

# Saint Eugene Reopening of School

## Guidance and Procedures



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# Introduction and Philosophy

## Introduction

This document will provide information regarding the plan to return to Brick-and-Mortar learning for the 2020-2021 school year. Before we discuss the specific aspects of the plan, let us start with an introduction to several of the key foundational premises that the plan is built upon. The principles listed below, will allow us to remain open and only use virtual learning for those who have been identified with COVID-19 or in a situation in which a parent feels working from home is beneficial.

**Partnership** – Catholic elementary schools are inherently a partnership between the parent and the school. This is never more important than at this time and an even greater partnership is now needed. It is our goal to open this school year and to remain open. This cannot be possible unless the school and the parents agree to the importance of monitoring your child’s health daily. Most importantly, this means that children who are experiencing symptoms – such as fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, parents need to keep their child home until medically cleared to return to school. With parental cooperation in this matter, we will be able to keep the schools open and safe.

## Cohorting

A **cohort** is a group of students in the same grade, most cases, this is a single homeroom but, in some situations; it could be a larger group. Cohorting is recommended by many health organizations as an environmental measure to prevent the spread of disease. Some large school systems are using it as the only method of prevention to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Although our schools will be using other precautionary measures, cohorting will be a major part of the plan. With this, we will keep groups of children together for the entire day. They will attend lunch, recess and classes as a cohort. If a case of COVID-19 were to surface with a cohort, we would then move to virtual learning at home with just the identified cohort. The rest of the school would continue to operate with in-class instruction.

**Social distancing** – Social distancing is also a fundamental practice in all our procedures of operations. Social distancing is deliberately increasing the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness. Keeping your distance from others lessens the chances of catching and spreading COVID-19. Travel in the hallway, lunch periods, and classroom instruction have all been planned to maximize social distancing.

**Strategic Use of Masks** – Masks will be mandatory in certain situations, such as travel in the hallway, on the bus, classroom situations with non-cohort members, or when travel about the classroom is necessary without effective social distancing. Following the ChesterCounty Health Department, children will be given 10 minute mask breaks every hour.

**Enhanced Cleaning** – The school will increase the cleaning of common areas and highly used features such as door knobs, handrails, and counters. Children are encouraged to bring their own water bottles to school, as common water fountains will not be in use. With this enhanced cleaning, a safer environment can be established.

**Monitoring health** – Every day, parents are primarily responsible for monitoring the health of their children. Teachers will be reminded to check the health of their students during a common activity.

**Virtual Learning** – If a child is sick, or a parent suspects the child may be sick, **with COVID 19**, we will have an option where the child can join the class via a telecommuting practice. The major subjects will be available through this method. Materials will be exchanged through a pick up/drop off process.

- In the case where a cohort has been dismissed from school and COVID-19 has been identified, the entire cohort will utilize distance learning for the isolation period. Lessons will be delivered through Google Classroom.
- **In the case of an in-person student out sick, it is a regular sick day. The student does not go virtual. Students home sick will make up the work as usual when they return. Only students who are home to quarantine or for an extended period of time will be virtual.**
- **Modified Attendance** – Since we are encouraging parents to monitor health closely, and we also encourage keeping children home if they display symptoms, the grading of attendance has changed. Children will be marked as attending in person or attending virtually. Only when children cannot or do not participate in any of the virtual lessons, will they be marked absent.

# General Principles for the Building

## Introduction

There are several key practices that should be implemented in each building to help maintain a safe learning environment.

## Philosophy

Foundational premises when designing a safe learning environment are the concepts of maintaining cohorts, social distancing and frequent cleaning. The use of these practices is recommended by the CDC and other health agencies to help control the spread of any viruses and manage any possible outbreaks.

## Process

1. We will be following OCE's directives of cohorting, keeping groups of students together for the entire day.
2. Limit the admission of visitors to the school: Recess aides only.
3. Each student will provide their own supplies to reduce the need to share.
4. Group singing is discouraged unless increased social distancing is possible.
5. Computer class will have space to socially distance half a class, up to 12.
6. No outside food for sharing will be permitted, including birthday treats.
7. Ventilation is important - windows will be opened if possible.
8. No field trips. Virtual field trips will be scheduled, including special activities.

