COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan

(Executive Order 2020-142 District Preparedness Plan Template)

School Name: St. Mary's School, Niles PreK – 8th Grade
School Address: 217 S Lincoln Ave., Niles, MI 49120
School Code Number: 03911
Web Address of the School: http://www.stmarysschoolniles.org
Name of Intermediate School District:  
Berrien Regional Educational Service Agency

Name of Authorizing Body (if applicable):  
Office of Catholic Schools; Diocese of Kalamazoo
Preparedness Plan Introduction

Governor Whitmer’s Executive Order 2020-142 “provides a structure to support all schools in Michigan as they plan for a return of pre-K-12 education in the fall. Under the order, school districts must adopt a COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan laying out how they will cope with the disease across the various phases of the Michigan Safe Start Plan. In turn, the accompanying Michigan Return to School Roadmap offers a guide to the types of safety protocols appropriate during each phase. There’s no one-size-fits-all solution: What works in Lansing may not work in Sault Sainte Marie. Districts will retain the flexibility to tailor their instruction to their particular needs and to the disease conditions present in their regions.” (EO-2020-142)
Preparedness Plan Assurances

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Kalamazoo agree to meet all of the following requirements of Executive Order 2020-142

✓ The school assures that when it provides in-person instruction to its students without disabilities, the school will provide in-person instruction to its students with disabilities, consistent with the students’ adjusted education plan (AEP).

✓ The school assures that when the school is closed to in-person instruction, the school will strive in good faith and to the extent practicable, based upon available resources, technology, training, and curriculum, as well as the circumstances presented by COVID-19, to provide equal access to any alternative modes of instruction to enrolled students with disabilities as identified through their AEP.

✓ The school assures that during Phase 1, 2, or 3 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan it will close its building to anyone except: (a) School employees or contractors necessary to conduct minimum basic school operations consistent with a Preparedness Plan, including those employers or contractors necessary to facilitate alternative modes of instruction, such as distributing materials and equipment or performing other necessary in-person functions. (b) Licensed child-care providers and families that they serve (if the school usually provides this service), and if providers follow all emergency protocols identified by the state.

✓ The school assures that during Phase 1, 2, or 3 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan it will suspend athletics, after-school activities, inter-school activities, and busing, if applicable.

✓ The school assures that during Phase 1, 2, or 3 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan it will provide for the continued pay of school employees while redeploying staff to provide meaningful work in the context of the Preparedness Plan, subject to any applicable requirements of a collective bargaining agreement.

✓ The school assures that during Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan it will prohibit indoor assemblies that bring together students from more than one classroom except for planned religious activities, which will be held according to Diocese of Kalamazoo guidelines to the extent they are stricter than state requirements.

✓ The school assures cooperation with the local public health department if a confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified, and agree to collect the contact information for any close contacts of the affected individual from two days before he or she showed symptoms to the time when he or she was last present in school.

Preparedness Plan

Every school within our diocese must develop and adopt a COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan (“Preparedness Plan”) that is informed by Michigan’s 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap (“Return to
School Roadmap") from the COVID-19 Task Force on Education and Return to School Advisory. Due to the nine county expanse of our diocese, each school has been tasked to prepare a plan that meets the needs and recommendations of their local communities in conjunction with the recommendations and guidance from local health officials and in accordance to the governor’s orders.

In accordance with Executive Order 2020-142 a plan must include all the following parts:

A. The policies and procedures that the school will follow when the region in which the district is located is in **Phase 1, 2, or 3** of the Michigan Safe Start Plan.
   1. Describe how the school will offer alternative modes of instruction other than in-person instruction and a summary of materials each student and the student’s parents or guardians will need to meaningfully access the alternative modes of instruction included in the Preparedness Plan. If the Preparedness Plan relies on electronic instruction, the Preparedness Plan must consider how the school will aid students who lack access to computers or to the internet.

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St. Mary’s School, Niles will provide its students with various opportunities for traditional (paper and pencil) and online learning.

