



RETURNING TO SCHOOL

2020-2021

LATEST TOPICS

From the Office of Catholic Schools

[July 10, 2020]

TASK FORCE: SAFETY, PRESENCE, & GROWTH

- Task Force: 17 subcommittees and 44 people.
- Announced June 12 we were returning to school for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Our priorities as we return to school are safety, presence, and growth:
 - Safety* - The diocese is committed to utilizing appropriate safety measures as we return to work and schools.
 - Presence* - The diocese is committed to keeping our schools open.
 - Growth* - The diocese wants our children to continue their academic progress in a safe, secure, and Christ-centered environment in our schools in formation of the whole child.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

- The planned traditional, or “brick and mortar” school environment with in-class instruction is the stated intent of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux for the start of the 2020-2021 school year.
- Given a particular set of circumstances, schools may conduct a combination of both traditional and non-traditional school setting. If capacity is limited with focus on occupancy, the school will consider quality programming for the other portions of the day.
- If governmental and diocesan authorities deem a return to school as inadvisable, schools will continue with a comprehensive distance-learning program.
- As a Catholic school, in all school settings, religion continues to be at the core of instruction.
- Digital learning resources are used to enhance instruction in both traditional and virtual settings (if needed).

MASKS/FACE COVERINGS

- Adults and students (third grade and up) will wear face coverings, to the maximum extent possible. Any child over age two may wear a face covering. Face coverings should be worn in all areas of the school. Most importantly, face coverings will be worn during arrival, dismissal, and any other transition within the school building.
- Students should practice wearing a face covering now to become more comfortable with it and be ready for wearing one at school.
- No school is mandating a particular face covering so as not to put undue hardship on the parents. Students can wear an appropriate face covering that covers their nose and mouth.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- All students and school faculty/staff should maintain a physical distance of six feet in all classroom/indoor settings to the maximum extent possible.
- Schools will limit crowding at entry and exit points, maintaining maximum group sizes and physical distance recommendations to the maximum extent possible.

- Schools should identify and utilize large spaces (gyms, auditoriums, etc.) to enable physical distancing.
- Teachers maintain social distancing guidelines and teach from one location in the classroom if possible.
- Floors should be marked and seating arranged for social distancing in waiting and reception areas.
- All nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities from off-campus groups or organizations will be limited or restricted.
- Students and staff should be reminded frequently to stay 6 feet apart by marking places where they may gather.
- Schools are to review and evaluate classroom capacities to create as much space as possible between students, including the removal of nonessential furniture and utilizing transparent dividers.
- Any activity that doesn't allow for social distancing should not be held.

MONITORING/SCREENING

- Regular screenings will be conducted for symptoms, and ongoing self-monitoring throughout the school day can help reduce exposure.
- Staff and students are encouraged to self-monitor for symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath). If symptoms develop during the day, they should be reported immediately.
- Staff and students stay at home if they have tested positive for or are showing symptoms of COVID-19.
- Symptom screenings will be conducted on any person entering the school building (students, faculty, staff, family members) when feasible. Depending on age level, the screening may consist of the following questions and actions:
 - Have you had close contact with someone within the last 14 days diagnosed with COVID-19, or has a healthcare provider advised you to quarantine?
 - Do you or the children you're dropping off have any of these symptoms: fever, chills, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or rash?
 - Conduct daily temperature screening utilizing a touchless thermometer or IR thermal body/face camera. Fever is determined by a measured temperature of 100.4 F or higher.
- Signs will be posted near the entrance to the school including the information such as the above, as well as the importance of face coverings and proper social distancing.
- If a school experiences a suspected, presumptive, or confirmed positive case of COVID-19:
 - The school will establish a dedicated space for symptomatic individuals that will not be used for other purposes.
 - The school will immediately isolate the symptomatic individual to that designated area, and then send the individual home to isolate.
 - While in the isolated area, the symptomatic individual will remain under the visual supervision of a staff member who is masked and at least six feet away.
 - Appropriate and immediate cleaning and disinfecting will be implemented upon the individual's departure.
 - The regional medical director will be contacted regarding the presumptive positive case, and he will advise the school on communication, quarantining practices, enhanced cleaning or disinfecting and, if necessary, a school facility closure.

CLEANING/DISINFECTING

- At the end of each school day, and frequently throughout the day, any and all "touched items" in each classroom must be sanitized/disinfected. This includes, but not limited to:
 - Desks
 - Tables
 - Chairs
 - Countertops
 - Doorknobs
 - Light switches

- School's common areas frequently touched surfaces should be sanitized/disinfected periodically throughout each school day, such as:
 - Push plates and pull handles on doors
 - Benches
 - Bannisters
 - Toilets
 - Urinals
 - Faucets and sinks
 - Restroom countertops
 - Shared objects
- The cleaning outlined above should utilize a commercially available cleaning solution including ETA-approved disinfectants or a diluted bleach solution.
- Schools should discourage sharing of items that are difficult to clean and disinfect.
- Each child's belongings should be kept separate from others in individually labeled containers, cubbies or areas.
- Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of highly touched materials to the extent possible. screenings will be conducted for symptoms, and ongoing self-monitoring throughout the school day can help reduce exposure.

THE DIOCESE OF
HOUMA*THIBODAU

Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Office of Catholic Schools
2779 Highway 311 | PO Box 505 | Schriever, LA 70395
(985) 850-3114 | htdiocese.org/catholic-schools