# Catholic Identity

## Introduction

Excellence in education is characterized by having a strong curriculum, student engagement, utilizing quality instructional methods, making good use of data and regular communication with parents and stakeholders. What is at the heart of learning in a Catholic school is the inclusion of faith and Catholic identity in all we do.

## Philosophy

Catholic schools have a two-fold charge: providing an education that is academically excellent and one that is deeply rooted in Catholic identity. The challenge, then, is to ensure that the education that is delivered (no matter what the mode of delivery) meets this standard.

## Process

1. Because of social distance, part of the school may attend the Mass.
2. Attendance of parents at school liturgies may have to be suspended depending on local guidelines.
3. We will say the prayer of Pope Francis daily.

## The Prayer of Pope Francis during the Coronavirus

Lord, may you bless the world, give health to our bodies and comfort our hearts. You ask us not to be afraid. Yet our faith is weak and we are fearful. But you, Lord, will not leave us at the mercy of the storm. Tell us again: "Do not be afraid" (Mt 28:5). And we, together with Peter, "cast all our anxieties onto you, for you care about us" (1 Pet 5:7). Amen.

Saint Michael the Archangel, pray for us.

# Entering the Building

## Introduction

Entering the building every morning is the activity which unofficially begins the day. It is important that this is smooth, stress free, efficient and conducted in a manner that keeps children safe.

## Philosophy

A foundational premise when designing a safe entry throughout the day and controlling transmission of any virus, is to help keep it from the building. During the entry into the building social distancing and hand sterilization will be implemented. The use of hand sanitation and social distancing is recommended by the CDC and other health agencies to help control the spread of any viruses and manage any possible outbreaks.

## Process

1. Parents must take temperatures of children before they leave home. Parents will complete a digital checklist of temperature and symptoms regarding each child in school each morning. The form must be submitted by **7:15** each morning.
2. Signs will be posted: "Did you answer your daily health questions at home?"
3. Students upon entering the building should immediately sanitize their hands by using sanitizer.
4. Buses will empty, one at time per entrance, so social distancing can be maintained and each child's hands can be sanitized.
5. Each entrance will be monitored by staff to help insure students maintain a social distance. Parents may not enter the building with their children. Parking will not be permitted in the front lot. All drop off of students in cars is in the back, using the high road. Cars line up along the hill. No one is to park along the fence. Students proceed directly to their classroom.
6. Use of a mask is mandatory as students ride the bus, enter the building and travel to the classroom.
7. Students should store their mask in a brown bag if they are going to remove it once they reach their desk. Students must bring their own mask to school, and have two if possible. Please review the proper way to remove the mask.
8. Arrival time is 7:30; prior to that, there is no supervision for students or entrance to the building.
9. Prayers will be said each morning in classrooms at 7:50.

10. Parents dropping off lunch are to ring at the glass doors and drop in the cooler available in the lobby; the bag must be labeled with the child's name and grade level. No sodas, fountain sodas or open drinks are to be included with the child's lunch

## **Daily Monitoring of Health**

### **Introduction**

The guidance provided by the State of Pennsylvania suggests that each school monitor health daily. To provide the healthiest environment possible for staff and students, schools should choose to implement a Daily Health monitoring system similar to one recommended below that meets the specific and unique circumstance of the school.

### **Philosophy**

Health monitoring should be done in conjunction with efforts taken at home with the parents of children attending the school. Parents have the greatest information regarding the health of their children and are an integral part of this process.

### **Process**

1. Parents will complete a digital checklist of temperature and symptoms regarding each child in school each morning. If the form(s) fail to be submitted by 7:30 each morning, parents will be called for pick up.
2. When students arrive in their classrooms the teacher will do a scan of the students to monitor if there are any concerns related to health. Temperatures may be taken to ensure the safety of all students.
3. Additionally, at scheduled times throughout the day, teachers will complete a scan of students to monitor if there are any concerns related to health.



## **Traveling Within the Building**

### **Introduction**

Movement about the building is essential and cannot be eliminated. Schools need to devise a plan to allow for travel throughout the building while keeping the students and staff safe.

### **Philosophy**

Students need to travel from the bus, to their classroom, to the lavatory and other essential areas. The specifics will differ from school to school, because each school's physical layout is different. Below is the process specific to Saint Eugene School.

