



August 10, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope this finds you and your families well. We at Ave Maria Academy are prepared and excited to welcome back our students. We also understand that these are unprecedented and stressful times for parents and guardians preparing to send their children back either in person or online. As we move closer to the return of school, we want you to know that our guiding principles are the safety of our students, faculty and staff while providing a quality Catholic education.

Attached you will find a comprehensive summarized plan for returning to school (in person and online). As we continue to work through this time, please realize that information including guidelines and requirements from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), Pittsburgh Diocese, Local Government and the CDC is constantly changing. We will strive to provide the most up-to-date and accurate information based on these guidelines.

The following plan is based on current guidelines and requirements and is subject to change.

**Brick and Mortar Option:**

**Pre-Arrival**

**All parents are expected to do a temperature and symptom check prior to sending their child(ren) to school.** Prior to arrival, Parents must assess the health of their children and other factors regarding possible exposure to COVID-19 every morning. Parents must inform the school if they are keeping their child or children home.

**A child should not attend school if they have any of the following:**

● **COVID-19 Symptoms:**

- o Fever over 100.0° F
- o Cough
- o Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- o Chills
- o Repeated shaking with chills
- o Muscle pain
- o Headache
- o Sore throat
- o New loss of taste or smell
- o Runny Nose
- o Nausea
- o Diarrhea

**Parents should contact their pediatrician if their child is not well.**

Per the CDC:

Symptom screenings will identify only that a person may have an illness, not that the illness is COVID-19. Many of the symptoms of COVID-19 are also common in other childhood illnesses like the common cold, the flu, or seasonal allergies.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/schools-childcare/Daily-Home-Screening-for-Students-Checklist-ACTIVE-rev5A.pdf> (Daily Homescreening for Students)

**Close Contact/Potential Exposure**

Had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) with a person with confirmed COVID-19

Traveled to or lived in an area where the local, Tribal, territorial, or state health department is reporting large numbers of COVID-19 cases as described in the [Community Mitigation Framework](#)

Live in areas of high community transmission (as described in the [Community Mitigation Framework](#)) while the school remains open

## ARRIVAL

\*\*When arriving at school all students **must be wearing their mask or approved face coverings** and will adhere to the following guidelines by campus:

### *Bethel Park Campus:*

- **Car Riders** may arrive between **8:15am and 8:30am**. No student will be permitted into the school prior to 8:15am.
  - Upon entry, students will go directly to their homeroom.
  - Parents are required to complete the Daily Health Screen and Attendance form online prior to bringing their child(ren) to school.
- **Bus Riders**
  - Upon entry to the school, students will proceed to the gym until 8:15am at which time they will be directed to go to their homeroom.
  - Parents are required to complete the Daily Health Screen and Attendance form online prior to bringing their child(ren) to school.
- **Entering the school:**
  - All students will enter the school via the main school entrance.

### *Mt. Lebanon Campus:*

- **Car Riders** may arrive between **8:00am and 8:15am**. No student will be permitted into the school prior to 8:00am.
  - Parents are required to complete the Daily Health Screen and Attendance form online prior to bringing their child(ren) to school.
- **Walkers** may arrive between **8:00am and 8:15am**. No student will be permitted into the school prior to 8:00am.
  - Parents are required to complete the Daily Health Screen and Attendance form online prior to bringing their child(ren) to school.
- **Bus Riders**
  - Upon entry to the school, students will proceed to the cafe until 8:00am at which time they will be directed to go to their homeroom.
  - Parents are required to complete the Daily Health Screen and Attendance form online prior to bringing their child(ren) to school.
- **Entering the school:**
  - All students entering the school will gain access by way of our back porch.

## **MASKS and PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

We have taken extensive measures to address the concerns expressed regarding the wearing of masks.

The following will apply:

- **Per the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and CDC requirements for school reopenings: Students will be required to wear face coverings at all times while inside the school, at recess and during arrival and pick-up.**
  - **Approved Face Coverings include:**
    - Standard Non-medical Face Masks
    - Face Shields
    - Gator type mask that covers both the nose and mouth.
    - Teachers will be provided Face Shields to help improve communication with students.
- Student desks will be spaced 6 feet apart, when possible, according to PDE guidelines and will face one direction.
  - All classrooms Pre-K – 8 will have individual desks in the classrooms.
- Students may remove face coverings when students are:
  - Eating or drinking when spaced at least 6 feet apart;
  - When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.

## **DRESS CODE**

During this time, students will be permitted to wear their gym uniform everyday if desired to provide comfort. The gym uniform policy includes:

- **Plain or Ave Maria logo gray t-shirt or sweatshirt (no hoodie).**
- **Plain or Ave Maria logo black athletic pants or seasonal plain black fingertip length shorts. NO other logos, volleyball shorts, spandex, or yoga pants. No stripes.**
- **Plain ankle cut tennis shoes in solid white or solid black with no-skid soles. Soles may be white or black with either shoe color.**

*This policy will remain in effect until further notice.*

## **CLASSROOM INFORMATION**

**Class size and number of classrooms per grade level:** due to the merger and pandemic, these numbers continue to be monitored and adapted as they fluctuate on a daily basis. The number of students who choose to begin virtually may also impact the number of classrooms per grade.

