



ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL
WHERE FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE MEET

**Protocols for the Safe and Healthy
Opening of On-Campus School
2020-2021**

Overview

At St. Mark Catholic School, the safety and well-being of our community is our top priority. In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, the Texas Education Association, the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department, and the Diocese of Dallas, we are taking the following precautionary measures to ensure the safety of our students, faculty and staff on our campus for the 2020-21 academic year. We will continue to respond to guidance from the Bishop, the Governor, and State and Local governments, so these guidelines are based on the best information currently available. Updates will be provided as needed. **It is important to note that these guidelines are mandatory.**

Plans to meet these guidelines are based on four foundations:

- *Monitoring and responding to student and faculty/staff health
- *Limiting and eliminating unnecessary or risky activities
- *Revising cleaning and disinfection protocols
- *Having additional blended learning and virtual learning options available for planned or unplanned shutdowns

We Are All In This Together

Our goal of keeping our community safe and healthy will only be achieved if we work together. It is important that everyone in the St. Mark community follow the guidelines set forth in this document so that we can provide the best care possible for the members of our community, and successfully weather this unprecedented challenge together.

We All Play A Part

Everyone in our community (parents, students, faculty and staff), plays a part in keeping each other safe.

The school has implemented enhanced health and safety measures. All instructions and guidelines provided must be followed. Parents should monitor the health of their children and not send them to school if they exhibit any symptoms of illness or COVID-19.

Let's keep each other healthy and safe. Let's all do our part!

Classroom Instruction

*Age-appropriate social distancing and protective measures will be implemented in classrooms.

*Expectations of younger students will differ from those of older students. Some of the protective measures expected of older students and adults such as maintaining social distancing are, for a variety of reasons, not possible for young children to practice during school. We cannot expect, for example, young children not to engage in interactive play or share toys. For young students, we will limit interaction whenever possible, and will use enhanced cleaning, hygiene, and disinfecting protocols in the classroom.

*All students will be required to wear face masks at school. Please see the "Health and Hygiene Measures" section below for details.

*Students will be grouped together by teacher to minimize the number of other students they regularly encounter.

*Desks for students in grades 1-8 will be arranged at least six feet apart as much as possible, and all desks will face the same direction in staggered rows.

*See-through dividers will be placed on tables for Preschool, Transitional Kindergarten, and Kindergarten students and will serve the purpose of shielding students from respiratory droplets that they may otherwise come in contact with.

*Teachers will travel to students to minimize the number of different students utilizing a given classroom.

*The school will ensure that students have plenty of breaks so they can move, stretch, and go outside.

*Students will have their own individual school supplies in containers. There will be no shared supplies.

*All grades will attend Mass (structured differently).

*Specials classes:

*Kindergarten-5th grade will attend Art class weekly.

*All grades will visit the school Library weekly (managed differently based on grade).

*Grades 1-8 will attend Computer Lab weekly.

*Grades 3-8 will attend SmartLab.

- *Kindergarten-5th grade will attend Music class weekly. Music will be held in the Cafetorium and will focus primarily on non-wind instruments and musicality.
- *All grades will attend Spanish at their regular times.

*All students will have their regularly scheduled Physical Education class, divided by teacher, in separate areas. It will frequently be held outside, weather permitting.

*All students will be required to wear rubber-soled athletic shoes to school every day instead of dress shoes/saddle shoes. (Note that Preschool-Kindergarten students already wear rubber-soled shoes as part of their school uniform. This policy change mainly affects grades 1-8.)

*Middle School elective classes will continue, but are structured differently. Detailed information can be found at the end of this document.

*All classrooms and materials will be disinfected between classes.

Health and Hygiene Measures

The first step in limiting the spread of COVID-19 is preventing those with a confirmed case of COVID-19 (or a high probability of contact with a confirmed case) from entering the school building. This will be accomplished through screening procedures. Once in the school building, additional protocols will be followed to limit the possibility of spread.

Staff

*Faculty/staff will self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus.

