



Choose Hope

'HIM WHO STRENGTHENS'

"I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of living in abundance and of being in need. I can do all things in him who strengthens me."

Philippians 4:12-13

Dear St. Mary Families,

Now that we have been in school for just over three weeks officially, we would like to update you on the status of our reopening plans.

First, we would like to thank you for your cooperation adjusting to our copious new protocols. We know that sending your children to school in face coverings, completing the daily COVID-19 attestation, and waiting in line at drop-off and pick-up are extra procedures that we are all still getting used to. However, these protocols, and the others we have put into practice on campus are making a difference. Simultaneously, we are also acutely aware of the challenges that remote learning presents to your students and families. Although the experience of learning online has been greatly enhanced with layers of technological tools and support, we know this mode of learning is simply not as effective as in-person instruction.

Our protocols have been working extremely well, and we have not yet had any positive cases of COVID-19 in the school. That's a tribute to a thoughtful and thorough reopening strategy, careful planning, an abundance of caution, and the school's commitment to the health and safety of your children and our faculty and staff. Because of this, and because of the physical layout of the campus and our current enrollment and staffing levels, we believe we can gradually begin bringing more students back to school—should families choose to return their student/s to on-site instruction.

While the DOH metrics we've been using as a guidepost to determine when to bring more students on site still place Spokane County in the "high risk" category, I, along with the administrative team, teachers, and staff, am confident we can phase in more classes in the coming weeks safely. If we maintain our deliberate and intentional course, and families do their part at home, this can be successful. As our phased approach has dictated since day one, this will remain a purposeful and calculated process, both to make sure we can continue to operate safely during a pandemic, and because teachers and students need time to transition from distance learning to in-person learning and acclimate to new spaces for instruction.

On September 17th, St. Mary Catholic School welcomed over 100 students back to campus in Pre-K-3-2nd grade. As you know, we brought 3rd grade back on campus on October 12th. Since the physical opening of school, we have carefully monitored and studied our transition to in-person learning. With over 105 children here daily, our reopening system is working effectively and efficiently. **Therefore, St. Mary Catholic School is tentatively planning for a 4th grade and 5th grade return to campus on Monday, November 9th.** However, we will continue monitoring Spokane County COVID-19 numbers and our own attendance and health data and adjust this date if necessary. If the data continues to look good (in house) after the return of the 4th & 5th grades, then we plan on bringing our middle school students (6-8) back on campus in late November or early December.

The return of the 6th-8th graders will be dependent on continual positive health data, the success of adding another 50 students in 4th and 5th grade in addition to finding enough volunteers to help with drop-off and pick-up so that teachers can be in their classrooms with students for their safe arrival and departure. Ideally, we will be looking toward the end of November for 6th-8th graders to return to campus.

Our aim is for the transition from online learning to in-person learning to be as seamless as possible. Teachers should have to make very few changes to the schedules and techniques they have already implemented; however, time is needed to prepare rooms and prepare students for classroom expectations once a final decision is made for students to return to school. For those families and students who choose not to return in person out of choice or necessity, our robust remote learning plan will continue to be offered.

It is vital for the continuation and expansion of on-campus learning that all families follow social distancing guidelines away from school and utilize the symptom flowchart that was sent home a few weeks ago—which is attached to this email. Otherwise, the success of reopening is jeopardized. If your child is sick, please follow the guidelines carefully. Generally speaking, if your child had exposure to anyone who tested positive for COVID-19, they must stay home for 14 days from the date of exposure, even if they are experiencing no symptoms. If your child is experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms but has not had an exposure to someone who has tested positive, they must either stay home for 10 days from the beginning of symptoms or get a COVID-19 test. See the flowchart for complete detail, or call the office for clarification or questions.

While we have not yet experienced any students testing positive for COVID-19, we know that it is a distinct possibility, and we are prepared for it and when it happens. If we receive word that there is a positive case of COVID-19 in the school community, then we will inform all school families. Families of students who are classified as close contacts, based on classroom seating assignments, will receive a second email with additional information and a phone call from the school with further guidance—in accordance with SRHD epidemiologists.

Thank you again for your patience, understanding, and prayers as we work together to provide quality Catholic education for your children. Feel free to reach out to any questions you have about our reopening plan.

