



St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School  
COVID-19 Reopening Plan for 2020-2021 School Year

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## **COVID-19 Reopening Plan**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to outline how St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School has developed the safest, most secure, and most teacher and student focused school reopening plan achievable. We have worked together with other schools in the Diocese of Rockville Centre to develop a secure reopening plan to return students and teachers to the classrooms as safely as possible. After working diligently with Perrotta Consulting, a threat mitigation and emergency operation planning company, and exhausting every available resource, we have developed a systematic way to secure and reopen St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School at 100% occupancy, five days a week, for the 2020-2021 school year. So long as we are permitted to reopen and remain open by the State of New York, we will use every available resource to:

- Provide the safest environment possible for our students and teachers
- Keep our extended school families healthy
- Communicate with our families and faculty
- Ensure continued access to education whether in the physical building or remotely
- Ensure equal access to education for all students
- Provide means of support for our students' and faculty's social and emotional wellbeing

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

- St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School will require all students, teachers, staff, and visitors to arrive at the facility wearing masks.
- Anyone who arrives without a mask will be provided one upon arrival before they are permitted to enter the school.
- An adequate two-week supply of PPE for all students and faculty will be kept onsite at all times.
- Other PPE kept onsite will include, face shields, gloves, gowns, and N-95 masks for staff in different departments or upon request.
- Masks will be required anytime 6 feet of distance cannot be maintained and while in common spaces.

## **Attending School Safely in Person**

Attending school in person is no small challenge. Through extensive studies of data and research collected from the New York State Department of Health, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, World Health Organization, Federal Emergency Management Agency, American Academy of Pediatrics, and several other private and public-sector resources from across the globe, we have identified how to safely return teachers and students to the classroom. Some of the safety protocols that we will follow can be found below:

### **Classrooms**

- Students and teachers will maintain six feet of distance at all times unless the safety of students or core activity of educating students requires a shorter distance. If six feet of distance cannot be maintained, at least three feet will be maintained and students will be required to wear a mask based on industry precedent and State guidelines.
- Many rooms, like the library, Chapel and auditorium, will be repurposed to serve as classrooms if necessary.
- Students will be kept in cohorts/pods and remain with their cohort/pod throughout the day.
- A cap will be placed on all class sizes.
- All non-essential items for teaching will be removed from the classroom.
- Students will be told to bring their own supplies. If they forget to bring supplies, the school will provide only supplies that can be disinfected after use.
- Increasing ventilation and air circulation in buildings with box fans, opening windows, etc.
- Eliminating the changing of classes or limiting class changes strategically and only to sanitized rooms.

### **Dining Areas and Food Service**

- Although children will be encouraged to bring lunch from home, St. Brigid/Our Lady of Hope School will offer individually wrapped sandwiches and salads from the deli.
- Students and teachers will maintain six feet from one another while eating unless an impermeable barrier can be placed between room occupants.

## **Common Areas**

- Signage indicating traffic flow patterns, social distancing guidelines, healthy hygiene practices and other critical functions.
- Stairwells and hallways will have directional flow patterns enforced by teachers.
- Prohibiting all non-essential visitors, including parents, from entering the building unless there is an emergency. In the event of an emergency, visitors will be screened, prior to entering our secured environment.
- Water fountains will not be used. Only the bottle filler fountain may be used to refill students' water bottles. Students will be told to bring their own water bottles from home. An emergency supply will be kept by St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School.

## **Hygiene**

- Frequent disinfection of classrooms, bathrooms, and high contact surfaces around the building using EPA certified disinfectants.
- Developing a culture of healthy habits in which students and teachers sanitize their hands and personal space frequently throughout the day.
- Implementing hand sanitizing stations strategically throughout the building.
- Not requiring certain items from uniforms such as ties that cannot be washed each day.
- Custodial staff will be doubled for this school year, and high-contact surfaces and bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected regularly and on a logged schedule throughout the day.
- Full building disinfection will occur at the end of each day and in any classroom, that has been occupied prior to other students entering.

## **Screening**

- Every person authorized to enter the school building whether a student, faculty member, or visitor will have their temperature checked with a contactless thermometer prior to entry. They will be denied entry if their temperature exceeds 100° F.
- Parents will fill out a weekly screening assessment for their child.
- Each faculty and staff member will have their temperature screened and answer a series of questions daily to affirm they are healthy and in compliance with current executive orders.
- If teachers or students are not feeling well, please stay home from school.

