can finalize our reopening plan and begin discussing it with you all. We expect to be able to release plans within the next few weeks at the very latest.

However, we do want to ask you to take several things into consideration as you continue your summer break. They are as follows:

### **Transparent Communications**

During this challenging time, the faculty, staff and I have worked together to be as transparent as possible with you in our communications, so you understand what is happening and when. Any reopening of the school in September will require full transparency from all of us - the school, you as parents, and our other school partners. We put great value in in-person attendance at school starting in September, but we must weigh that with all of the safety and protocol guidance we are being given by the federal, state and local officials, including the Diocese of Paterson Catholic Schools Office. This safety will only happen if all members of the community of forthcoming and transparent.

### **14-Day Quarantine**

With transparency in mind, currently, Governor Murphy and state officials have asked all NJ residents to quarantine for 14 days if coming back into New Jersey from hotspots across the country. As of today, the list includes the following states but more could be added:

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Arizona
- California
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Iowa
- Idaho
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Mississippi
- North Carolina
- Nevada
- Oklahoma
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah



We ask that all families with SPS students who are traveling from the same affected areas of the U.S. back to New Jersey in time for school to reopen, please be mindful of your vacation plans. We also ask that if a member of your family travels to a hotspot state for business, that person self-quarantines for 14 days as recommended and informs the Nurse's Office.

### **Uniforms**

When school reopens on September 1, students will be asked to wear uniforms as normal. In addition, most likely, students in grades K-8 will wear their full school uniform several days a week and their PE uniform at least 2 days per week. Students in the Early Childhood Program will wear their uniform daily or based on their chosen schedule. Please be sure you have enough uniform pieces so that your child is able to wear a freshly washed, clean uniform each day of the week.

### **Backpacks & Headphones**

As I mentioned at the New Parent Meet-Ups and the Town Hall meetings in late June, students will need to keep all items with them while they are in the school building. This means that cubbies and lockers may not be used for the entire school year. Please be sure that your child's backpack is big enough to hold all of their books, notebooks, pencil cases, and other school supplies, including an electronic device, in addition to a sweatshirt and/or winter coat. In the event we cannot use cubbies or lockers, students will be required to keep their winter coat on or inside of their backpack during the school day. Finally, all students will need a pair of headphones to keep at school and should also have one for home.

In closing, the COVID-19 TASK FORCE, Fr. Bob and I are aware that anything less than a normal school schedule is a challenge for our families. We are working tirelessly to bring our school family back together again, but we MUST follow all of the rules and regulations that Governor Murphy and the NJ Department of Education as well as our Diocese is asking of us. We cannot overlook any detail! We understand the frustration and anxiety that comes with not knowing what the school year will look like but please know that as we get closer to announcing the school schedule for 2020-2021, our students' safety - as well as the safety of our faculty and staff - is foremost in our minds.

Should have any questions or concerns, please email the School Office at [schooloffice@st-pats.org](mailto:schooloffice@st-pats.org) or call 973-635-4623. The School Office is open during the summer from 9AM-Noon Monday through Thursday. For any admissions or enrollment questions please email Mrs. Kearney at [admissions@st-pats.org](mailto:admissions@st-pats.org).

Blessings for health and safety,

Dr. Christine Ross  
Principal