



August 14, 2020

Dear KCS Families,

I hope this finds you well and enjoying the warmth and sunshine of August. I am so happy to be sharing good news with you again today. We have received the final approval from the Superintendent's Office to reopen for five full days beginning on September 8, 2020. The recent decisions by our local public school districts to delay the in-person start of school do not pertain to KCS. At this point only a change in policy from the Governor's Office or the Ulster County Health Department would delay our opening.

My last letter shared the ins and outs of the new day-to-day procedures at Kingston Catholic. **For the full Archdiocese of NY reopening plans, please visit our website at [kingstoncatholic.org](http://kingstoncatholic.org) or the Archdiocese of NY website at [catholicchoolsny.org](http://catholicchoolsny.org).** Today I wish to share some information for you to help your child return to the school setting.

As I started preparing for our new normal, I thought a lot about your children and their transition back into school. Each one of us has experienced the COVID-19 pandemic and quarantine differently. I think it is important to keep that in mind as we help our children transition back to school. Young students may not know how to articulate their fears and concerns. Older children may feel the need to put on a brave face. Please know that before the start of the school year, the KCS faculty and staff will be receive training on recognizing and responding to stress and anxiety in our students. As always, the Archdiocesan counseling team from ADAPP, and our school counselor, Mrs. Jeanette Mazzarella, will be on hand to provide us with assistance as needed.

According to the World Health Organization, some signs that your child may be experiencing COVID related anxiety include: difficulty concentrating, not sleeping or waking up with nightmares, loss of appetite or refusal to eat, over indulging while eating, feeling moody or easily irritated or angry, tense, fidgety, clingy, crying or weepiness, and complaining of a stomachache or headache. If you see your child showing signs of anxiety or worry, it can be helpful to start a conversation. "I see that you have been very teary today, is there something that you've been thinking about that is making you upset?"

Talking about their emotions can help children begin to regulate themselves and work through this challenging time. Some coping strategies we will be discussing at school include practicing a Mindful Minute (brief minute of deep breathing and meditation), listen to a calming song, rainfall, or waterfall sounds, drinking a cold glass of water, or taking a moment to say a prayer to a favorite Saint or Guardian Angel. Please rest assured that your child's safety and wellbeing is our first priority. Each year, the first few days of school are dedicated to transitioning back to school. This year, to help ensure a smooth, safe, and secure transition, an extended period will be dedicated to this transition.

A few reminders and tips for your child's safety and comfort as well as the safety of others:

- If you have traveled outside on NY in August, please refer to the quarantine guidelines for New Yorkers that can be found at [governor.ny.gov](http://governor.ny.gov)
- If your child has had a fever of 100.0 or higher within the 14 days prior to September 8, 2020 (beginning Aug. 25<sup>th</sup>) they may not return to school on Opening Day. (Students with a fever of 100.0 at any time during the school year must remain home for 14 days)
- Please practice handwashing, temperature scanning, and wearing a mask at home to help normalize these daily school practices
- Please be sure to pack a snack, lunch, and water each day
- As we will not be using lockers or coat closets during Phase One, we suggest that each student bring in a milk crate to go under his/her desk to contain backpack, lunchbox, sweater, etc... (If you prefer not to send this on the bus, parents may drop the crates off at school on Tuesday, August 25, Wednesday, August 26, or Thursday, August 27 9am & 2pm. As always, please call if these dates and times do not work for your family and we will make every effort to meet you at another time.)
- To help make our students more comfortable, the students may wear their gym uniform for the first few weeks of school. (Please find and order from at the end of this letter.)
- New student orientation will be held on Thursday, August 27, 2020 at 1:30pm via Zoom. Orientation will last about 45 minutes and is an important step in beginning school. A link will be sent to new parents prior to this event.
- Beginning next week, the information sent to you regarding drop off and pick up will be available on our website

At this point in the back to school process, if you have decided that your children will participate in distance learning for the first quarter, kindly send me an email at

jill.albert@archny.org. I will then set up a day and time for you to come in during the first week in September to pick up any learning materials your students will need.

During the week of August 24<sup>th</sup>, I will be hosting grade level Zoom meetings for parents. These meetings are an opportunity for parents to bring forth the questions, concerns, and suggestions you may have. Parents with children in multiple grades do not need to attend more than one meeting, but are welcome to do so. Additionally, I would ask that everyone remember that these meetings are for parents. While I am excited to see your children, your fellow parents need the opportunity to ask questions and discuss concerns without feeling that they need to edit their comments because children are on the call. A schedule and links for these meetings will be sent out next week.

If you have questions or concerns you wish to discuss outside of these upcoming meetings, please feel free to send me an email or give me a call. The faculty, staff, and I look forward to having our students back in the building and getting the new school year underway.

Blessings,

Mrs. Albert

*KCS- Stronger Together*