

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SCHOOL RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN

2021-2022 FALL PLAN – Parent Plan  
*IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19*



## **School Reopening Taskforce**

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## **FALL OPENING CONSIDERATIONS**

In order to best prepare for our fall opening, it is important to assess our status of readiness and develop a plan to re-enter school this fall. In order to help our school prepare we have established guidelines in the areas of:

- Safety and Health
- Technology
- Catholic Identity
- Curriculum/Assessment
- Creating and maintaining a community

Our goal is to open safely and efficiently. This plan will be re-evaluated and updated as new information is shared.

## **SAFETY AND HEALTH**

The Fall Plan for Parents outlines details as it relates to student and employee health and safety protocols. Those recommendations will not be repeated in this section. The following are guidelines specific to employees.

## INTRODUCTION

The ICS Task Force Committee reconvened to create a plan that supports the reestablishment of our school where employees, students, and families feel safe, while reducing the risk of COVID-19 and the Delta variant condition upon returning to the 2021-22 school year. The guidelines referenced in this plan were carefully studied and are based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), and the State of New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) *The Road Forward*.

ICS students will attend a full-day, full-time, in-person instruction and operations for the 2021-22 school year. While the school is committed to a resumption of normalcy for the next school year, we will continue to monitor the data and our decisions will be guided by information provided by the CDC, WHO, and applicable federal, state and local agencies. ICS is committed to ensuring we maintain a safe and healthy school community.

### SOURCES

Center for Disease Control: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html#anchor\\_1589931942037](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html#anchor_1589931942037)

New Jersey Department of Education:  
<https://www.nj.gov/education/reopening/NJDOETheRoadBack.pdf>

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In order to ensure the continued well-being of our employees and students the following guiding principles have been put in place:

1. EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT SAFETY MEASURES
2. HEALTH GUIDELINES

## PHASES AND TIMELINES

Information and direction about the phases and timeline will be sent to all employees and parents before implementation. Please see below for a summary of the phases and timelines.

Phase	Timing	Items
Planning	July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supplies, equipment</li><li>• Prepare detailed work schedule for phases</li><li>• Prepare building and transportation for reopen with thorough cleaning</li></ul>
Phase 1	August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implement 3 feet social distancing protocol and open facilities</li></ul>

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Phase 2	August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expand use of school based on recommendations and data from CDC, NJDOH, New Jersey Governor, and applicable state and local agencies</li></ul>
Phase 3	September 2 September 7  August and September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Open elementary school</li><li>• Open early education building</li><li>• Expand full operation based on recommendations and data from CDC, NJDOH, New Jersey Governor, and applicable local and state agencies</li><li>• Determine what restrictions/guidelines stay in place</li></ul>

### **HEALTH PROTOCOL AND SCREENINGS (EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT)**

ICS has adopted a policy that screenings should be completed by the child's parent/guardian prior to arriving at school each day.

The school's policies for screening must include the following:

Staff must visually check students for symptoms upon arrival every day to assure students are not showing COVID-19/variant symptoms.

COVID-19 and Delta variant symptoms include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
- Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19

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### **Employees:**

A staff waiver will be provided requiring each employee to check for symptoms and temperature daily prior to going to school.

- If an employee becomes ill at work or if another person is exhibiting symptoms of COVID19 at work, they will be asked to leave work and go home or to the nearest health center.
- Employees returning to work from an approved medical leave should contact HR. You will be asked to submit a healthcare provider's note before returning to work.
- If an employee has been diagnosed with COVID19, the school, Office of Schools, and local health department must be contacted. The health department will determine the next steps.

### **Students:**

- Parents are encouraged to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick.
- Students and adults are required to wear face coverings when in the building. It is also necessary to acknowledge that enforcing the use of face coverings may be impractical for young children or individuals with disabilities.
- Student health checks must be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations.
- Results must be documented when signs/symptoms of COVID-19/Delta variant are observed.
- Any screening policy must consider students with disabilities and accommodations that may be needed in the screening process for those students.