*Faculty/staff members must answer COVID-19 health questions each day to satisfy admission into the school building. If the answer to any of those questions is "yes," they will be asked to return/remain home.

*All faculty/staff will have their temperature checked daily prior to entering the school building. Should their temperature be equal to or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit, they will be asked to return/remain home.

*All faculty/staff must wash hands upon entering the school building each day.

*Faculty/staff will wear personal face masks during the day, with the exception of certain outdoor activities.

Family

*Parents are asked to assess their children for a fever each morning. Keep them home if their temperature is over 100 degrees F. Any child who appears ill or reports having any symptoms at school will have their temperature taken by the school nurse.

*Upon arrival at campus, everyone (parents, students, guests) must remain in their car and everyone must wear a face mask.

*Prior to the student(s) exiting the car:

*Each morning, upon arrival at school, parents must answer COVID-19 screening questions. If the student(s) exhibits one potential COVID-19 symptom, he/she will be sent directly to the school nurse. If the student(s) exhibits two or more symptoms, only the student(s) in the car with symptoms will be asked to return/remain home. Should this occur, call the school, Nurse Whitney Battershell, 972-578-0610.

Students

*Students will disinfect their hands upon entering the building and will wash hands frequently throughout the day. Students will engage in handwashing for at least 20 seconds at least two times per day, in addition to being encouraged to wash hands after using the restroom, after P.E., and before eating. Proper handwashing technique will be taught in Health classes during the first two weeks of school.

*Hand sanitizer is available in all classrooms and throughout the building, and will be utilized frequently.

*All classrooms will be equipped with ionic air purifiers.

*All students will wear non-medical grade cloth face masks. Masks must be furnished by each family. Masks of 2-3 layers that seal around the nose provide the best protection. Masks with ventilation valves and gaiter masks **are not** permitted. Students should bring an extra mask to school in a Ziploc bag labeled with their name. Cloth masks must be made of simple patterns, such as polka dot, striped, floral, or plain. No words, symbols or distracting pictures are allowed.

The only valid medical reasons for not wearing a face mask, within the context of COVID-19, would also mean that attending school in person with such a condition is too dangerous to allow. As such, any individual who is unwilling or unable to wear a face mask would need to move to the Off-Campus Learning Platform. This is a firm Diocesan decision.

*Students in any grade are welcome to wear a face shield in addition to the required cloth face mask.

*All students must bring their own reusable water bottle to school. Water dispensers are available on the water fountains throughout the school. All water fountains will be sealed off, but the bottle dispensers will be open. Water bottles should be labeled with the student's name. To ensure that your child has a school-approved water bottle, please review the guidelines outlined on page 62 of the [Parent Student Handbook](#).

*The school buildings will be thoroughly disinfected each night using a safe and effective cleanser.

*Classroom high-touch surfaces will be disinfected several times throughout the day.

Facilities, Cafetorium, Recess, After School Program

*High-touch surfaces throughout the building will be disinfected frequently throughout the day.

*Restrooms will be cleaned midday and every evening.

*All grades will eat lunch in their classrooms.

*Cafeteria lunches will be available, but procedures will be structured differently so students do not have to go through the Cafeteria line. The traditional full St. Mark lunch menu will continue to be offered each day (plate lunches, "grab and go" lunches, and salad bar).

*Cafeteria lunches must be preordered by Monday of the previous week via FACTS Family Portal (formerly Renweb).

*If a lunch is preordered, your FACTS account will be charged unless the student is absent.

*All food and drinks ordered through the Cafeteria will be delivered to students in the classroom in covered containers.

*All students will have recess by grade level in designated areas outside, weather permitting.

*Hallways will be limited to "one class at a time" to minimize the intermingling of students.

*Lockers will not be used. Students in grades 3-8 must bring a backpack to school containing their books and materials which will be left in their first period classroom each day. To avoid

overloaded backpacks, we encourage middle school students to have separate backpacks for "A" day classes and "B" day classes.

*The After School Program will be offered.

