



BISHOP BARAGA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

July 23, 2020

Dear Bishop Baraga Families,

I hope that you are having a grace-filled summer and enjoying the sunshine. The Advisory Council, office staff, and I have been busy planning for the fall in order to prepare to welcome back our students and staff.

As you already know, Governor Whitmer released the State of Michigan's Return to School Roadmap which included mandates for the "return to school" plans for all Michigan schools, public and private. We are required to develop 3 plans for three different scenarios. Those plans will depend on the phase (1-3, 4, or 5) of the Michigan Stay Safe Plan by region. Our school is located in **Region 8 – Upper Peninsula - which is currently in Phase 5**. According to the Governor's executive order, when our region is in **Phases 1-3**, all schools must be closed and distance learning provided. When we are in **Phase 4 and Phase 5**, schools may open, but they must follow certain requirements and recommendations. Phase 4 has more stringent requirements than phase 5.

Phase 5 includes the following:

1. Face coverings are recommended but not required for students and staff in grades K-8 while in the classroom.
2. All students and staff are required to wear face coverings when in indoor hallways and common areas except during meals and unless face coverings cannot be medically tolerated.
3. We will not conduct indoor assemblies that will bring together students from more than one classroom.
4. School Masses will be allowed provided that all Diocese of Marquette guidelines are followed. (Classes in K – 8 will attend Mass once a week - Monday or Wednesday. Social distancing and face masks will be required per diocesan policy.)
5. Students who use public school busing will defer all safety guidelines to those providers.
6. We are incorporating the Return to School Roadmap's required protocols governing hygiene, cleaning, screening, and testing protocols. View the complete Michigan Executive Order containing the Return to School Roadmap here - https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/0,9309,7-387-90499_90705-533311--,00.html

So, what does this mean for Bishop Baraga Catholic School? We are currently working through the 63-page document to develop our three plans. Once these plans are developed and approved by the state, they will be shared with you and posted on SchoolSpeak.

Realizing that the status of our region's phase may fluctuate back and forth, we are preparing to be able to pivot to remote learning very quickly. Each student in grades kindergarten through eighth grade will start the year with their own chromebook. We are also developing contingency plans for students or teachers who may have to quarantine.

As we are developing our in-person plans, we have put certain safety precautions into place which will include the following:

1. Temperature and health checks of staff and students
2. Increased hand washing and sanitizing
3. Students will eat in classrooms or weather permitting outside
4. Limiting volunteers and visitors in the building to essential staff only
5. Suspending field trips and large school events

We will also be revising our morning drop-off and after school pick-up routines to ensure the health and safety of all our staff and students. We will have more details regarding this as we finalize these plans.

The faculty and I are committed and willing to do everything in our power to be in session and stay in session. We cannot do it alone. We need to be able to trust that our families are using sensible precautions outside of school and are conscientious in keeping their children home when they are sick or exhibiting possible symptoms of Covid-19.

I know that we are all looking forward to a return to normalcy. We are striving to strike a balance between having a "normal" school experience while at the same time keeping every member of our school family safe. The staff and I will be sensitive to your children and their need for a return to normalcy. Even though we cannot do that completely, we are going to do our best to achieve it as much as possible within the safety guidelines.

Thank you for all your prayers and support as we navigate this pandemic. Be assured of my prayers for you and your families. Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

God bless,

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