Teachers can/will scan and email assignments for parents to download, students complete, and then the completed assignments can be scanned and sent via email, uploaded to the school’s DropBox account, turned into the dropbox located outside of the school building, or a photo can be taken of the completed assignment and be sent to the teacher via their personal Google phone number.

The administrator is looking into renting video equipment to record teachers teaching the day’s lessons. The recordings will then be available to families on the school’s private Facebook page, via email, or on the school’s private YouTube channel.

--If video equipment is not available for rental, the administrator and staff will work together to record lessons via cell phones and then upload the content to the above sources.

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B. When the region in which the school is located is in **Phase 4** of the Michigan Safe Start Plan the following policies and procedures must, at a minimum, include:
   1. **Personal Protective Equipment**
      a. All staff will wear facial coverings when in classrooms, except (1) during meals and (2) unless face coverings cannot be medically tolerated as documented through written and signed verification by a physician.
      b. All passengers and drivers will wear facial coverings when on a school bus, except (1) during meals and (2) unless face coverings cannot be medically tolerated as documented through written and signed verification by a physician.
      c. All staff and all students in grades pre-kindergarten and up will wear facial coverings when in indoor hallways and common areas, except (1) during meals and (2) unless face coverings cannot be medically tolerated as documented through written and signed verification by a physician.
      d. Facial coverings are not required in preschool classrooms.
      e. All students in grades kindergarten through 5 will not be required to wear facial coverings in their classrooms, unless (1) students do not remain with their cohort class throughout the school day or (2) come into close contact with students in another class or (3) a grade 5 and 6 are housed in the same classroom in the school.
      f. All staff and students in grades 6-12 will wear facial coverings, except (1) during meals and (2) unless face coverings cannot be medically tolerated as documented through written and signed verification by a physician.
      g. The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Kalamazoo will not conduct indoor assemblies that bring together students from more than one classroom.
         i. School Masses and other liturgical services will be allowed provided that all Diocese of Kalamazoo Mass guidelines are followed.
h. Facial coverings may be homemade or disposable level one/basic-grade surgical masks, and/or face shields.

Please describe how you will implement the above requirements as outlined in the Return to School Roadmap.

Face covering policies will be added to both the Family and Staff Handbooks with a signature page to ensure the policies have been read and that there is an agreement to follow said policies.

Students will stay with his/her cohorts during the day. There will be no exchanging classes or mixing with other classes.

Students will wear masks during Specials. Music will be more about foundations and fundamentals rather than singing. Each class will attend Specials individually. The classroom will be sanitized between each class unless the Specials teacher’s come directly to the students’ classroom.

Weekly Mass will be attended following the guidelines set forth by the Diocese of Kalamazoo.

2. Hygiene
   a. Provide adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors (including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol for safe use by staff and students, paper towels, tissues, and signage reinforcing proper handwashing techniques).
   b. Teach and reinforce handwashing guidelines, including the use of soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or the safe use of hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
   c. Educate staff and students on how to cough and sneeze into their elbows, or to cover with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands cleaned immediately using proper hygiene techniques.
   d. Systematically and frequently check and refill soap and hand sanitizers.
   e. Daily, provide opportunities for handwashing with soap and water by students and teachers.
   f. Limit sharing of personal items and supplies such as writing utensils.

Please describe how you will implement the above requirements as outlined in the Return to School Roadmap.

Students, faculty, and staff will use hand sanitizer upon entering the building.

Each classroom will have a small table outside each doorway that contains hand sanitizer. Teacher and students will sanitize each time he/she enters the classroom.

There is a sink available in each classroom. There will be antibacterial soap and paper towel provided. Teacher will demonstrate proper handwashing procedures when reviewing the rules and procedures of the classroom. This will be reviewed for the first few weeks at least. Posters will also be posted by each sink reminding students of proper handwashing procedures. Hand sanitizer will also be available.

Each student is required to have his/her own pencil box/pouch that contains crayons, markers or colored pencils, a glue stick, scissors, and many pencils. These materials will be used by the individual student only. There are no longer communal supplies in the classroom. If a student can not afford materials, the office will supply the student with any available materials.

