

Saint Mary School Reentry Team Update – July 27, 2020

We wanted to share some of the information we have gathered so far that will help us to determine if Saint Mary School is able to meet the requirements as outlined by the DESE to deliver the in-person model of learning. **Please note that this is not the Reopening Plan that we will be submitting to the state.** This is simply an outline of the steps we have already taken and the protocols that will be established that will be critical in the safe and effective reopening of the school building. Plans for all three models of instruction – in-person, hybrid, and fully remote- will be prepared and submitted for approval to the Diocese by August 1st and to the state by August 10th.

If Saint Mary School opens in an in-person or hybrid model, parents will still have the option of choosing a remote model for the delivery of instruction, with the understanding that the remote learning program may not provide as robust offerings as, or replace the full benefits of, learning in person. After we release our finalized plan for September, parents will have one week to communicate their intentions for the fall.

The Reentry Team understands that concrete information is important at a time when there is so much uncertainty. We hope in reading this document it will help to ease the concerns and anxiety of those parents who are unsure about the Fall, particularly if children will spend time within the school building.

The guidance documents from DESE multiply with each passing week. We share in your frustration because we also have more questions than answers at this point. Please remember that the information we are sharing today is fluid and subject to change as we await the final guidance and use the early weeks of August to continually update and adjust our policies and protocols.

PPE Items Ordered to Date

- Disposable masks, gloves, gowns
- Two touchless hand sanitizing stations
- Hand sanitizer
- Infra-red Thermometers
- Two disinfectant foggers/misters
- 5 UV disinfecting wands
- Signage for building (social distancing, hand washing, and mask-wearing reminders, etc)
- Plexiglass for office counter
- Disinfecting wipes
- Disinfecting tech wipes for computers and chrome books
- EPA-approved cleaning products
- Touchless paper towel dispensers for student bathrooms (faucets and soap dispensers are already touchless)

Facility Health and Safety Protocols

- Hand sanitizing stations positioned as you enter the office and cafeteria
- Hand sanitizing pumps positioned at key entrances/exits (classrooms, bathrooms, lunchroom entrance, Media Center, etc)
- Designate Mrs. Lisa Powers, the School Nurse, as the point person to notify if there are any suspected COVID-19 symptoms. Saint Mary School will follow the DESE protocols for responding to COVID-19 scenarios which are linked [here](#).
- Establish Medical Waiting Room for student or staff who experience COVID-19 symptoms
- Display visual cues and posters to communicate safety protocols, especially for younger students
- Increase frequency of cleaning and disinfecting of shared spaces, furniture, and high-touch surfaces using EPA-approved disinfectants
- Set up plexiglass barrier in school office area
- Daily cleaning of desks and electronics
- Open windows as much as possible to increase outdoor air ventilation
- Use water fountains only for refilling water bottles, not drinking
- In addition to the built-in unit ventilators and exhaust system in each classroom, purchase air purifier for each classroom
- Remove hard to clean objects from classrooms: Area rugs, stuffed animals, etc.

Masks

- Masks covering the nose and mouth are mandatory for all staff and students in grades 2 and up.
- Masks or face shields are strongly encouraged for students in Preschool through Grade 1. Students in Preschool through Grade 1 are required to bring a mask to school to use in the event that physical distancing is not possible (entering and leaving a building, traveling through the hallway, etc.).
- Students need to provide their own masks and they should be labeled in some way if they are not easily identified by the child.
- Disposable masks will be available for any child who forgets to bring one to school
- Mask breaks will be given at appropriate intervals throughout the day.
- At times, teachers will conduct their classes outdoors with appropriate social distancing to allow students to remove masks.
- The school is determining the kind of receptacle that will be used for individual mask storage during mask breaks (paper bag, lanyard, plastic container, clip system, etc.) and will provide that storage.
- To increase comfort, uniform policy will be updated to allow for increased student comfort. Further details will be provided in our final school plan.