### **Classroom Specifics**

#### **General:**

- Student desks will maintain a distance of 6 feet apart at all times when possible.



- Student desks will face the same direction.
- Students will not be allowed to share any items (school or personal).
- Library will be temporarily suspended as students are not permitted to borrow books.
- Physical Education may be in the classroom or outside whenever possible.
- Students should bring a water bottle to school every day as fountains will not be available. Please place your child's name on the water bottle with a Sharpie marker. Water bottle donations are being accepted at both locations from school families.

### ***Specials:***

- Art, Music, and Spanish class will be in the homeroom. Teachers will rotate to the classrooms. Students will not travel to other classrooms for specials.
- Band will be temporarily suspended.
- Physical Education may be in the classroom or outside whenever possible.

### ***Technology:***

- Due to CDC requirements for limited sharing of items and documents, all students in grades 4- 8 will be issued a Chromebook.

### **Lunch**

Due to constraints with “open serving” of food, hot lunches will not be provided. Boxed lunches will be an option or students may bring their own lunch. Please be sensitive to students who may have allergies when packing lunches. Teachers will notify the classroom parents if there are food allergies in the classroom.

- Students will eat lunch at their desk in their classrooms.
- Students may carry a packed lunch in a paper bag/disposable container or lunch box that can be disinfected each day at home.
- Social distancing will be observed during lunch.
- Milk and drinks in containers will be served, if purchased through AVI.

## **IN SCHOOL SCHEDULING**

Teachers will provide schedules in the coming weeks and will share via our school website.

### **Middle School Scheduling**

Individual middle school student schedules will be provided the first day of school during homeroom. Students will receive the same amount of subject time as they would have under the traditional schedule.



## **DISMISSAL PLAN**

### ***Bethel Campus***

All day 4-year prekindergarten students will be dismissed at 2:45 pm. They will be dismissed from the former extended day door. All other students will remain in their homeroom until their bus is called by overhead page at which time they will proceed single file, directed by floor level, to the main lobby for boarding. Staff will monitor and assist in hallways and during loading.

Car riders will proceed to the gym single file, spaced apart, and will be directed by staff where to wait to maintain social distancing.

### ***Mt. Lebanon Campus***

Walkers will depart first using the front doors of the school.

All day 4-year prekindergarten students will be dismissed at 2:30 pm. Parents/guardians will pick up their children on the back porch. Parents should park in the back lot. Because these students will be dismissed first, the parents must wait until cars are formally given permission to leave by the teachers before leaving the grounds

Students will remain in their homeroom until their bus is called by overhead page at which time they will proceed single file, directed by floor level, to the back porch for boarding. Staff will monitor and assist in hallways and during loading.

Car riders will exit via the doors at the back of the school to the parking lot and will be directed by staff where to wait to maintain social distancing.

It is our hope to have all those students who walk to be safely off parish grounds before cars start moving. All car riders will be dismissed from the BACK of the school.

## **COVID-19 ISOLATION ROOM**

Our school is required to have a designated area to isolate suspected COVID-19 infected students or staff until such time as they can be picked up from the school. A nurse or adult will provide supervision of the student while in the Isolation Room.

The COVID-19 Isolation Room will be located in the:



- Bethel Park Campus: Nurse Office
- Mt. Lebanon Campus: Nurse Office or 3rd floor classroom.

## SCHOOL CLEANING PROCEDURES

- Hard surfaces will be sanitized daily, including handrails, doorknobs, and classrooms.
- Teachers will use disinfectant on all hard surfaces as needed throughout the day.
- Bathrooms will be addressed daily and at specific times during the day.
- Items that are difficult to disinfect are being placed in storage.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- There will be no after school activities held in the school until further notice due to the sanitization protocol once students leave the building.
- The after school athletics programs will continue. Please visit the school website and click on the AMA athletics tab for more details.

## VIRTUAL SCHOOL OPTION

- Parents will have the option to choose virtual learning.
  - o **Please note:** if you choose virtual learning at the beginning of the year, readmittance to brick and mortar will be handled on a case by case basis due to the limits on classroom sizes and social distance requirements.
- Virtual learning will also be available to students who are:
  - o Sick
  - o Quarantining
- Each grade will have the ability to live stream their classes via Google Classroom.
- Student technology will be provided for grades 4 - 8 and will have Google Classroom loaded for student use.
- Students will be issued all necessary textbooks.
- Virtual students will attend class via live stream in real time and be expected to ask questions and fully participate in class. This will be teacher driven by the classroom.
- All class assignments and academic expectations will be the same as those of an in-class student.
- Students will be required to login and follow the daily schedule. They will log off during lunch and recess and log back in for the afternoon session.
- Individual teachers will contact their students with specific expectations prior to the start of school.

## PRE-KINDERGARTEN

- Teacher led orientation will be held on Thursday, August 27th for pre-kindergarten (and kindergarten). Time to be



determined. Parents and students may attend. Students must wear masks at all times according to CDC guidelines.