



ST. PAUL PARISH SCHOOL

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Dear St. Paul Families,

As we welcome in the month of August, I pray that this email finds you all doing well. We are five weeks away from the start of the new school year, and I am sure there are many questions on your minds as we anticipate returning in September. With the current status of COVID-19, this continues to be a very fluid time and the operational blueprint for re-opening also continues to change based on guidance from Governor Brown, Archbishop Sample, Archdiocese of Portland Department of Catholic Schools (DCS), Oregon Department of Education (ODE), Oregon Health Authority (OHA), and Oregon Department of Education Early Learning Division (ELD).

Meeting the guidelines outlined by the previously mentioned entities, the plan is to start the school year with in-person instruction for students in preschool through grade eight. If a family prefers not to have a child receive in-person instruction, on-line learning will be made available through St. Paul.

St. Paul Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten Programs are certified through the Oregon Department of Education Early Learning Division. This certification allows us to provide on-site care and in-person instruction regardless of the metrics due to the program being considered essential care for this age group.

Hybrid and Distance and Digital Learning models for students in grades kindergarten through eighth will be created. This will allow us to be prepared for any potential changes through the course of the school year and possible updated guidance from the state based on their efforts to navigate the mitigation of COVID-19.

As Governor Brown announced last week, and now added to the *Ready Schools, Safe Learners* operational blueprint guidelines, school's will follow "Community Health Metrics". This identifies guidelines for when schools can be in-person or must move to comprehensive distance learning for children in kindergarten through grade eight. These metrics are based on the status of COVID-19 in our county, in our state, and at our school. You can find details of the metrics by visiting the ODE website [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#). I will continue to monitor these metrics on a weekly basis.

In case the school does need to close, we are applying for Emergency Child Care licensure through ELD. This license will allow us to provide on-site care for students through the age of 12. Priority must be given to serve Essential Workers in the following order: first responders, emergency workers, health care professionals, followed by critical operations staff and essential personnel, followed by individuals working outside of the home.

Attached to this email I've included a **draft** of a few sections of the "St. Paul Return to School Plan" in accordance with the Archdiocese and ODE. Please review it so you can anticipate how we are preparing for students to come back to school this fall. Please note that this is a "living" document and clarifications and additions are still being made based on guidance from DCS and ODE. The final document will be submitted to the DCS, ODE, and Lane County Public Health by August 15 for review. The document will be sent home and posted on our school website once it has been finalized.

Additionally, I would like to receive your input regarding the coming school year. Tomorrow, you will receive an email with a survey link. Please take a moment to complete the survey to provide information to assist us in planning, share concerns, and ask questions. Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

Carrying out the mission of our school by providing a Catholic education fostering excellence through the spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical development of each student in a safe and nurturing environment continues to be our priority. Know that the health of our students, staff, and families are at the forefront of our decision-making process.

I know that this is a difficult time for all of us, especially given the uncertainty of what the future holds. I thank you for your unending patience and support. I am sure there are a mixture of emotions in regard to having your child in the school building or having your child stay at home. Please know that we are doing our best to meet the needs of all our St. Paul Families. Our school is a special place because of the students, staff, and parents. We want to work with you through this difficult time, and we look forward to the day when the doors of our school open and we hear the joyous voices of the children without the worries of COVID-19.

May we continue to keep one another in prayer for each other's safety and well-being, and may we trust in God's plan for us. We ask the Holy Spirit to give us wisdom and courage to navigate through this time and to take care of one another as Jesus did.

In Christ's Peace,

Kelli Braud