*Music Learning Band will be offered by grade level, after school only, using a hybrid model. Contact Ken Utz for further information at 972-499-0825 or kutz@musiclearningband.com.

*Fall Enrichment Clubs, Drama Kids, and Chess Club are canceled.

*The Dallas Parochial League (DPL) has canceled all school sports until further notice.

*The status of all academic competitions/robotics is pending.

*Visitors and volunteers will not be permitted on campus.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

*There will be no "Morning Supervision" time in the Cafetorium. This will prevent students from intermingling. Students will report directly to their homerooms upon entering the building. Teachers will be in their classrooms by 7:30 AM each day.

*All regular drop-off doors (Cafetorium, Early Childhood, Single Family) will open earlier than normal at 7:30 AM.

*Families with Preschool, Transitional Kindergarten, or Kindergarten students may no longer drop-off at the Cafetorium doors as in the past. These students must be dropped-off at the Early Childhood Education building driveway.

*Parents should remain in their vehicles during drop-off and pick-up.

*For late arrivals, one parent/guardian must escort the student(s) to the building's main entrance for check-in. If another student is already in the waiting area, please wait in line outside the main door, socially distanced from others.

*Dismissal will be done in accordance with social distancing guidelines.

*At dismissal, please have your family carpool sign clearly visible in the front windshield of your car. The last name should be in LARGE, dark, bold letters. Students will not be dismissed without it.

Positive Cases and Teachers, Staff or Students Showing COVID-19 Symptoms

*St. Mark Catholic School will take a conservative approach to the evaluation of potential COVID-19 symptoms. If a student or staff member presents potential symptoms, the School Nurse will utilize an internal "decision tree" to determine whether or not those symptoms could be indicative of COVID-19. If the decision tree process indicates that symptoms point to a potential case, the individual, will be sent home immediately for further medical attention. The School Nurse will talk with the family about documentation needed for the child(ren) to return to school. It is important to note that just because someone is sent home, it does not mean they have a positive case. It simply means St. Mark is following the standard protocols prescribed by the Diocese of Dallas Catholic Schools Office. In most of these instances, the individual will not have a positive case of COVID-19. The community will not be notified when someone is sent home with potential symptoms.

If there is a positive test result with a student or employee, the school will immediately notify Collin County Health Care Services (CCHCS) and the Catholic Schools Office. The individual directly impacted will be placed on home isolation per current guidance from CCHCS and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The School Nurse will talk with the family about documentation needed for the child(ren) to return to school.

In conjunction with CCHCS, a contact tracing investigation will be conducted with subsequent notification of any identified close contacts to the positive case. The school will implement the specific protocols set forth from CCHCS and the CDC regarding quarantine for any identified close contacts who may have been exposed to the person testing positive, as well as procedures for the cleaning and disinfection of facilities.

The school will then notify the school community that there was a positive case and we have followed these protocols.

*There is an isolation room on campus for anyone who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms.

*Students who show COVID-19 symptoms must be picked-up immediately.

*Any student, teacher, or staff member who experiences any symptoms of COVID-19 (listed under the "COVID-19 Symptoms for Screening" section below) should stay home from school and contact the School Nurse.

*Any student, teacher, or staff member living with someone who experiences any of the symptoms of COVID-19, whether they have a positive COVID-19 test or not, should immediately self-isolate and contact the School Nurse.

*In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:

1. At least 24 hours have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medication); AND
2. The individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath); AND
3. At least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

*Lesson and homework accommodations will be made for students who must isolate/quarantine at home. See *Temporary "Off-Campus Learning" Due to Medical Issue/Illness* section below for complete details.

COVID-19 Symptoms for Screening

People with COVID-19 have reported a wide range of symptoms, from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with the following symptoms may have COVID-19. This list does not include all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported.

In the last 24 hours, has the student/individual experienced new or worsening onset of any of the following:

Symptoms of Covid-19:

- Dry Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Loss of sense of taste or smell
- Diarrhea, nausea, vomiting or loss of appetite
- Chills
- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit

Exposure to Covid-19:

- Has student or a close contact of student been diagnosed with COVID-19 or placed in quarantine for possible exposure to COVID-19?
- Has student knowingly been exposed to someone who has symptoms of COVID-19?

Updated 2/3/21

- Has student returned from international travel within the last two weeks?

Reporting Absences

*If, for any reason, a student will not attend school, the parent should call the school office at 972-578-0610 between 8:30 and 9:00 AM to report the absence and the reason for the absence.

Temporary “Off-Campus Learning” Due to Medical Issue/Illness

Please note: All absences from school due to any COVID-19 related signs or symptoms must be promptly reported to School Nurse, Whitney Battershell, for further review at 972-578-0610.

Following are the procedures for a student to go on a **temporary** Off-Campus Learning Platform (OCL) due to a medical issue/illness absence from school:

- OCL does not start until the 4th day of the absence. Absences of 3 days or less will follow the [Parent-Student Handbook](#) policy pertaining to make-up work (pages 24-25).
 - During days 1, 2, or 3 of absences, families are encouraged to reference the Lesson Plans in [FACTS Family Portal](#) (aka RenWeb) and complete any work that they can.
- On day 3, teachers will send home a list of all make-up work from the previous 3 days that needs completing, along with the student’s OCL schedule and **2-3 days** of OCL work.
 - Parents will come to the main school building for grades 1-8, and the Early Childhood Education building for grades PK-K, any time after 4:00 PM, to pick up needed work/books/materials. Items will be labeled and placed in a box outside of the front doors.
 - Each student needs his or her own individual device. Notify the school by the third day of the absence if the student needs to borrow an iPad. If the iPad is returned damaged, the family is responsible for a \$100 repair fee.
 - If the absence will extend into the next school week, families will start participating in the weekly “OCL bag pick up” (no bag required) that occurs on the last school day of the week:
 - Grades 1-8: Park and enter the Cafetorium doors to drop off completed work and pick up new work/materials.
 - For full-day dismissal: 11:30 AM-1:00 PM
 - For half-day dismissal: 12:15-1:00 PM
 - Early Childhood Education: Come through the ECE circle drive to drop off completed work and pick up new work/materials. The exchange will take place either outside the building or in the foyer.
 - For full-day dismissal: 10:45 AM- 11:45 AM
 - For half-day dismissal : 12:15- 1:00 PM

- If there is nothing to pick up, or if everything will be available electronically, parents will receive an email notification that pick up is not necessary.
- All Off-Campus Learning policies apply. Reference the "[Off-Campus Learning Platform](#)" document for details.
- During this temporary OCL time, PK3-5th grade students will not participate in Specials.
- If a student is too sick to work, call Rene O'Connor at 972-578-0610 between 8:30 and 9:00 AM to report the day's absence.
- **If the absence is COVID-19 related, students may only return to school with Nurse Whitney's approval.**
- When the student has been cleared by the nurse to return to school, send all books, materials and incomplete work to school on the day he/she returns.

Middle School Elective Information 2020- 2021

Electives are an enriching part of the Middle School day, taking place during the last class period from 2:45 – 3:25 PM. While we have new COVID-19 guidelines in place, we are pleased to announce that we will be able to continue this experience for our students. The new format will be the same for all students as follows:

- On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday all students will have Silent Study Hall.
- On Tuesday and Thursday, students will take part in various activities taught by many different teachers. Students will have the opportunity to learn Meteorology, Latin, Mystery/Detective Work, Painting/Building, Car Care and Changing a Tire, Financial Literacy, Travel, and many more. The teachers will go to the student's classroom for one month at a time, and will then rotate to the next classroom.

All students will automatically be enrolled in electives, and grades will be taken for each quarter. Report cards will read "Elective-General" regardless of the activities students have participated in that quarter.

Our administration and staff are excited to be able to continue to provide students this exploratory opportunity in a safe, short, timeframe which will develop experiences, interests, and skills that they will be able to bring forward to high school and beyond.

If you have any other questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact Ms. Steinkirchner at pam.steinkirchner@stmcs.net.