

Saint Francis de Sales School  
Guidance and Procedures for Re-Opening  
2020—2021



**Introduction**

This document will provide information regarding the plan to return to Brick-and-Mortar learning for the 2020—2021 school year. Before we can discuss the specific aspects of the plan, let us start with an introduction to several of the key foundational premises upon which this plan is built. 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**

Saint Francis de Sales School is inherently a partnership between the parent and the school. This has never been more important than at this time when an even greater partnership is 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 our children’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, headaches, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea—must remain at 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. In 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 Saint Francis de Sales School

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 within 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**

In compliance with the latest guidelines, masks (face coverings) will be worn by the students throughout the day. There will be “mask breaks” when the students are at their own desks during class

### **Enhanced Cleaning**

The school will increase the cleaning of common areas and highly used features such as doorknobs, handrails, and counters. Children are encouraged to bring their own labeled 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. Additionally, the school will implement random temperature monitoring.

### **Virtual Learning**

This year we will be offering two basic learning programs. The first is virtual and the second is in-person learning. Both programs will be from Monday to Friday. Parents will select which one they feel will benefit their children. The virtual learning platform will consist of *Samba Live* and *Google Classroom*. The administration has set aside days for faculty and staff in-service in both platforms. *Samba Live* will be the program that will be used to communicate with parents. The teachers will conduct Back-to-School Nights using *Samba Live*.

- If a student is sick, or a parent suspects the student may be sick, or if a family is quarantined, Saint Francis de Sales School will provide an option where the student can join the class via *Samba Live*. If a student is absent due to illness for four days or if a student’s health or the health of a family member is compromised by a pre-existing

condition, Saint Francis de Sales School will provide class via *Samba Live*. The major subjects will be available through this method. Materials will be exchanged through *Google Classroom*.

- In the case where COVID-19 has been identified within a cohort, the entire cohort will isolate in their homes and utilize distance learning for the isolation period. Lessons will be delivered through *Samba Live* and *Google Classroom*.

## **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 Saint Francis de Sales School**

### **Introduction**

Several key practices will 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. All visitors will remain at the front entrance. At this time, we will not be asking for volunteers to assist in school.
2. High touch surfaces will be cleaned frequently, such as doorknobs, remotes, and light switches.
3. Signage will be in each classroom and throughout the building reminding students to practice good hygiene.
4. Hand sanitizer will be available in the hallways near entrances and other strategic areas. It will also be available in the classrooms.
5. Within each class, the students will pray to be aware of and care for one another by using best practices.
6. Each student is encouraged to provide their own supplies to reduce the need to share supplies.
7. Sharing of food will be prohibited.
8. All areas will maintain the circulation of fresh air by proper ventilation.
9. Field trips will be eliminated at this time.

## 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**

Saint Francis de Sales School has a two-fold charge: Providing an education that is academically excellent and 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. Maintain a level of intentionality across all grade levels and all subject matter that course content is intentionally Catholic.
2. Provide opportunities for daily prayer in a community
3. Pray daily “The Prayer of Pope Francis during the Coronavirus.”
4. Support and make modifications to other faith-based activities that are important in the life of the school (i.e. retreats, prayer services).
5. Begin all synchronous video sessions with prayer, including soliciting prayer intentions from students.
6. Support the faith life of faculty and staff through community prayer and scripture study.
7. Connect the current events with a Catholic perspective (using the tenets of Catholic Social Teaching, the Virtues, etc.) as a framework to support age-appropriate understanding.
8. Create approaches to minister to the poor families who experience food insecurity, financial issues, and other crises.
9. Find opportunities in the current situation that would lend themselves to a community response (acknowledgements and prayers for police and first responders, holding food drives, etc.).
10. Maintain Catholic Identity in the school environment:
  - a. Make sure that every classroom has a prayer corner, crucifix, statues, and bulletin boards reflecting faith values.
  - b. Laminate “The Prayer of Pope Francis during the Coronavirus” and put it in a prominent place in the school and classroom.

### **The Prayer of Pope Francis during the Coronavirus**

Lord, may you bless the world, give health to our bodies and comfort to 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.

## **Daily Monitoring of Health**

### **Introduction**

The guidance provided by the State of Pennsylvania suggests that each school monitor health daily.