Tentative Phased Reopening Timeline – Subject to Change (particularly if we reopen to in-person or hybrid learning in the fall):

- The current start date on the school calendar will be adjusted.
- The week of August 31st will be dedicated to staff training in safety protocols, handwashing and sanitization procedures, Covid-19 symptom identification, Google Classroom, improving distance learning, setting up learning spaces.
- The week of September 8th will be Student and Parent Orientation Sessions. Different cohorts of students will attend school on separate days to be trained on new safety/sanitizing protocols, hand hygiene and physical distancing practices, and distance learning platforms. A schedule is being created.
- During the week of September 8th Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten will have a separate phased reopening schedule. One day will be an orientation/informational sessions attended by parents and their children. An additional day will be smaller groups of children coming in for training on new classroom routines. A schedule is being created.
- September 14th will be the first day of school for all students (except for the T/Th Preschool which will start on September 15th).

Classroom Configuration and Class Size

- Measurements have been taken to determine the student capacity of each classroom to determine how many desks can be spaced no closer than 4 feet.
- Desks will all face the same way with a buffer between students and teacher.
- Enrollment is capped in each classroom based on the square footage of the room so that students in all grades will be able to return for in-person instruction. For example, classes such as the science lab (because the tables are not movable) and Grade 1 (because of the reading loft) will have a lower capacity than other classrooms.
- A wait list has been started for each grade level that is considered at capacity and prospective families will be contacted if spots should open up.
- Children will have their own supplies for classroom use and strongly discouraged from sharing items with classmates.
- Items shared for lessons, particularly in the younger grades will be sanitized between uses.
- External facility spaces will be repurposed, if necessary.
- Teachers will be encouraged to take classes outdoors when weather permits.
- We are investigating tents to create temporary outdoor learning, breaks, and lunch spaces.

Creating Cohorts

- For lunch and recess individual grades will be assigned to cohorts that will minimize exposure to larger groups of students.
- Students will have assigned seating in each class and during meals.
- **Pre-Kindergarten:** For the 2020-2021 school year the Full day Pre-K will eat lunch in their classroom and not in the school cafeteria. They will not have the option to utilize the hot lunch program this year.

Revised Schedules and Movement Protocols Within Building

- Schedule will be revised to accommodate increased recesses, lunch periods, and mask breaks.
- Arrival and dismissal movement protocols will avoid crowding and minimize person-to-person contact.
- Middle school students will not change classes and remain in their homerooms for instruction. Teachers and specialists will be the ones to move from room to room.
- Whenever possible, movement in hallways will be scheduled for bathroom use, transitioning to the lunchroom, and traveling in and out of the building.

Lunch

- The number of lunch periods will be increased to reduce capacity of students in the lunchroom.
- Cohorts will be assigned to the same lunch period.
- The lunch periods will be staggered with sufficient time between each period to build in time for sanitizing surfaces before the next cohort arrives.
- There will be assigned seating and six feet of separation between students as masks will need to be removed.
- We are investigating the possibility of plexiglass or vinyl partitions that will allow more children to sit together.
- The distribution of hot lunch meals will be revised.
- Condiments and utensils will be distributed by the lunch aides and teachers on duty and not handled by students.

Recess

- Grades Pre-K-8 will have two scheduled recess periods each day which will provide necessary mask breaks.
- Recess will be considered a mask-free time with social distancing practices in place.
- Cohorts will be assigned to the same recess period and to specific sections of the playground area.
- It is undecided if the playground equipment will be used at this time.
- Alternative plans for indoor recess days are being reviewed.

Technology

- Chrome Books: To limit the sharing of devices, additional chrome books are being ordered to allow each student in Grade 5 through 8 to have their own device during the school day. If funds permit, we will purchase additional ones to extend that range from grades 3 to 8.
- Google Classroom: All students in grades K through 8 will be assigned a Saint Mary School Google account so that the whole school will be on a uniform platform for hybrid or distance learning use.
- Training: Students and parents will be offered Google Classroom training as well as training on other platforms as needed.

School Bus Transportation

- We are awaiting information from the Shrewsbury Public Schools and AA Transportation.

After School Program

- As we further develop our in-person model, our current thinking is that we will open the ASP, but have not yet developed a definitive plan. It will need to operate using the same cohorts we have established during the day.

Visitors and Volunteers

- No outside visitors or volunteers will be allowed unless authorized by the principal and a log will be maintained.
- Parents will be encouraged to communicate with the office via phone or email, rather than in person.