### **Protocol for Symptomatic Staff and Students**

ICS has adopted procedures for symptomatic staff and students. Procedures include the following:

- Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others in the nurse's office.
- Students should remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.
- Continuous monitoring of symptoms
- Follow current State of New Jersey Communicable Disease Service guidance for illness reporting - <https://www.nj.gov/health/>

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- If the school becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in the school tests positive for COVID-19/Delta variant, school officials must immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.
- Adequate amount of personal protective equipment (PPE) available, accessible, and provided for use.

If an employee or student becomes ill on campus, he/she will immediately report to the **nurse's isolation room** and the case form will be completed.

Once the employee or student arrives at the isolation room, immediately provide them with a mask and gloves. Explain that this is to help protect other employees and students and prevent the spread of the potential virus.

- The nurse must call the local health authority and seek advice regarding transportation and location.
- The nurse and others attending the suspected infected person, should also wear a protective mask and gloves while working with the suspected infected person. If a mask is not tolerated by the child, staff should use a face covering and follow social distancing guidelines (6 ft. away).
- The nurse will direct the ill employee to leave work or call the parent of the student to be picked up and go home.
- The nurse and principal must identify persons who may have come in contact with the suspected infected person. *Unless required by the local health authority, the name of the employee should not be provided.*
- Advise employees that they may have been in contact with a suspected employee and to carry out self-screening every morning, and based on the results, contact the HR department.
- The isolation area and suspected employee's or student's work area/classroom must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, in addition to all other common surfaces recently touched by the employee or student.

When an individual tests positive for COVID-19/Delta variant, the facility should immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of a possible or confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.

Facilities should be prepared to provide the following information when consulting public health:

- The identity of the person with the virus or probable virus (i.e. staff, child in care, household contact).
- The date the person with virus or probable virus was last in the building
- The date the person developed symptoms.
- Types of interactions the person may have had with other persons in the building or in other locations.

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- How long their interactions were with other persons in the building.
- If other persons in the childcare program have developed any symptoms; and
- Any other information to assist with the determination of next steps.

### **Re-admittance Procedures After Recovery From COVID:**

Students and employees diagnosed with COVID-19 or the Delta variant will be instructed by the school nurse and/or school's principal about a quarantine plan. A doctor's note is required stating the person is symptom-free and healthy to return. All students and employees who have spent time with the student or employee will need to be instructed about a specific quarantine plan.

## **SOCIAL DISTANCING**

Social distancing is an effective way to prevent potential infection. Immaculate Conception employees, students, and parents should practice staying approximately 3 feet away from others and eliminating contact with others.

- ICS has allowed for social distancing within the classroom to the maximum extent practicable. This can be achieved by ensuring students are seated at least 3 feet apart and considering the flow of student traffic around the room.
- ICS can maintain physical distance and additional modifications have been put in place. This includes turning desks to face the same direction when students are unmasked. Each elementary classroom can accommodate up to twenty-five students, leaving extra space for students to move around while practicing social distancing. Each Early Childhood classroom can accommodate 18 students, while encouraging and practicing social distancing.
- Windows will be opened to allow for greater air circulation. Indoor environments with recirculated air are the riskiest of environments for COVID-19 spread.
- In the fall~ Non-essential/informal meetings and visiting will be modified during this time.

## **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

In order to minimize exposure to COVID-19 and the Delta variant, PPE will be needed to prevent certain exposures. PPE can include:

**Masks:** Face masks, personal hygiene, social distancing, and frequent cleaning efforts.

Our two-year old students are not required to wear masks throughout the school day. This is optional.

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**Gloves:** Touching your face with contaminated hands, whether gloved or not, poses a significant risk of infection. Wearing gloves does not diminish the need to wash your hands. Please remember to wash your hands properly as it is the number-one defense against any virus. Additionally, the proper removal of gloves reduces the risk of being exposed to contamination.

