



July 23, 2020

"The laborers in the Lord's vineyard should have one foot on the ground, and the other raised to proceed on their journey." --St. Ignatius of Loyola

Dear Families,

The year 2020 has certainly presented all of us with a unique journey! At La Salle Catholic School, we are excited and ready to continue our partnership with your family. I wish to update you on our preparations for the 2020-2021 school year in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. La Salle Catholic School staff has been working diligently to create a rigorous and safe return-to-learn plan in order to proceed with the journey of Catholic education that feeds your child and family spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually.

Living our Mission

We are committed to providing a quality Catholic education, regardless of the mode of delivery being used. The education your child receives from La Salle is distinct, as our Catholic beliefs, traditions, and teachings are deeply embedded in daily instruction. La Salle staff are prepared to continue this for next school year.

Regardless of which mode of delivery is being used, La Salle is committed to offering the highest level of education possible by focusing directly on the social, emotional, faith, and intellectual needs of each child.

- Religion classes and prayer opportunities will be held daily.
- Teachers will have daily communication and interaction with all students.
- Catholic beliefs, traditions, and teaching will continue to be deeply embedded in daily instruction.
- Mass will be held weekly.
- Service opportunities will be available for all students.
- Core classes will be taught daily.

Three Modes of Delivery

We have prepared three models for instruction in order to be prepared for the unknown of next school year. Each one is described below.

On-Site Learning

This model indicates services are offered at La Salle Catholic School. It is our goal to begin the school year on August 20, 2020 with on-site learning kindergarten through grade 6 Four-year-old preschool will begin on August 25 and three-year-old preschool will begin on August 28. We plan to meet Monday through Friday. (Bus transportation may not be available on Fridays. If you need assistance with transportation, please contact Susan Hucker.) To meet this goal, we have planned for additional cleaning, social distancing, training, and health/safety plans.

Hybrid Learning

This model indicates services are offered both remotely and on-site. This model may be used to address specific student health concerns and a lack of readiness to return to the onsite model, as well as state mandates for social distancing, etc. Students using remote virtual learning will utilize Google Classroom and Meets, Class Dojo, Zoom and other programs for instruction.

Virtual Learning

This model indicates services will be held remotely for all students. Virtual learning will be used in emergency situations when on-site learning is not possible. When students are using remote virtual learning, they will utilize Google Classroom and Meets, Class Dojo, Zoom and other programs for instruction. We will follow the guidance of the Dubuque County Public Health Department and will adjust or change procedures as needed.

Health and Safety

We recognize it is not possible to eliminate all COVID-19 exposure risks. We are implementing strategies to make our school as safe as possible.

Screening

- Families are required to pre-screen students for illness before sending their child to school.
- Children or staff with a temperature of 100.3 or above should not attend school. Students with a temperature of 100.3 or above should remain home until fever-free for 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- If the temperature is discovered at school, the child or staff member will be kept away from others and expected to leave as soon as possible.
- If other cold and flu symptoms are discovered at school, the child or staff member will be kept away from others and expected to leave as soon as possible. We are not encouraging children or staff to “tough it out.” Please talk with your child’s teacher about seasonal allergies that may present as cold symptoms. Please work with the school office if your child has allergy medications that may be needed at school.

Face Coverings

- Students and staff are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings. Students may wear their own face coverings and the school will have a supply of face coverings for students in need. The school will have both cloth masks and clear plastic face shields that fit over/onto a baseball cap. Students wishing to use a face shield should bring their own ballcap to leave at school.
- Students and staff are expected to wear face coverings when working in close proximity such as at a small-group table.
- Lessons and instructions will be provided to students on the appropriate use of face coverings, as well as the prevention of stigmas associated with use or non-use of face coverings.
- At this time, Western Dubuque is requiring students to wear face coverings on the bus.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Additional cleaning and disinfecting procedures will be implemented. A peroxide-based solution will be used in the classrooms throughout the day to clean and sanitize frequently touched areas. A COVID-19 approved disinfectant will be sprayed throughout the building after students have left to disinfect frequently touched areas.

Hand Washing and Personal Hygiene

- Hand washing will be done five or more times a day. Typically, the class will wash hands at the beginning of the day, mid-morning, before lunch, after recess, and mid-afternoon.
- Hand sanitizer and tissues will be available in multiple places in the classrooms and school.

Limiting Exposure

- We will limit school visitors and access to the school building.
- We will not go on field trips in the fall semester. Decisions about field trips for the spring semester will be made at a later date.
- Staff continues to plan how to reconfigure and utilize building space to provide for as much social distancing as possible. Classroom desks will be spread out. Classroom routines will be adjusted to provide space between students.
- Two health office spaces will be utilized. One for illness and one for first aid/medication.
- Lunch procedures will be adjusted to limit waiting in line and passing groups in the hallway. Trays will be filled and then handed to students rather than students reaching for their tray and moving it through the line. Students will be seated four or fewer to a long lunch table in an alternating-side pattern to allow distance.
- Students will be seated by class group or bus group in the gym with space to spread out as they wait before and after school.
- Registration and open house will be planned in a way that encourages social distancing. Details will be shared in the coming weeks and will likely specify times for families to visit school. There will be an opportunity to let us know if there is a specific time that doesn’t work for your family to visit school.

Exposure

- All positive cases of COVID-19 will be reported to Dubuque County Public Health. We will follow their guidance for notification, contact tracing, cleaning, and closure.

What can you do?

Please understand that we are making the best decisions we can for everyone involved. We know that not everyone will be happy with all our decisions, but please remain positive around your children. Their attitude about school will directly correlate with yours. Below are a few other things you can do to help our school community:

- Talk to your child about what school will look like, including the mitigation steps listed above.
- Discuss your family's expectation of face coverings with your child. Let your child know that other families may make different choices about face coverings and those choices should be respected.
- Continue to read school communications as more information becomes available.
- When available, complete e-registration accurately and make sure your contact information is up to date in case we need to communicate with you.
- Please keep your child at home if they do not feel well. It is important to keep your child home if they have a fever. Please do not give fever-reducing medication and send your child to school.
- Report any exposure or positive cases to Barb Miller or Susan Hucker at school immediately.
- Please contact Susan Hucker to request to be part of our hybrid model if you would prefer that your child not attend on-site during the first month of school. Remote learning plans will be re-evaluated monthly with individual families.
- Please reach out with any questions or concerns. Our school staff is here to help!
- Pray! Beckman Catholic High School has organized a novena during this difficult time. They are also organizing a coordinated prayer time to occur after school has started. All Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Dubuque will be participating and we will have over 10,000 students praying at the same time.

Our school team continues to receive information almost daily from the Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Department of Public Health, CDC, Archdiocese of Dubuque Office of Catholic Schools, and the Dubuque County Health Department. Please know that plans and guidance may change as more information is received. Dubuque County Public Health is planning a meeting with school principals. I also anticipate a meeting between the WD superintendent and area Catholic schools. Our local return-to-learn committee will continue to review this information in order to welcome your child back to La Salle Catholic School to continue their spiritual, social, emotional, and intellectual growth as safely as possible. Thank you for entrusting us with your most precious gift.

Sincerely,



Susan Hucker, Principal