With hope,
Ben Walker, Principal

QUALITY FAMILY TIME TOGETHER

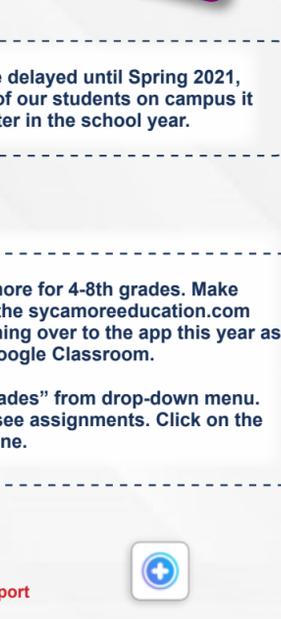
St. Teresa of Avila Craft

Attached to the Bell email this week is an optional Family Craft project created by our own St. Mary Parish Director of Religious Education & Faith Formation, Marie Bricher.

It uses St. Teresa's teachings on prayer—the kids construct "A Garden of My Soul" and use it to begin a prayer time of visiting with Jesus.

We wanted to make this fun activity available to all families as an option to spend some time together away from a screen to color, create, play and pray together.

God bless your day!



INDIVIDUAL PICTURE DAY



Individual picture day will be delayed until Spring 2021, exact date TBD. Without all of our students on campus it made sense to delay until later in the school year.

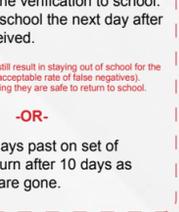
SYCAMORE

Mid-quarter grades are now posted on Sycamore for 4-8th grades. Make sure to look at grades/assignment status on the sycamoreeducation.com website and **not** the app. Grades are not pushing over to the app this year as nicely as in past years due to syncing with Google Classroom.

Hover over student's picture and choose "Grades" from drop-down menu. Click on the box that the letter grade is in to see assignments. Click on the assignment name to see details about each one.

MY MED BOT

It's very important to the community as a whole to report health screenings each school day for in-person students.



If you have not signed up for the MyMedBot app yet please contact the office to have an invite emailed to you.

If a student goes home from school ill or is called in ill from home, the "at-risk" red screen procedures must automatically and immediately be followed before student will be allowed back in school.

Here is an informational sheet to help determine what to do if student receives an "at risk" red screen from MyMedBot.

Please note it may change as new information/procedures are received from the Spokane Regional Health Dept.

2020 - 2021 CALL IN/SENDING HOME SICK PROCEDURES

GREEN SCREEN = Health screen completed, no symptoms present, student may proceed to school.

AT RISK SYMPTOMS (in the past 24 hours)

- Fever greater than 100.4
- Cough
- Loss of Taste or Smell
- Sore Throat
- Unusual Shortness of Breath
- Unusual Fatigue
- Congestion or runny nose
- Gastrointestinal (GI) Symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea)

(Recently)

- Have you recently been in close contact with anyone who has exhibited any COVID-19 symptoms?
- Have you recently been in contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19?
- Have you recently traveled to a restricted area that is under a Level 2, 3, or 4 Travel Advisory according to the U.S. State Department?

FAQs:

If I call my child in sick in morning with **just one or two mild symptoms** can we come back the next day (or in a couple days) as long as symptoms are gone?
NO - students that go home sick from school or get called in sick from home must immediately follow through with one of the "at-risk" red screen options listed above before they can return to school.

Can siblings of the sick child attend school as long as they have no symptoms?
YES - as long as no symptoms are present and no one in home has tested positive or had known exposure to COVID. Child will be sent home if they develop any symptoms during the school day.

RED SCREEN = Health screen completed, student is experiencing one or more "at risk for COVID" symptoms. **DO NOT** proceed to school, choose from the following options listed below:

RED SCREEN OPTIONS

- Visit Pediatrician and obtain a Dr.'s note to submit to school. **DO NOT** COVID the child and can safely return to school.
- Obtain a negative (non-rapid)* COVID test result and submit the verification to school. Child can return to school the next day after negative result received.

*A negative rapid COVID test will still result in staying out of school for the full 10 days (due to a higher than acceptable rate of false negatives). You may still obtain a Dr. note stating they are safe to return to school.

- Stay home for 10 days past on set of symptoms. May return after 10 days as long as symptoms are gone.

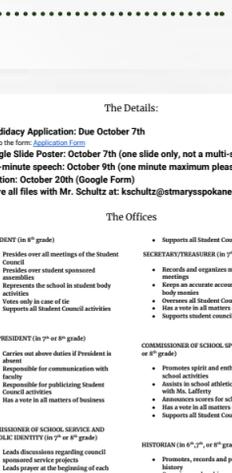
PICK-UP TABLE

Avoid has been set up to the left of the front doors (inside breezeway) for pick-up items. You do not need to check into the office to grab your pick-up items, you will be buzzed in and walk over and grab what you need.

Don't forget to press the silver button located on the right outside the doors to call the office if the door doesn't open for you right away. Office hours are: 7:30am - 3:30pm, M-F.

TROPHY CASE

THANK YOU Athletics Dept. and Echo and Dave Thompson for the beautiful, hand-crafted school trophy case we've been wishing for for many, many years!



STUDENT COUNCIL

St. Mary Student Council will be a little different. In fact, we don't know what it will be like until we do. This will take a tremendous amount of creativity on your part. So what do you say? Are you in?

The process for running for office look different this year. We will start by having interested sixth, seventh, and eighth graders fill out a candidacy application document. Candidates would normally have to get signatures from teachers and the principal. This year, let us know which teacher that you are seeking a recommendation from and we will talk to that teacher. We will also talk to Mr. Walker about your desire to run. If you receive approval from those folks and your parents give you the green light, you may proceed.

You will need to submit one Google Slide (instead of a poster) that will highlight your desire to run. This will be placed with the others and posted on the student body may leave a little about you. Please state your full name, grade, and office you are seeking. You can add additional information outlining your qualifications and plans for the school year. A picture would be especially nice.

Finally, you should prepare a video speech to talk to the school. The speech will be uploaded and shared with the votes. This speech should be less than one-minute long. You should write, plan, and practice before recording it. Pay attention to your background and make sure you can be heard.

Good Luck! We look forward to hearing from you.

The Details:

Candidacy Application: Due October 7th
Link to the form: <https://forms.gle/8888888888888888>
Google Slide Poster: October 7th (one slide only, not a multi-slide show)
One-minute speech: October 9th (one minute maximum please)
Election: October 20th (Google Form)
Share all files with Mr. Schultz at: kschultz@stmarysspokane.org

The Offices:

PRESIDENT (in 6th grade)

- Preside over all meetings of the Student Council
- Preside over student sponsored assemblies
- Represent the school in student body activities
- Vote only in case of tie
- Supports all Student Council activities

VICE PRESIDENT (in 7th or 8th grade)

- Carries out above duties if President is absent
- Representative for communications with faculty
- Responsible for coordinating Student Council activities
- Has a vote in all matters of business

COMMISSIONER OF SCHOOL SERVICE AND CATHOLIC IDENTITY (in 7th or 8th grade)

- Leads discussions regarding council sponsored service projects
- Leads prayer at the beginning of each Student Council meeting
- Promotes the Catholic identity of the school and its relation with St. James
- Has a vote in all matters of business

SECRETARY/TREASURER (in 7th or 8th grade)

- Records and organizes minutes of school activities
- Acts as official athletics and a liaison with Ms. Lafferty
- Announces scores for school events
- Has a vote in all matters of business
- Supports all Student Council activities

COMMISSIONER OF SCHOOL SPIRIT (in 6th, 7th, or 8th grade)

- Promotes spirit and enthusiasm for school activities
- Organizes and archives student council records
- Has a vote in all matters of business
- Supports all Student Council activities

HISTORIAN (in 6th, 7th, or 8th grade)

- Promotes, records and preserves school history
- Organizes and archives student council records
- Has a vote in all matters of business
- Supports all Student Council activities

Recommended:

- Have a scavenger hunt at home. Dress up and hide candy or other treats throughout the house or around the yard.
- Host an online costume or pumpkin carving contest.
- Have a Halloween movie marathon with household members.

Discouraged:

- Halloween gatherings, events, or parties with non-household members that violate the gathering limitations outlined in Governor Inslee's Safe Start Plan. Learn more about the [gathering limits](https://www.wa.gov/governor/inslee/safe-start-plan) for each phase.
- Traditional trick or treating (handing candy to kids who knock on your door) and large groups of trick-or-treaters.

Trunk-or-treat gatherings with multiple households that facilitate crowding around treats and violate the gathering limitations outlined in Governor Inslee's Safe Start Plan.

Indoor, haunted houses are not permitted. Haunted houses must be designed as a no-touch outdoor activity with a one-way path. See Governor Inslee's Phase 2 and 3 [Governor Inslee's requirements](https://www.wa.gov/governor/inslee/safe-start-plan).

Indoor trick-or-treating activities, such as those organized in malls or similar venues.



BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION



Eventually the Box Tops program will become digital-only. Participating brands are starting to change their packaging from a traditional Box Tops clip to the new Box Top label.

If you see this label, use the new Box Tops app to scan your receipt. Box Tops are still worth 10¢ each for your school. The app will find participating products purchased at any store and instantly add cash to your school's earnings online.

Traditional Box Tops clips are being phased out of production, but may continue to be found on many products throughout the store. You can still clip (**unexpired** box tops) and send them to school.

For more information please visit: <https://www.boxtops4education.com/>

Tips for a Safer Halloween
Updated September 28, 2020
DOI: ISD 102

Many of the traditional ways in which we celebrate Halloween involve contact with non-household members in large group settings. This year, it is important to plan early and identify safer alternatives to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. The Department of Health is offering the following considerations to help protect individuals and communities.

Regardless of how you choose to celebrate Halloween, it is important to keep the following in mind:

- Wear a cloth face covering. Make sure the face covering fits snugly over your nose and mouth.
- Avoid crowded spaces. Outdoor activities are safer than indoor activities. If participating in an outdoor event is not possible, and you choose to attend an indoor event, avoid crowded, poorly ventilated, and fully enclosed indoor spaces. Increase ventilation by opening windows and doors to the extent that is safe and feasible based on the weather.
- Avoid close contact with people outside of your household. Stay at least 6 feet away from all other people who are not part of your own household.
- Wash or sanitize your hands often. Use soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Stay home if you are sick or were recently exposed to someone with COVID-19. If you are sick, have symptoms of COVID-19, or have been in contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, stay home and away from others.

| Recommended | Discouraged |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a scavenger hunt at home. Dress up and hide candy or other treats throughout the house or around the yard. Host an online costume or pumpkin carving contest. Have a Halloween movie marathon with household members. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Halloween gatherings, events, or parties with non-household members that violate the gathering limitations outlined in Governor Inslee's Safe Start Plan. Learn more about the gathering limits for each phase. Traditional trick or treating (handing candy to kids who knock on your door) and large groups of trick-or-treaters. |

Stay up-to-date on the [current COVID-19 situation in Washington](https://www.wa.gov/governor/inslee/safe-start-plan), [Governor Inslee's proclamations, symptoms, how it spreads, and how and when people should get tested](https://www.wa.gov/governor/inslee/safe-start-plan). See our [Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.wa.gov/governor/inslee/safe-start-plan) for more information.

A person's race/ethnicity or nationality does not, itself, put them at greater risk of COVID-19. However, data are revealing that communities of color are being disproportionately impacted by COVID-19—this is due to the effects of racism, and in particular, structural racism, that leaves some groups with fewer opportunities to protect themselves and their communities. [Stigma will not help to fight the illness](https://www.wa.gov/governor/inslee/safe-start-plan). Share accurate information with others to keep rumors and misinformation from spreading.

- [WA State Department of Health 2019 Novel Coronavirus Outbreak \(COVID-19\)](https://www.wa.gov/governor/inslee/safe-start-plan)
- [WA State Coronavirus Response \(COVID-19\)](https://www.wa.gov/governor/inslee/safe-start-plan)
- [Find Your Local Health Department or District](https://www.wa.gov/governor/inslee/safe-start-plan)
- [CDC Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](https://www.wa.gov/governor/inslee/safe-start-plan)
- [Stigma Reduction Resources](https://www.wa.gov/governor/inslee/safe-start-plan)

Have more questions about COVID-19? Call our hotline: 1-800-525-0127, Monday – Friday, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., Weekends: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. For interpretive services, press 8 when you answer and say your language. For questions about your own health, COVID-19 testing, or testing results, please contact a health care provider.

Mission Statement: St. Mary's Catholic School is a parish ministry that actively assists families by fostering community while providing Catholic formation within a strong academic program.