*Please note that social distancing should still be practiced even with the use of gloves and masks.*

In addition to using PPE, please remember to:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow

All ICS students and employees will be required to wash his/her hands upon entering the school building.

## **CLASSROOM AND COMMON SPACES**

Immaculate Conception employees are encouraged to disinfect their own personal workspace (teacher desk, phone, etc) throughout the day, giving special attention to commonly touched surfaces.

### **Classrooms:**

- We have arranged for a 3 feet separation of desks and children. Desks will face the same direction (rather than facing each other) or have students sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart. Some of the classrooms have tables intended to accommodate more than one student for small group gatherings. This prevents the ability to maintain a 3 foot distance. ICS will continue to use a partitioning system.
- Larger rooms (i.e. multi-purpose room, cafeteria/gym, art studio, science lab, innovation lab) can be used as classrooms to allow for social distancing.
- We will utilize our outdoor grounds as outdoor classrooms when possible and when seasonally appropriate.
- Inside the door of each classroom there will be a Cleaning Station equipped with hand sanitizer, wipes, tissues, disposable masks, and gloves in accordance with CDC guidelines.



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### **School Entrances, hallways, and common spaces:**

- **In the fall, ICS will use a curbside morning drop off and curbside afternoon pick up each day, unless you are picking up from After Care. Our school will resume morning and afternoon gatherings when it is safe to orchestrate such gatherings.**
- Face covering will be worn upon entering the building and in the hallways. Social distancing of 3 feet will be required. Social interaction of students and adults will be kept at a minimum between drop-off and entrance into school facilities.
- Drop-off times or locations by grades will be put in place to limit contact between students and direct contact with parents as much as possible.
- Social distancing will be maintained in hallways and common areas.
- Large group gatherings are suspended at this time.
- Organizational techniques and strategies will be established that allows for physical distancing.
- Free standing hand sanitizer stations will be at each school entrance.
- Signage has been posted around the school buildings (inside and out) to provide hygiene advice and reminders. Increase frequency of cleaning all surfaces, including walls (to the appropriate height based on age of students).
- The number of students in the hallway at the same time will be kept at a minimal by staggering release from classrooms.
- Physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, may be installed on tables in the classrooms where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least 3 feet apart.

### **Other Considerations:**

- Student supplies and equipment will not be shared. All students will have a set of supplies and tools to support learning. Materials will be cleaned and disinfected between use.
- Electronic devices, books, and other games or learning aids will not be shared, without being thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between use.
- Student belongings will be kept separated from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
- When possible, we will increase circulation of outdoor air, for example, by opening windows and doors. Windows and doors will not be opened if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms) to children using the facility.
- Regularly planned times for handwashing will be encouraged throughout the day.

## FACILITIES CLEANING

The safety of our employees and students are our priority. Upon reopening, our school has been completely cleaned and disinfected and we will continue to adhere to all necessary safety precautions each day. In addition to the deep clean of the office and school before employees and students return, the cleaning steps outlined below are to be taken to disinfect workplace surfaces, chairs, tables, etc. to protect employees and reduce the risk of spread of infection. We will require employees to maintain this safety standard by continuously cleaning and disinfecting based on the frequency stated below. Deep cleaning is triggered when an active employee or student is identified as positive for COVID 19 or the Delta variant based on testing.

### GENERAL DISINFECTION MEASURES

Category	Area	Frequency
<b>Workspaces</b>	Classrooms, Offices	At the end of each use/day
<b>Appliances</b>	Refrigerators, Microwaves, Coffee Machines	Daily
<b>Electronic Equipment</b>	Copier machines, Shared computer monitors, TV's, Telephones, keyboards	At the end of each use/day and/or between use
<b>General Used Objects</b>	Handles, light switches, sinks, restrooms	Several times a day
<b>Buses</b>	Bus seats, handles/railing, belts, window controls	At the end of each use/day
<b>Common Areas</b>	Cafeteria, Innovation Lab, Conference rooms, Gyms, Common Areas	At the end of each use/day; between groups

Hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol) will be placed inside each classroom and throughout the buildings:

- In each classroom (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).
- At entrances and exits of buildings.
- Near lunchrooms and toilets.