## **Arrival and Departure**

- Students will be screened prior to entering the building and proceed to a secondary testing location if their surface temperature is determined to be above 100° F at the time of screening.
- Screening will be conducted through several entrances and may be determined by grade.
- Students will be dismissed out of separate exits from the building to reduce congestion at any one egress.

## **Bathrooms**

- All bathrooms will have a posted and enforced maximum occupancy.
- Custodial staff has been doubled to ensure bathrooms are cleaned and disinfected at least four times a day.
- Cleaning logs will be kept in each bathroom. Each cleaning will be marked with initials and time stamped by custodial staff.

## **Early Childhood Programs**

- Group sizes will be capped at 15 students per class.
- Masks are recommended, but not required in the classroom for students in Pre-K and below.
- Teachers will be permitted to interact with children as long as they are wearing appropriate PPE.
- We will follow the childcare and day care guidelines from NYS which account for student needs as well as health and safety.
- Students will utilize sinks for hand hygiene and not have access to hand sanitizer.

## **Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade**

- Students will not change classes.
- Mask breaks will be built into the schedule.

## **Middle School**

- Students will stay in homerooms for the most part; teachers will move from room to room.
- Students may change classes after the rooms have undergone full disinfection either immediately or later in the school day.
- Mask breaks will be built into the schedule.

### **Faculty Space and Teachers**

- Faculty lounge will have a posted and enforced maximum occupancy.
- Teachers will always be required to socially distance from one another.
- Shared supplies such as copiers will be disinfected after individual usage.

### **Physical Education**

- Physical Education will continue in an adapted capacity.
- As weather permits and as much as feasible, gym classes will occur outside.
- 12 feet of space will be mandated between students while engaging in physical activity.
- The youngest grades in the building will have hula hoops pre-placed 12 feet apart to help them identify how to space themselves apart.
- Gym classes will be adapted to not permit any close contact activities or high-risk sports.

### **Shutdown**

- St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School will constantly be prepared for an immediate shutdown. Students and teachers will not leave any essential items in the school building overnight.
- Shutdown as a result of an outbreak will be communicated immediately to all students, faculty and parents.
- Shutdown as a result of executive order will also be communicated to all stakeholders immediately.

### **Emergency Action Planning**

Extensive and detailed plans will be kept onsite regarding how to protect students in the event of a positive COVID-19 case in the building and exactly who will be quarantined. Some of this planning includes:

- Designating a monitored isolation location within the school in the event a student appears symptomatic onsite.
- Keeping seating charts of every classroom to be used in contact tracing.
- Determining which students and teachers will need to quarantine in the event of a positive diagnosis after consulting with the health department.
- Designating a COVID-19 Administrator and task force internally at the school.
- Developing an internal contact tracing protocol and continuing to work with professional contact tracers at Perrotta Consulting.
- Internal procedures to determine which students and teachers will need to quarantine and for how long if they are exposed to someone who is COVID-19 positive.

## **Disinfection and Decontamination**

- Classrooms, bathrooms, shared spaces, and high contact surfaces will undergo disinfection throughout the day and full cleaning at the end of each day.
- In the event of a positive case within the building, full facility decontamination will occur before anyone is permitted to return.

## **Continuity Planning**

St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School will reopen in a constant state of high alert. Every student, family and teacher will be prepared to immediately shift to remote learning should a partial quarantine or executive order force students and teachers to return to do so. Efforts are being made to enhance the ease of another transition like this on an individual, class, or school wide level. Students and teachers who are medically unable to return to school will receive special accommodations and instruction will continue through remote learning.

- **Hybrid Model**

- A school-wide hybrid reopening model has been prepared in the event we are physically unable to return at 100% capacity by either pandemic conditions or executive order.
- Returning to classrooms full time will be prioritized for nursery through fifth grade. Students in the middle school will attend class on an alternating A/B schedule if we must resort to a hybrid model.
- A hybrid model will be essential if individual students or entire classes are forced to quarantine.
- In the event of an entire class shifting to remote learning, the teacher and students will all shift together seamlessly for 14 days.
- For individual students, remote learning will be coordinated through the school and through the Diocese of Rockville Centre to ensure continued education.