3. Space Movement and Access
   a. Space students as far apart as feasibly possible in classrooms, whether desks or tables are utilized.
b. Post signage to indicate proper social distancing.
c. Place markers at six-foot intervals where line formation is anticipated.
d. Provide social distancing markers in waiting and reception areas.
e. Post signs on the doors of restrooms to indicate proper social distancing and hand hygiene techniques.

Please describe how you will implement the above requirements as outlined in the Return to School Roadmap.

Student desks will be spaced 6ft apart within the classroom. The floor will be marked with tape to ensure students keep his/her desk within the set parameters.

Unnecessary movement within the classroom will be discouraged. Students must raise his/her hand and obtain permission before getting up from his/her desk.

Signs demonstrating proper social distancing will be displayed in classrooms, common areas, and the bathrooms.

In the bathrooms, every other sink will be used. “Closed” sinks will be marked or taped off. The same will be true with urinals and stalls.

There will also be proper handwashing procedures posted by each “open” sink.

4. Screening Students and Staff
   a. Cooperate with the local public health department regarding implementing protocols for screening students and staff.
   b. Identify and designate a quarantine area and a staff person to care for students and staff who develop signs or symptoms of COVID-19 at school.
   c. Students and staff who become ill with signs or symptoms of COVID-19 will be placed in an identified quarantine area with a facial covering in place, if able, until they can be picked up. An identified person caring for these children/staff will wear a facial covering.

Please describe how you will implement the above requirements as outlined in the Return to School Roadmap.

The administrator has been in contact with the Berrien County Health Department (BCHD) at least weekly. The BCHD will be providing families of Berrien County with COVID-19 screening protocols. Parents/guardians will be asked to make sure his/her child does not exhibit any of the symptoms listed in the screening protocols before sending their children to school.

Faculty, staff, and students will have his/her temperature taken prior to entering the school building. Anyone with a temperature of 99.6°F will not be allowed to enter the building. There will be 3 separate entrances monitoring temperatures to promote social distancing. Parents/Guardians will be notified of this policy. Temperatures will be recorded privately within our attendance system as to not violate HIPPA. Temperatures will be taken again before lunch. This will ensure faculty, staff, and students are still fever free, especially any student who may have been given fever reducing medicine prior to coming to school.

Any person who develops a fever or begins to display symptoms of COVID-19 based on the screen protocols provided by the BCHD, will be quarantined in the principal’s office until he/she is able to be picked up. Any student who is sent home must remain home for 24 hours and have been cleared by a physician.
Any faculty and/or staff member who is displaying symptoms of COVID-19, will be asked to go home and remain home until cleared by a physician and/or has a "negative" COVID-19 test.

5. Testing Protocols and Responding to Positive Tests Among Staff and Students
   a. Cooperate with the local public health department regarding implementing protocols for screening students and staff.
   b. Cooperate with the local public health department if a confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified, and in particular, collect the contact information for any close contacts of the affected individual from two days before he or she showed symptoms to the time when he or she was last present at the school. The Local Health Department will initiate contact tracing, following regular public health practice.
   c. Notify local health officials, staff, and students immediately of any possible case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws.

Please describe how you will implement the above requirements as outlined in the Return to School Roadmap.

Symptoms and screening flow charts provided by the BCHD will be displayed in the main office, hallways, and will be provided to teachers.

Any “positive” cases of COVID-19 will be reported to the BCHD, the Diocese of Kalamazoo, and a private record will be kept in the school office. Those students who were in the diagnosed student’s cohort will be monitored closely. The school will follow recommendations from the BCHD has how to proceed further.
Faculty/Staff, students, and parents/guardians will be notified if the school has any possible/positive cases of COVID-19 in a confidential manner.

6. Food Service, Gathering, and Extracurricular Activities
   a. Prohibit indoor assemblies that bring together students from more than one classroom.
      i. School Masses and other liturgical services will be allowed provided that all Diocese of Kalamazoo Mass guidelines are followed.