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- Children ages 5 and younger will be encouraged to wash their hands at the sink with soap and water. When needed, adults will supervise our students when using hand sanitizer.
- For classrooms that have existing handwashing stations, prepare stations with soap, water, and alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol).
- Students will be taught to wash hands for at least 20 seconds at regular intervals, including before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) if washing with soap and water is not possible.

### **For Early Childhood programs, when possible:**

- Close group learning activities like reading circles will be modified.
- Designated times for handwashing will be part of the daily routine. Students will be taught to wash hands with soap and water, including, at a minimum:
  - at the start of the day when children enter the classroom
  - before snacks and lunch
  - after using the toilet or helping a child use a toilet
  - after sneezing, wiping, and blowing noses
  - after snacks and lunch, particularly if hands are sticky, greasy, or soiled
  - when students come in from outdoor play or recess

In limited cases, hand hygiene with an alcohol-based sanitizer or alcohol-based wipes, when there is no visible soiling of hands, are alternatives to hand washing with soap and water by children over 24 months of age, under the supervision of the teacher. The CDC recommends an alcohol-based sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol and to rub the product over all surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry, about 20 seconds, then wash hands with soap and water as soon as possible.

## **RESTROOM USAGE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

The school will establish maximum capacity for the facility that allows for social distancing. The school will post the maximum capacity sign on the door. There will be limited shared use of restrooms. Classes will be assigned a specific time to use the bathroom. Our goal will be to have a limited number of children in the hall and bathrooms together.

## **RECESS, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, LOCKERS AND LOCKER ROOMS**

- Recess times for each grade will be closely monitored and modified. If two or more classes are participating in recess at the same time, they should have at least 3 feet of open space between them.
- Cones, flags, tape, or other signs to create boundaries between groups will be used when necessary.
- Hands will be washed immediately after outdoor playtime.
- ICS will stagger the use of playground equipment and establish frequent disinfecting protocols.
- Direct contact with equipment (lessons with no equipment) will be used. We will not allow sharing of equipment. If equipment must be shared, it will be cleaned and disinfected between each use.

## **VISITORS ON CAMPUS**

Visitors will be allowed on campus or in the school buildings. We will continue to utilize a rolling cart outside the front door entrance each morning for packages or other items, if your child forgets snack/lunch or other school-related items.

## **MEAL PERIODS**

At this time lunch periods in our cafeteria will be part of our school day.

The school will resume preparing lunch meals and give students the opportunity to purchase lunch from our cafeteria staff.

ICS will implement strategies to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. These strategies include:

As stated from the guidelines, when cafeterias or group dining areas are used:

- Stagger times to allow for social distancing, and clean and disinfect between groups. Discontinue family style, self-service, and buffet.
- Clean and sanitize tables/surfaces between each meal service, pursuant to the protocols outlined here by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Space students at least three feet apart.
- Individuals must wash their hands after removing their gloves or after directly handling used food service items.
- Serve individually plated meals.
- Ensure students are not sharing food.
- Use disposable food service items (e.g., utensils, dishes).

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- If disposable items are not feasible or desirable, ensure that all non-disposable food service items are handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher. Encourage proper hand washing before and after eating meals.

### **SNACKS AND FOOD DELIVERY**

Bringing refreshments to share during school is prohibited in order to limit the risk of contamination. Snack time is permitted, but students should bring their own snack items and drinks to school.

### **COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES IS IMPORTANT TO US**

School Specific: To stay updated on the most current information:

1. Teachers, students, and parents need to check their email often
2. Visit the school website
3. Follow our social media platforms
4. SeeSaw (grades Preschool-3); Google Classroom (grades 4-8)
5. PowerSchool Student Information System-grades kindergarten to grade 8

### **ACADEMICS / LEARNING**

ICS is prepared to open in September utilizing full-day, full-time, in-person instruction and operations for the 2021-22 school year.

Each family will commit to sending their child/ren to school using the chosen model for one full marking period. If a parent decides to change their mind, the parent must schedule an appointment with the school's principal.

ICS has three emergency days included in the 2021-22 school calendar. These days are known as "Snow Days." If ICS is mandated to close beyond the three allotted emergency days, we will utilize a virtual platform for instruction. ICS is committed to being prepared when change is necessary. When school closure seems to be forecasted in the future, ICS will make proactive decisions to best prepare for a seamless transition.

#### **Virtual Learning at home**

Virtual instruction will be offered via live streaming of direct instruction only when a student is required to quarantine based on the recommendation of the school nurse and/or medical doctor. Once in quarantine, a student will be expected to attend their regularly scheduled classes via live streaming.

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Immaculate Conception's goal is to design flexible instructional plans that work best in both traditional face to face and remote environments. The following is being developed by ICS faculty and principal:

- Year-long plans to facilitate more meaningful, interdisciplinary units that can be delivered face to face or remotely.
- Instructional experiences that include modeling, guided instruction, collaborative work, and independent work rather than over-reliance on independent work during remote learning. This requires strategic use of synchronous and asynchronous lessons.
- Best practices are being reviewed and will be implemented to support synchronous and asynchronous instruction to meet student needs and engagement.
- Adjustments and modifications will be made to school-based services plans for students with disabilities. All accommodations and modifications will best service our students with special needs on the virtual learning platform using a Blended teaching approach.
- Create an “early warning system” to identify and intervene with students who may be exhibiting academic and/or behavioral concerns.
- Develop a plan for benchmark screening and intervention delivery during face-to-face and remote learning.

### **CATHOLIC IDENTITY**

Catholic schools have a two-fold charge: to provide an education that is academically excellent and one that is deeply rooted in Catholic identity. Catholic values will be infused intentionally across all grade levels and all subject matter. Participation in liturgy and prayer will continue to be encouraged for both traditional face to face and remote settings. We will attend 9 am First Thursday Mass, but not the entire school at the same time. For now, we will use a modified attendance schedule for in-person Mass. Classes not attending in-person will attend Mass virtually. Teachers will collaborate and design a Mass schedule, allowing all classes to attend daily Mass at least two times monthly. Faith Family service projects are a priority and will remain in place.

### **GRADING AND ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Students are expected to attend classes every school day and complete all posted assignments. Teachers will take attendance daily when school is in session, which include when virtual instruction is required. Attendance will be recorded in Power school. The grading policy is in the school handbook and is expected to be followed as stated.

## **REMOTE LEARNING**

In the event school must close in 2021-2022, we will follow the guidelines below for receiving and returning student work.

The school will continue to use *SeeSaw* for Preschool- grade 3 and *Google Classroom* for grades 4-8. Google Classroom and SeeSaw will be used as student learning platforms. It is best to email teachers directly when needing to communicate with the classroom teachers.

## **ONLINE INSTRUCTION**

Our school's Virtual Learning Plan is posted on our web site. We are committed to reevaluating and revising our plan regularly. As revisions take place, ICS administration and your child's classroom teacher will inform all families of changes. All grade level teachers will clearly define and explain student learning expectations that will guarantee your child the best education and school experience possible.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/BEFORE AND AFTERCARE PROGRAMS**

- Adhere to all applicable social distancing requirements and hygiene protocol during any extracurricular activities.
- Maximize the use of technology and online resources to continue some extra-curricular activities without additional person-to-person contact.
- Restrict use of school facilities to school-sponsored extracurricular activities and groups.
- Cleaning/disinfecting schedule may not allow for in-person gatherings outside school hours.