### **Philosophy**

Health monitoring will 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. Staff will be stationed at each entrance to facilitate temperature checks. A student arriving by car who is displaying symptoms of illness or who has a temperature of 100.4 or higher will not be admitted to school. A student arriving by bus will be screened as they exit the bus. A student who is displaying symptoms of illness or who has a temperature of 100.4 will be sent to the St. Raphael Room, and a parent will be contacted to pick up the child from school.
2. Saint Francis de Sales School has developed a system to engage parents in monitoring daily the identified possible symptoms of COVID-19 listed below. As we learn about the disease, we may need to alter the list by adding or subtracting symptoms--fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, earache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.
3. In the classroom, teachers will conduct a daily scan of the students to monitor if there are any concerns related to health. This could be an overt process, where the teacher asks the children if they are experiencing any of the symptoms when grade/age-appropriate. The teacher could make a deliberate effort to monitor health without running through the list of symptoms and then refer children with concerns to the nurse for further monitoring.
4. Saint Francis de Sales School will also monitor the health of staff and students by tracking students' and staff's absenteeism.

## **Entering the Building**

### **Introduction**

Entering the building every morning is the activity which unofficially begins the day. Saint Francis de Sales School is committed to ensuring this 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 the transmission of any virus is to help keep it from the building. During the entry into the building, social distancing and hand sanitization will be implemented. The use of hand sanitization 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** (See Protocol)

1. Each entrance to the school will be monitored by staff to help ensure students maintain social distancing. Three students will enter the auditorium at a time.
2. The use of a mask is mandatory as students ride the bus, enter the building, or travel to the classroom.
3. Upon entering the building, students will go to the temperature check station. If a student's temperature is over 100.4, the student will move to the St. Raphael Room where his/her parents/guardians will be called and the student will wait for them to arrive.
4. If a student does not have a temperature, the student will move to the sanitizing station.
5. If a student wishes to receive breakfast, he/she will proceed to the third station to pick up a breakfast box and then proceed to his/her classroom.
6. If a student does not wish breakfast, he/she will proceed to his/her classroom.
7. A designated storage location will be provided for each student's belongings.
8. Students will wear masks throughout the day. Whenever the mask is removed (i.e. lunch), it should be stored in a storage bag.

## **Recess**

### **Introduction**

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, the following procedures will be put in place to ensure our students have a safe recess.

### **Philosophy**

To the best extent possible, during recess, all students will continue applying social distancing and the safe use of equipment through sanitization. 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 observed between people interacting with each other. Games that utilize physical and social activities yet limit physical contact will be played.

### **Process**

1. Students will go to recess using the procedures established in school operations regarding movement within the building.
2. Students will need to wear masks while at recess with their cohort.
3. Students will play at a designated area with their cohort.
4. Students will wash/sanitize their hands before and after 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.

## **Lunch**

### **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.

### **Philosophy**

Foundational premises 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.

### **Process**

1. Students will wash their hands before lunch.
2. Students will eat lunch in the classroom with their cohort.
3. The desks will be sanitized before and after lunch.
4. There will not be any shared meals.
5. Students will wash hands or use hand sanitizer after lunch.

## **Traveling Within the Building**

### **Introduction**

Movement about the building is essential and cannot be eliminated. Saint Francis de Sales School has devised a plan to allow for travel throughout the building while keeping the students and staff safe.

### **Philosophy**

The wearing of masks, social distancing, proper hygiene, and cohorting will all be used to keep students as safe as possible.

### **Process**

1. All students and staff will be required to wear masks whenever they are traveling around the building.

2. Increased cleaning of all commonly touched items will be implemented throughout the day.
3. Classroom doors will be kept open whenever possible during the day to avoid unnecessary touching by students.
4. Social distancing will be practiced at all times.

### **St. Raphael Room**

#### **Introduction**

The St. Raphael Room will be the location where a student who is experiencing discomfort or potential symptoms of COVID-19 can be isolated from others.

#### **Philosophy**

The concept is to provide a safe supervised staging area where students can wait until they can be picked up from school.

#### **Process**

1. Masks will be provided to all who enter the room.
2. The area will be sanitized after each use.
3. Disposable gloves will be available.
4. Necessary supplies will be available in the room. These supplies will include the following: disposable paper towels, tissues, waste container with a plastic liner, alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol, and hard-surface disinfectant.

### **Classroom Set-Up**

#### **Introduction**

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. The organization of the classroom is important in supporting the academic progress of students. 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**

We will be maintaining the concepts of cohorts and using social distancing guidelines at all times. We will be removing any non-essential furniture, materials or equipment that is not immediately needed for instructional purposes.

#### **Process**

1. All student desks and/or tables will face in the same direction.
2. Desks will be appropriately distanced..



3. Rugs will not be permitted.
4. All class sizes are in accord with the state requirement and will not exceed 18 students in any room (the state requires <25 students in a room at one time).
5. All teachers and staff members will wear face shields or masks throughout the day.
6. Teachers will establish one-way traffic within the classroom so that students do not return from the board to their seats facing other students, but will loop around the area to approach from the back of others.
7. Wearing masks is required of the students. Students will be able to have “mask breaks” throughout the day when they may be working independently in their own space

## Classroom Materials

### **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 subject areas.

### **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. Classrooms should eliminate, when possible, the use of shared materials.
2. Classrooms should set up areas where students can store personal items that keeps them isolated from use by others.
3. When materials must be shared, cleaning in between use is essential.
4. Procedures to wipe down supplies before and after every use will be established.
5. Children will be reminded to wash their hands after using a shared item.
6. If students travel to a room, an area and place should be established for the traveling students to store items away from being used by others.
7. Computer keyboards, robots, shared Science equipment, etc. will be cleaned by the faculty and staff between classes.

## Physical Education

### **Introduction**

These guidelines are written to keep the integrity of quality Physical Education programs while navigating through a “new normal.” The athletic director and administration will work together to follow CDC protocols.

## **Philosophy**

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

## **Process**

1. Weather permitting, PE class will be held in outside space. Weather non-permitting, PE in the gymnasium is preferred, with PE class in the classroom, if needed.
2. Hand washing before and after activity will occur.
3. It is preferred that students carry personal water bottles for hydration before, during, and after activity.
4. PE teacher will be trained thoroughly in sanitizing protocols.
5. Class equipment will be sanitized frequently (arrange class times to allow for a buffer between classes to allow the teacher to facilitate moving, washing, and sanitizing).
6. When equipment sanitizing is not feasible, used equipment will be quarantined for 3 days or more before being used again.
7. PE teacher will limit shared items or keep the same groupings throughout lessons.
8. PE teacher will track the use of equipment so there is a break between uses to prevent the spread of bacteria.
9. Resources will be designated to each class that only they use.
10. PE teacher will emphasize teaching personal health and safety and being responsible for equipment use.
11. PE teachers will emphasize teaching personal skill development and personal fitness concepts to promote physical distancing.
12. Whenever possible, PE teacher will use social distancing activities.

## **Virtual Learning** **Cohort Instruction**

## **Introduction**

While we realize that in-person instruction has a 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 (including individual or small group situations), 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, 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 through online instruction and interaction through various devices synchronous and asynchronous methods. Virtual learning can take place in situations where students are unable to be physically present in the school building.

### **Process**

1. Teachers will provide the use of *Samba Live* and *Google Classroom* to centralize materials, lessons, instruction, assessments, feedback, and communications.
2. Direct instruction will take place as teachers:
  - Provide a continued focus on our Catholic Identity throughout instruction in all content areas.
  - Provide live-stream direct instruction by the teacher.
  - Provide materials that are age- and grade-appropriate.
  - Use textbook online components with timely follow-up.
3. Teachers will use assessments with timely feedback.
4. The goal of virtual instruction is mastery of the curriculum for the year.
5. Teachers will use small group and large group instruction to meet needs of students.
6. Teachers will communicate regularly with parents/guardians.
7. Teachers will encourage age-appropriate physical movement to avoid sitting too long.

## **Virtual Learning** **For Individual Instruction**

### **Introduction**

While we realize that in-person instruction has a 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 student’s health issue or health issue of a family member is compromised by a pre-existing condition or the child must do a limited time of quarantine or a student has been absent for four days.

### **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. Teachers will provide the use of a *Samba Live* and *Google Classroom* to centralize materials, lessons, instruction, assessments, feedback and communications.
2. Teachers will provide a direct video connection to the classroom during the period the child is unable to attend class.
  - Students can receive direct instruction from the teacher.
  - Students can use textbook and online components with timely follow-up.
3. Teachers will use assessments with timely feedback.
4. The goal of virtual learning is mastery of curriculum so the child stays current and can return prepared to rejoin the class.
5. Teachers will communicate regularly with parents/guardians.
6. Virtual learning will remain focused on the Standards for Ministerial Behavior.

### **Guidance for Dealing with COVID Cases**

Saint Francis de Sales School will make an effort to monitor the health of the students and staff, although it is not required or suggested by the CDC. If Saint Francis de Sales has a case or cases of COVID-19, local health officials will help identify those individuals and follow up on next steps. Contact will be made with the Philadelphia Health Department.

Below is some specific guidance related to situations involving the school, community and COVID-19.

If a staff member or volunteer has a confirmed case of COVID-19, the school will:

1. Notify the Philadelphia Health Department officials and ask for guidance.
2. Dismiss the staff or volunteer for 2 to 5 days until health officials can determine the next step.
3. Consider dismissal of cohort, related to the suspected case of COVID-19, according to the guidance of health officials.
4. Discourage the cohort from gathering during the initial period.
5. Communicate to staff and families that there was a confirmed case without using a name or identifying information of the person(s) involved.
6. Close off the potentially infected area and clean the areas that may have been infected by the identified case of COVID-19.
7. During the initial 2 to 5-day period, evaluate if any other cases related to the case were identified and decide to extend or end the cohort dismissal.
8. The staff/volunteer can return after the following conditions have been met:
  - 3 days with no fever and
  - Symptoms improved and
  - 10 days since symptoms first appeared.

If a student has a confirmed case of COVID-19

1. Notify the Philadelphia Health Department officials to ask for guidance.
2. Dismiss the student for 2 to 5 days until health officials can determine next steps.
3. The individual should be comforted in the St. Raphael Room until a parent or guardian can come and take them home.
4. Consider a dismissal of a cohort related to the suspected case of COVID-19 using health official guidance for this.
5. Discourage the cohort from gathering during the initial period and while the situation is being evaluated.
6. Communicate to staff and families that there was a confirmed case. Name or identifying information of the student with COVID-19 is not permitted.
7. Close off and clean areas related to the identified case of COVID-19.
8. During the initial 2 to 5 day period, evaluate if any other cases related to the case were identified and decide to extend or end the cohort dismissal.
9. The student can return after the following conditions have been met:
  - 3 days with no fever and
  - Symptoms improved and
  - 10 days since symptoms first appeared

If a student or staff has a suspected case of COVID-19 or is demonstrating symptoms.

1. Immediately separate staff and children with COVID-19 symptoms (such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath) at school. The individual should be comforted in the St. Raphael Room until a parent or guardian can come and take them home. Individuals who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility depending on how severe their symptoms are. CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others who are sick should be followed.
2. Provide an isolation room.
3. Call for home transportation, if necessary.
4. Can return when:
  - 3 days with no fever and
  - Symptoms improved and
  - 10 days since symptoms first appeared or, if cleared by a medical professional.
5. If case is confirmed, please see aforementioned section (Confirmed case of COVID-19)

### Exclusion From and Return to School Requirements

Scenerio	Exclude From School	Return to School
#1 – No Symptoms	No	Not applicable
#2 – COVID-19 Symptoms	Yes	Individual should be tested for COVID-19. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If test result is <u>negative</u> return to school 3 days after symptoms are no longer present.</li> <li>• If test result is <u>positive</u>, follow return to school guidance for scenario #3.</li> </ul>
#3 – Positive COVID-19 PCR Test <u>with</u> Symptoms	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 days with no fever <b>and</b></li> <li>• Improvement in symptoms <b>and</b></li> <li>• 10 days since symptoms first appeared</li> </ul>
#4 – Positive COVID-19 PCR Test <u>without</u> Symptoms	Yes	10 days after the PCR test was collected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If symptoms develop during 10 days, follow return to school guidance for scenario #3</li> </ul>
#5 -- Close Contact of COVID-19 <u>with</u> Symptoms	Yes	Individual should be tested for COVID-19. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If test result is <u>negative</u>, return to school 14 days after last exposure to the person with COVID-19 and symptoms have resolved.</li> <li>• If test result is <u>positive</u>, follow return to school guidance for scenario #3.</li> </ul>
#6 – Close Contact of COVID-19 <u>without</u> symptoms	<b>Yes</b>	14 days after the date of last exposure to the person with COVID-19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If symptoms develop during 14 days, follow return to school guidance for scenario #5.</li> </ul>

**Notifications:**

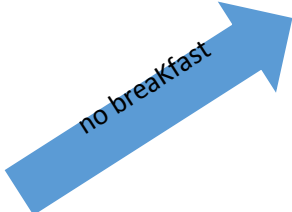
- Staff and students should notify the school if an absence is due to COVID-19.

- Schools should notify the Philadelphia Health Department of any confirmed case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality.
- The Philadelphia Health Department will conduct an investigation and contact tracing and provide appropriate guidance.
- The Philadelphia Health Department will notify the school/coach if staff or students test positive, are exposed, or become ill and must self-isolate.
- The Philadelphia Health Department will NOT notify the general community if staff or student tests positive, are exposed, or become ill and must self-isolate.

St Raphael Room

Entering School Protocols

Blue dividers  
temperatures  
over 100.4  
Parents  
called



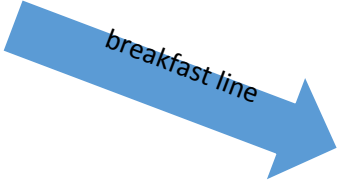
Proceed  
to  
class

Temperature check  
First station

1 Sanitizing Station  
Second Station  
2 sanitizing station

Third Station  
Breakfast  
pick up

Entrance  
door  
enter  
three at a  
time  
xxx



social  
distancing  
for breakfast