Please describe how you will implement the above requirements as outlined in the Return to School Roadmap.

St. Mary’s School, Niles does not offer a food service. Each student is required to provide a sack lunch.

All assemblies are hereby cancelled. If important information needs to be presented to the students, either the classroom teacher or the principal will relay the information to the class. No classes will be intermingled.

School Masses will occur weekly unless otherwise noted. Faculty/Staff, students, parents, and parishioners will follow Mass guidelines set forth by the Diocese of Kalamazoo.

7. Athletics
   a. Schools will comply with all guidance published by Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).
b. Students, teachers, and staff must use proper hand hygiene techniques before and after every practice, event, or other gathering.

c. Every participant should confirm that they are healthy and without any symptoms prior to any event. If athletic activities or events are held on non-school days, a Monitoring Form needs to be completed by all participants (this includes all adult volunteers, coaches and administrators).

d. All equipment must be disinfected before and after use.

e. Each participant must use a clearly marked water bottle for individual use. There should be no sharing of this equipment.

f. Handshakes, fist bumps, and other unnecessary contact must not occur.

g. Indoor weight rooms and physical conditioning activities that require shared equipment are suspended. Outdoor physical conditioning activities are allowed while maintaining social distancing.

h. Large scale indoor spectator events are suspended. Large scale outdoor spectator or stadium events are limited to 100 people, and people not part of the same household must maintain six feet of distance from one another.

i. Spectators are allowed provided that facial coverings are used by observers and six feet of social distancing can be maintained at all times. Attention must be given to entry and exit points to prevent crowding.

j. Prohibit indoor assemblies that bring together students from more than one classroom.

Please describe how you will implement the above requirements as outlined in the Return to School Roadmap.

8. Cleaning

a. Frequently touched surfaces including light switches, doors, benches, bathrooms, will undergo cleaning at least every four hours with either an EPA-approved disinfector or diluted bleach solution.

b. Libraries, computer labs, arts, and other hands-on classrooms will undergo cleaning after every class period or when cohorts change classrooms, with either an EPA-approved disinfector or diluted bleach solution.

c. Student desks will be wiped down with either an EPA-approved disinfector or diluted bleach solution after every class period, or when cohorts change classrooms.

d. Playground structures will continue to undergo normal routine cleaning, but using an EPA-approved disinfector is unnecessary.

e. Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including storing products securely away from children, and with adequate ventilation when staff use products.

f. Staff must wear gloves, surgical masks, and face shields when performing all cleaning activities.

Please describe how you will implement the above requirements as outlined in the Return to School Roadmap.

The main office, principal’s office, and classrooms will have a list of “High-Touch” surfaces posted. These items will be sanitized by and EPA approved cleaner at least 4 times per day.

If utilized, the Specials classroom will be cleaned and sanitized between each class. Otherwise, the Specials teacher will travel to each classroom to deliver instruction.
The playground equipment will be cleaned and sanitized twice a day with an EPA approved cleaner. Any faculty/staff who is taking part in the cleaning and sanitizing will be provided with gloves, masks, and face shields. Gowns will be available upon request.

9. Busing and Student Transportation (Including Extra-Curricular Activities and Athletics)

Schools that utilize public school district busing will defer all transportation safety guidelines to those providers. The following is intended for schools who are the district provider of busing services. If you utilize public school busing please indicate which public school district(s) safety guidelines are being followed.

a. Schools will require the use of hand sanitizer before entering a school bus. Hand sanitizer will be supplied on the bus.

b. The bus driver, staff, and all students in grades preK-12, if medically feasible, will wear facial coverings while on the bus. Note: there may be situations where it is not safe for the bus driver to wear a facial covering. Decisions about these situations should be made on a case-by-case basis with local public health officials.

c. Schools will clean and disinfect transportation vehicles before and after every transit route. Children will not be present when a vehicle is being cleaned.

d. Schools will clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in the vehicle (e.g., surfaces in the driver’s cockpit, hard seats, arm rests, door handles, seat belt buckles, light and air controls, doors and windows, and grab handles) prior to morning routes and prior to afternoon routes.

