

**Plans Consistent with Diocesan Policies for Safe Re-Opening
for In-Person Learning
2021-2022
St. Anthony Catholic School**



“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).

*-Pope Francis
Strong in the Face of Tribulation:
A Sure Support in Time of Trial*

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They will soar on wings as eagles” Isaiah 40:31

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank you for choosing St. Anthony Catholic School. We welcome you to our family. We are excited to begin a new year!

This document will provide you with our safety protocols for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year. Our outlined procedures are consistent with diocesan policies for a safe re-opening for in-person learning.

Our goal is to provide all students with the opportunity to excel in all areas in the safest learning environment possible.

I look forward to working with you this school year. Let’s make it the best one yet!

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

Peace and blessings,

Mrs. Stapleton, M.Ed.



Return to Learn Plan

Welcome Back!

Let us go back in time when the pandemic first began.... Everything came to a stop. Schools, businesses and places that were considered non-essential were closed, masks were mandatory, furloughs took place, shelter in place was called by all counties in the Valley and our home life changed for all of us.

Our Catholic Schools worked quickly under the leadership of our school principals to begin putting packets together for the students to continue learning and so it happened, the packets were prepared by the teachers and staff, the lines of cars came for students to pick up and drop off and we ended our school year knowing we did the best we could under the circumstances.

The summer was a time to prepare for the new school year (2020-2021) with so many uncertainties and all school personnel worked diligently on preparing for remote learning and hoping that we could open our doors to in person learning, which we did on September 29th. Throughout the year, we faced many challenges, the teachers and administrators were exhausted as we had to greet each student and staff member with a thermometer, collect their questionnaire and pray that the internet would be up and running for the students who remained at home. Our days and weeks were longer to make up for the time loss and to make sure that we completed our instruction days on time.

Now, we are returning 100% for in person instruction for all students. We will have to have in place some protocols for various reasons. Masks, 3 feet social distancing and washing of hands will continue. Signs will still be posted in our schools as a reminder to all staff and students, this virus is not over and we need to be aware at all times.

We will go back to our cafeterias, outings, etc., always keeping in mind our protocols that must be in place. This all depends on what is happening in our community and throughout the world.

Our top priority remains the health and safety of our students, families, teachers, staff, leaders and community. We remained steadfast in our commitment to health and safety

when the pandemic surprised us and our schools had little or no time to prepare for the new school year 2020-2021, but we did and we did it well. Our principals and their teams demonstrated a quick turn to ensure and provide the means and we were successful.

Our IOWA test scores brought us the hope we need to assure all of us that our students did not miss any instruction time and scores were good throughout the Diocese. Our commitment to our mission statements at each of our schools is what we lived during this pandemic day after day as we did our best to meet each student on the educational level as well as the emotional level.

Now our eyes are brighter and our smiles are wider as we begin the new school year with the hope that all of us can come back to a “normal” school day as best we can.

Each school principal will provide for all staff, students and parents a plan that will meet the needs of their school community to assure that safety remains a priority and that each person matters each and every day.

I leave you with this scripture passage from Isaiah (40:21)...***“but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”***

Let us all pray for hope, a gift from God, to help us on our journey in life and to know that we can do all things through God who strengthens us.

Blessings to all for this new school year and May the Lord continue to bless all our school community families with his love and hope as we come together again.

Welcome back, once again,

Sr. Cynthia A. Mello, SSD
Superintendent – Diocese of Brownsville



St. Joseph, pray for us.

Health Safety Protocols for Students and Staff

Traditional School Setting and 100% In-Person Instruction: We are convinced that a Catholic education delivered on campus and in person is best for our families and is the preferred mode of instruction for our teachers and students. As stated, we will be returning to 100% in-person instruction with **NO option** for online learning.

Screening Questions for COVID-19 (Good Faith Form) Before Campus Access

1. Parents will be primary screeners for the school prior to drop off.
2. St. Anthony Catholic School will still only require for parents to fill out the COVID-19 Good Faith form and **this will be for documentation purposes only.**
3. Students will simply turn in the form to teachers or staff members on duty as they exit the vehicle each morning.

Temperatures

- We **WILL NOT** be taking temperatures as students arrive.
- Temperatures will be taken if a student shows signs of illness.
 - Isolation of a student showing a sign of illness will take place immediately and parents will be notified.

Guidelines for Facial Coverings

Government and health authorities, including the Center for Disease Control (CDC), TCCBED, TEPSAC and the Diocese of Brownsville, have advocated the effectiveness of face coverings in minimizing the transmission of the coronavirus. **St. Anthony Catholic School will require, until further notice, the use of facial coverings by all adults and students.**

All students, teachers and staff will continue to wear masks.

- Reasons:
 - Ages 18 months to 11 years will not be vaccinated until there is a vaccine for them.
 - Not everyone has been vaccinated.