### **Process**

1. As people travel about the building, masks must always be worn.
2. Students will travel in one direction through the hallway keeping travel restricted on each side of the hall to one direction.
3. A bathroom schedule will be developed that takes into consideration the movement of cohorts around the building.
4. If an emergency bathroom visit is necessary, the student wears their mask.
5. Bathrooms will be cleaned throughout the day.
6. Classroom doors will be kept open during any movement of classes to avoid unnecessary touching by students.

# Lunch/Recess

## Introduction

Lunch in school serves multiple purposes, it is a time to replenish and nourish as well as a time to socialize and get a brain break. It is important to provide all these goals and keep children safe.

Recess is an important part of a child's school day. A safe and healthy recess promotes time to develop socially, emotionally, physically, and academically.

During recess, students learn and practice important social and emotional skills, such as conflict resolution, decision-making, compromise, and self-regulation. Additionally, recess provides a needed brain break and facilitates the learning process. With this in mind, procedures will be put in place to insure our students have a safe recess.

## Philosophy

A foundational premise when designing a safe lunch environment are the concepts of maintaining cohort and social distancing. The use of cohorts is recommended by the CDC and other health agencies to help control the spread of any viruses and manage any possible outbreaks.

To the best extent possible, recess will continue applying safe physical contact of equipment and social distancing. The term "social distancing" refers to measures being taken to restrict where and when people can gather to stop or slow the spread of infectious disease. In general, six feet of separation is the distance that should be kept between people interacting within their peers. Games that utilize physical and social activities, yet limit physical contact will be played.

## Process for Lunch

1. Students will use hand sanitizer in the classroom before lunch/recess.
2. Students will eat lunch in their classrooms.
3. There will not be any shared meals.
4. Meals and utensils will be served directly to the student.
5. Students will use sanitizer as they exit a room/recess/yard.

## **Process for Recess**

1. Students will go to recess using the procedures established in school operations regarding movement in the building.
2. One class at a time dismissed to the yard in a social distant line wearing masks.
3. Students must stay in grade level designated areas.
4. Students will not need to wear masks while at recess with their cohort and are playing socially distant activities. If they are unable to be with their cohort or social distance, students should wear masks during recess.
5. Games and activities used during recess will be pre-approved as part of the safe list for limiting the spread of infectious disease, with no shared equipment.
6. Students will wash/sanitize their hands before returning to class or coming in for lunch.

# Physical Education

## Introduction

These guidelines are written with the goal of keeping the integrity of quality Physical Education programs while navigating through a “new normal.”

## Philosophy

Physical education is an integral part of the curriculum in an elementary school and essential that it continue safely.

## Process

1. Weather permitting, PE class will be held in outside space. Weather non-permitting, PE class will be held in the Gymnasium.
2. Students will sanitize as they leave their classroom for physical education class.
3. Students will bring their personal water bottle.
4. Class equipment will be sanitized frequently or quarantined for 3 days before use.
5. Whenever possible, social distancing activities will be used. Masks will be required when social distancing is not possible.

# Classroom Set-up

## Introduction

The organization of the classroom is important in supporting the academic progress of students. Classroom space should provide an environment that allows teachers and students to interact comfortably and safely. Careful consideration has been given to the strategic placement of furniture, learning centers, and materials to optimize student learning, reduce distractions and keep children safe.

## Philosophy

Fundamental premises when designing a safe classroom environment are the concepts of maintaining cohorts and social distancing. The use of cohorts is recommended by the CDC and other health agencies to help control the spread of any viruses and manage any possible outbreaks.

## Process

1. Non-essential furniture, materials or equipment, including rugs, will be stored away.
2. Student desks will be placed 6 feet from the center of each desk to the center of the next desk.
3. Teachers will wear masks. Face shields are also available for teachers.

# Materials Within the Classroom

## Introduction

The organization of the classroom is important in supporting the academic progress of students. The use of a variety of materials is essential for learning. This includes books, writing instruments and materials for special area subjects.

## Philosophy

Foundational premises when designing a safe classroom environment are the concepts of maintaining cohorts, social distancing and frequent cleaning. The use of these practices is recommended by the CDC and other health agencies to help control the spread of any viruses and also manage any possible outbreaks.