e. Schools will clean, sanitize, and disinfect equipment including items such as car seats, wheelchairs, walkers, and adaptive equipment being transported to schools daily.

f. Schools will create a plan for getting students home safely if they are not allowed to board the vehicle.

g. If a student becomes sick during the day, they will not use group transportation to return home and must follow protocols outlined above. If a driver becomes sick during the day, they will follow protocols for sick staff outlined above and will not return to drive students.

h. Weather permitting, doors and windows will be open when cleaning the vehicle and between trips to let the vehicles thoroughly air out.

Please describe how you will implement the above requirements for busing and student transportation protocols from the Return to School Roadmap. For schools who utilize public school district busing, please indicate which public school district safety guidelines are being followed.

St. Mary’s School, Niles does not use buses. Students arrive to school via parent/guardian.

10. Mental and Social-Emotional Health

Please describe your school’s plans for addressing the mental and social-emotional health needs of students, staff, teachers, administrators, and school families.

Teachers will provide a positive learning environment. They will build upon the relationships with their students. The teacher of St. Mary’s School, Niles do a wonderful job of greeting each child with a smile
and eye contact as they enter the classroom. Teachers will be cognizant of student feelings and emotions and will provide strategies for dealing with said emotions.

The administrator will check in with faculty/staff individually some time during the school day. She will also send a group email/text of encouragement at least once a week and will encourage faculty/staff to reach out when struggling.

There will also be an open line of communication between the teachers, administrator, and families.

C. The Diocese of Kalamazoo has included most “strongly recommended protocols” under Phase 4 as required. Please indicate if there are any additional protocols that will be adopted under Phase 4.

At this time, parents/guardians will not be allowed in the building unless it is an emergency or picking up a sick child. Also, volunteers will not be allowed in the building. We are hoping to lift this restriction by October 1, 2020.

D. As the State transitions to Phase 5, indicate which highly recommended protocols under the following areas from the Return to School Roadmap the district will include in its Preparedness Plan.

Type school response here:

- Personal Protective Equipment – Masks will be required in common areas and in the classroom where social distancing is not available.

- Hygiene – All faculty/staff and students will be required to use hand sanitizer upon entering the building and when entering his/her classroom. Proper handwashing procedures will be reviewed with students. Soap and hand sanitizer will be available in the classroom. Everyone is encouraged to cough/sneeze in “his/her corner” (elbow).

- Cleaning – High-touch surfaces will still be cleaned at least 4xs a day. The playground equipment will be cleaned at least once a day.

- Food Service, Gathering & Extra-curriculars – Field trips may be in consideration. It will depend on the location and practicality. Mass will still be weekly following social distancing guidelines.

- Athletics – N/A

- Screening – Temperatures will continue to be taken and recorded for all faculty/staff and students prior to entering the building with a follow-up screening before lunch. Limited number of volunteers will be allowed in the building provided they are fever and COVID-19 symptom free. Administrator will remain in contact with BCHD regarding screening protocols and reporting possible/positive COVID-19 cases.

- Testing – Any faculty/staff and/or student displaying symptoms of COVID-19 will be asked to leave the building and may not return until a “negative” test is provided or cleared by a physician.

- Busing and Student Transportation – N/A
Final Steps for Submission

Each school shall complete and submit this “Preparedness Plan” to the Diocese of Kalamazoo’s Office of Schools for approval by Friday, August 7 at 12:00 noon. The Office of Schools will provide a final review before submitting each school’s plan to the State.

Name of School(s): St. Mary’s School, Niles

Name of Administrator Submitting Plan: Leslie A Conyers

Date of Approval by the Diocese of Kalamazoo’s Office of Schools: Aug. 12, 2020

Signature of Superintendent: [Signature]

Each school’s approved plan will be posted collectively on the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Kalamazoo’s website: Catholicschools.diokzoo.org/covid-19 In addition, each school will post its individual plan on their local school website.

Date Submitted to State Superintendent and State Treasurer: