



July 17, 2020

Dear Xavier Catholic School Families,

The year 2020 has certainly presented all of us with a unique journey! Our Xavier Catholic School teachers and staff are excited and ready to continue our partnership with your family. We would like to give you an update on our return to learn plans at this time. Our administrators and return to learn committees have been working collaboratively and 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. We also want families to know that each of our schools will be sending their full and detailed plans to families by July 31, 2020.

With that said, we can tell you at this time that all Xavier Catholic Schools will have students in their buildings for the 2020-2021 school year with significant health and safety measures in place. We acknowledge it is not possible to eliminate all COVID-19 exposure risks, but we want to assure families that we will do as much as possible to mitigate those risks. K-8 Xavier Catholic Schools will be using on-site learning (all students in the building). As Xavier balances safety measures with over 600 students and having many of their students able to drive, they are considering both the hybrid model and on-site learning at the high school level.

[Recommendations from Linn County Public Health](#), which were presented yesterday, will factor into all of our health & safety decisions.

**Online/Virtual Learning Will Be An Option:** We understand that some families may not be completely comfortable with on-site learning even with health & safety measures in place. If your family is not ready to return to on-site learning at the beginning of the school year (or if your comfort level or other health factors change with your family throughout the year), you may elect to participate in a full online/virtual learning option for your child(ren). The details of this option will also vary from school-to-school and will be explained in greater detail in each school's formal plan.

**Faith & Connection:** Regardless of which learning model (on-site vs. online/virtual) your family chooses, our schools remain steadfast in our commitment to "learning with a

higher purpose” by providing a high quality Catholic education with an emphasis on personal connection between families and schools. Families can expect that Catholic beliefs, traditions and teaching will continue to be the cornerstones of daily instruction; Teachers will have daily communication/interaction with students; Core classes (including Religion/Theology) and prayer opportunities will be conducted daily; and service opportunities will be offered.

**Masks:** While masks are only one element of our many health & safety measures (which will include distancing, cleaning/disinfecting, and limiting exposure among others), we realize their importance in preventing transmission and their prominence in conversations at a community, state and national level. Masks will be required for students, teachers and staff while in our buildings with intervals in place to allow for mask breaks throughout the day. These intervals will vary slightly from school-to-school based on the learning environment at each school and will be communicated in our final school plans by July 31st.

**Regis Middle School Families:**

**Activities:** We are currently awaiting guidance from the Iowa High School Athletic Association and Iowa High School Girls Athletic Union regarding what 2020-2021 activities will look like.

Once our final plans are communicated to families at the end of the month and you’ve had a chance to review, we will be sending you a form to complete that will let us know how you would like to proceed for the 2020-2021 school year (on-site vs. online/virtual).

We continue to receive information frequently from the Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Department of Public Health, CDC, Archdiocese of Dubuque Office of Catholic Schools, and Linn County Public Health. Please know that plans and guidance may change as more information is received. Our school administrators and school return to learn committees will continue to review this information in order to welcome your child back to continue their spiritual, social, emotional, and intellectual growth as safely as possible.

Thank you for entrusting us with your most precious gift!

God bless,

Heather Williams, Principal, Holy Family/St. Jude

Zach Zeckser, Chief Administrator, Holy Family

Brian O'Donnell, Principal, St. Pius X

Megan Boomgarden, Principal, All Saints

Amy Conlon, Principal, St. Matthew

Casey Kettmann, Principal, St. Joseph

Josh Gredys, Principal, Regis

Angela Olson, Principal, Xavier

Chris McCarville, President, Xavier