## Process

1. No use of shared materials, when possible. Students will sanitize if they do.
2. Areas where students can store personal items that keep them isolated from use by others will be available.
3. Each student should have their own tissue box.
4. Change of classes: Teachers will change rooms so that students are in their own desk with their own materials.

# Dismissal

## Process

1. Dismiss from classrooms.
2. Masks will be put back on in the classroom before dismissal lines are called.
3. Car line will be called first. They will be dismissed from the cafeteria where they will sit at a social distance to wait.
4. Students will come out through the brown door facing the car line.
5. Families will be given laminated cards with the student's name(s) so the teacher on duty knows who to call. Laminated cards must be placed in the window. It would expedite this process if cards were held up in the driver's side window for the teacher to see, as you approach the pick up area.
6. Bus students will be called by bus line and grade, then sent out through glass doors to teacher on duty.

# CARES

## **Introduction**

It is integral for our schools to provide a CARES program especially during the current circumstances. For many of our students, this will be their first re-entry into the school setting. CARES is an offshoot of the regular school day; thus, all procedures in place for the school should be adhered to during the CARES program.

## **Philosophy**

It is paramount that we provide a safe, healthy and sanitized environment for those students entrusted to our care before and after regular school hours. It is important to engage these students in a social setting which they have not experienced in months and to provide a pleasant atmosphere for them. We are the protectors and providers for these students during the hours they are entrusted to us.

## **Process**

1. Social and safe-distancing practices are to be observed as much as possible.
2. Outside visitors will not be allowed to enter the area where the CARES program is being held. Parents will meet their children at the brown cafeteria door and sign out students there.
3. Students are responsible for providing their own snack and beverage during their time in CARES.
4. All employees, including teens, will follow the same health checklist practices as school employees.
5. Materials used by CARES students will be sanitized daily.
6. Monitored hand washing and sanitizing will be done on a regular basis.
7. The CARES program will comply with any emergency actions and resulting decisions that occur during the school day.



# Isolation Space - Saint Eugene Room

## **Introduction**

When students are experiencing discomfort or potential symptoms of COVID, they will be isolated from others with enough room that several students could sit in the room and be six-feet apart.

## **Philosophy**

The concept is to provide a safe supervised staging area where students can wait until they get transportation home from school.

## **Process**

1. An area has been established that is supervised and can fit multiple students that can be socially distanced.
2. Masks will be worn by all who enter the area.
3. The entire area will be sanitized after each use.

# Virtual Learning Cohort Instruction

## Introduction

While we realize that in-person instruction has greater impact at the elementary level, the need for virtual learning has become a reality in a variety of circumstances including the pandemic-related quarantines, weather-related situations, and building maintenance issues. Physical presence in the classroom allows time for students to develop spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically, and academically. When this is not possible for a cohort, it is important to provide a means for student learning without interruption.

## Philosophy

As much as possible, instruction will continue to apply best practices incorporating our Catholic Identity and based on educational research and sound pedagogy. The term “virtual learning” refers to adapted instructional practices being utilized by means of online instruction and interaction with students using various and asynchronous methods.

## Process

1. Google Classroom and Google Meet/Zoom will be used to centralize materials, lessons, instruction, assessments, feedback and communications.
2. Have regular communication with parents/guardians.

# Virtual Learning For Individual Instruction

## Introduction

While we realize that in-person instruction has greater impact at the elementary level, the need for virtual learning has become a reality in a variety of circumstances including the pandemic-related quarantines. Physical presence in the classroom allows time for students to develop spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically, and academically. When this is not possible, it is important to provide a means for student learning without interruption.

This guidance is for situations in which a child cannot attend class. This may be because a parent is not comfortable sending their child to school or because the child must do a limited time of quarantine.

## Philosophy

The term “virtual learning” refers to instructional practices being utilized so a child can access what is taking place with his /her class by means of connecting virtually to the classroom in real-time.

## Process

1. Child is able to receive direct instruction by teacher through the live streaming of lessons..
2. Students must attend live classes for Religion, Math,ELA. Social Studies, Spanish and for grade 4 - 8 Techonology lessons
3. Pick up of materials is essential: handouts, books, workbooks.
4. Use of assessments with timely feedback
5. Regular communication with parents/guardians