Note: There are some common areas and moments where the facial covering may be removed, and it is outlined below.

Facial Covering: Must be worn...

- By all students and staff while in the building.
- Upon entering the building.
- While transitioning in the hallway.
- While doing group work in the classroom.
- While attending general assembly and Wednesday Mass.

Exceptions where **facial covering may be removed:**

- Montessori students while they are napping.
- While at recess or any outdoor activity or event.
- While working independently at desk.

- During PE class.
- While in the cafeteria eating lunch.

Students and parents can choose a face covering that works best for their child(ren). We recommend a clear mask for the younger students in grade PK-2nd. **Facial coverings with ventilators are prohibited.**

Morning Entrance Protocols: Continued Best Practices

Self-screening questionnaires (COVID-19 Good Faith Forms)

- We will continue daily the turning in of self-screen questionnaire.
 - Purpose: For tracking purposes

Morning drop-off

- We will follow the same routine as the past year where students are dropped off in the back of the school each morning.
- Students will turn in COVID-19 Good Faith form upon exiting the vehicle each day.
- **All students** will report to their classrooms.
- We will maintain 3 feet of social distancing
- Students are expected to be on campus daily and follow all guidelines when it comes to daily attendance as outlined in the parent/student handbook.

Afterschool Pick-up

- We will utilize the same practice as last year for afternoon pick-up and same designated location.

Afterschool Pick-up

- We will utilize the same practice as last year for afternoon pick-up and same designated location. **Logistics to follow.**

Visitors

- As per TCCBED and Diocesan policy we will continue with **NO VISITORS**, volunteers or parents at this time.

**Exception: Therapists or specialist contracted with the school to deliver services to students.*

Daily School Operations: Daily Health Checks, Hygiene, Social Distancing and Sanitation Practices

Students Who Are Late

- Students will enter the front of the building and must present the COVID-19 Good Faith form to the front office staff prior to entering the school building.

Recess

- All students and staff will be required to wash their hands and use hand sanitizer before leaving for recess and upon re-entering the building.
- We will utilize both our Montessori playground and large playground on a rotation basis by homeroom/grade level to limit the number of students in a common area at one time.
**Students will be allowed to remove their mask while outside during recess.*

Handwashing and Hand Sanitizer Stations

- We will continue the use of automatic hand sanitizer dispensers.
- Students and staff will still use hand sanitizer upon entering and exiting any common area.
- Portable hand washing stations will also stay in designated places of points of entry.
- To be checked and refilled at noon and after school.

Social Distancing

- Based on preliminary enrollment numbers, we will be able to hold true to our 3ft of space in each classroom to ensure proper distance as recommended by CDC for enclosed spaces. We will cap our classes at 15 students per class.

Cough/Sneeze Guards for Desks

- Cough/Sneeze guards will remain on students' desk in each classroom.
**Sneeze guards will be wiped down and disinfected at the end of each day.*
**Students will be allowed to lower their masks while seated at desk while engaging in independent work.*

Common Spaces

Hallway/Transitions

- Students will be transitioning from class to class and follow a regular daily schedule.
- We will maintain 3ft of social distancing

Physical Education

- We will run a regular PE class.
- Access to hand washing and hand sanitizer will be provided and should be used before and after any PE activity.
- There will be a limit to the number of students allowed in the general locker room/restroom area at one time.
- **Students may remove their facial covering while in PE class.**

Recess

- All students and staff will be required to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before leaving for recess and upon re-entering the building.
- Teachers will monitor students to ensure safety guidelines are followed.
**Students will be allowed to remove their mask while outside during recess.*
- We will utilize both our Montessori and large playground on a rotation basis by homeroom/grade level to limit the number of students in a common area at one time.
- **Students may remove their facial covering while outside.**

Cafeteria/Lunch

- Our cafeteria will be utilized at full capacity beginning this year.
- Washing of hands before and after lunch
- We will again offer a warm meal for all students.
 - *Workers will use gloves and masks at all times.*
- Students are still welcome to bring their own meal from home.
 - *A reminder that outside food or snacks are not allowed to be delivered during the school day.*
- We will maintain 3ft of social distancing while in the cafeteria.
 - All lunches have been scheduled accordingly to accommodate 100% of students conveniently and safely in the cafeteria.

Disinfecting Measures

Classrooms

- Will be cleaned at the end of each day.
**Desks, chairs, door handles, light switches, teacher common area and floors.*

General Used Objects

- Doorknobs, handles, light switches, sinks, restrooms, and hand wash stations will be wiped down on a set schedule.

School Planned Afterschool/Extra-Curricular Events

Gala/Athletics /Awards/Grade Level Programs – *subject to change*

- Will take place with the mandate of masks, social distancing, and proper disinfecting.
 - Capacity of indoor groups will be kept at a minimum and well planned keeping in mind school safety protocols.