- **Remote Model**

- A plan to return all students to remote learning is critical and our foundation is the same process we utilized to switch to remote learning this past March.
- Since March, we have increased the availability of technology to our students.
- Students requiring technical support will be asked to contact St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School.
- Since March we have developed the highest standard of online learning achievable, and while in person learning is preferred, we are prepared to immediately return to remote learning if it becomes necessary.

### **Social and Emotional Wellbeing**

- We recognize the stress and emotional toll this year has taken on not only students, but also faculty and parents.
- Our teachers and social workers will be attuned to the realities of the physical, mental, and economic hardships our families have faced over the last several months and trained to support them to the best of our ability.
- Resources will be available for anyone struggling with mental health through counselors and the district.
- Mask breaks will be built into the schedule.
- Teachers will be permitted to move class outside as weather and their individual schedules permit.

### **Professional Partnerships**

Perrotta Consulting has collaborated with St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School to develop and guide our individual threat mitigation and COVID-19 secure operations planning and development initiative. In addition to helping develop our individual reopening plans, they will remain a resource to us throughout the year to guide us as pandemic conditions change and assist in changing procedures, contact tracing, threat mitigation, and decontamination. PM Pediatrics is the largest pediatric urgent care chain in the United States, and we will be partnering with them for their telehealth, medical consulting, and testing capabilities.

### **Student Orientation**

- Students will undergo an orientation of new COVID-19 hygiene and procedures on the first day of school either in person by grade or streamed to each classroom.

### **Teacher Training**

- All faculty and staff will be trained in new COVID-19 operating procedures and planning.
- Custodial staff will undergo training in disinfection and decontamination procedures.
- Teachers will be trained in syndromic surveillance and identifying students who may be developing the onset symptoms of COVID-19 so that they can direct students to the nurse as early as possible.
- A COVID-19 Administrator will be thoroughly trained in the entirety of St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School's comprehensive operation plan. Select individuals will also be trained in contact tracing.

### **After School Activities and Outside Groups**

- After school activities and outside groups attending St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School will be subject to the same standard of screening as faculty, teachers, and students if they occur.
- St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School will only open our doors to after school programs and outside groups when we are 100% certain they have the highest standards of safety in place for their full-time student body and teachers.
- We may determine not to allow any outside groups at all.
- CYO, clubs and music programs are actively being addressed in consultation with Perrotta Consulting to determine risks and how to safely conduct them.
- Any singing or use of woodwind instruments must allow for a minimum of 12 feet of space for each student. This may make the programs unfeasible in person or require relocation to the gym, auditorium, or outdoors.

### **Travel and Transportation**

- Teachers and students must avoid any unnecessary travel. If immediate family members of teachers or students travel to states or countries with quarantine restrictions, they will be required to quarantine within their own home away from the individual who will be entering the school.
- We will determine our transportation capability in coordination with our public-school districts busing protocols.

### **Visitor Access**

- Parents will not be permitted to enter the school building at any time except for emergency or scheduled meetings.
- In the event of an emergency or scheduled meeting, all visitors will undergo the same check-in procedures as teachers prior to entering our secure environment.

### **Individual and Evolving Approach**

- Each school, faculty member, family member, and student has a role to play in safely returning students to the classroom.
- Individual social responsibility and adherence to our new guidelines and procedures cannot be carried out solely through the creation of this document and the risk does not end at the dismissal.
- We ask each member of the school community to continue to be socially responsible and most importantly stay home if you do not feel well.

### **Communication and Information Collection**

- St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School is united in its mission to reopen schools safely and at full capacity. Successful operations this school year will require constant reassessment of policies and procedures.
- We have fully established a modular COVID-19 command structure to rapidly identify needs and execute operating plans possible to protect students, teachers, and families at St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School.
- If any student, teacher, or person with whom they reside is diagnosed with COVID-19, they must notify the main office at St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School, immediately.

## **Conclusion**

St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School is actively working to implement the safest and most operationally successful school reopening plan possible amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic. Together with our partners, we will establish a culture of health within St. Brigid/ Our Lady of Hope School. Our decision to reopen is based on scientific facts, industry standards, and threat mitigation procedures adopted from private and public sectors. COVID-19 is generally a mild disease in children, including infants, but this does not diminish its severity or the threat it poses to our students, faculty, and families. Together, we will safely and optimistically reopen this school year, and yet always remain on a heightened state of alert so that we may adjust and adapt as the pandemic conditions and student and teacher needs change.