



Saint Francis Academy

Reopening Plan

Fall 2021

*“IN ALL DIFFICULTIES, YOU MUST
BECOME AS A LIVING TABERNACLE OF
GOD MOST HIGH, ... WHEN YOU ARE
TEMPTED TO RESPOND TO
DIFFICULTY IN BITTERNESS
AND TEMPER, SAY,
“PASSION OF CHRIST STRENGTHEN ME.”*

St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

After much thought, research, work and prayer St. Francis Academy has again developed plans for reopening during this new school year of 2021 – 2022. This could not have been possible without the invaluable aid of our Missionary Franciscan Sisters, the Board of Trustees, the Administrative Team, The Archdiocesan Leadership, our office staff and the valuable input from teachers and parents.

We particularly want to thank our families for their dedication to our beloved academy during this unprecedented situation. Together, we have helped each other overcome the challenges faced during this devastating global pandemic. We believe our students were able to learn and thrive academically and spiritually with the help of their dedicated parents and teachers. **This school year of 2021 – 2022 we will not engage in virtual learning. Total virtual learning will only be used if Governor Murphy closes all schools or if there is an outbreak of Coronavirus in the school or an increase of COVID-19 infection strikes our state.**

All children will be present in class five days per week. It is our strong belief that students need to be physically present for learning and socialization to be optimal.

St. Francis Academy's highest priority is the health and safety of our community, which includes students, faculty, staff and parents. Our plans, though seriously considered, are continually evolving as new information and circumstances are put forward by the CDC, the State of New Jersey, local public health officials and the statistics on the current state of COVID-19 spread in the area. No plan or set of safety measures can guarantee absolute prevention of COVID-19 transmission. These plans are subject to change without notice.

Daily Protocol for Students

- All students will return to the school building 5 days per week.
- Students will be in traditional classrooms supervised by their teacher.
- Small group instruction in reading and mathematics will be reinstated.
- Plexiglass dividers have been placed on all desks for the health and safety of the students and faculty and where social distancing is not possible.
- Students and faculty will wear masks securely fitted over their nose and mouth inside the school building. Students will remove the masks during lunch. All students may remove masks when playing outside and will strive to remain 3 feet apart.
- Students may enter school at 7:30 AM and will go directly to their classroom. There will be no before care.
- Aftercare will be available beginning Monday, September 20th. Aftercare will end promptly at 5:00 PM.
- Students will have temperatures taken at entrance. Anyone with a temperature over 100.4 will be sent home.
- If your child is ill DO NOT send them to school.
- Six different entrances and exits will be used for staggered entrance and dismissal.
- No parents or visitors will be allowed to enter the school without an appointment.
- Pre-K3 and 4 will enter with one parent for quick drop off at their cubbies for the first month of school.
- All special classes will resume after first week of school.
- Extra-curricular after school activities will resume early October.

- Students will change classes.
- When in hallways or on staircases everyone will wear a mask.
- Lunch Program will begin on a limited basis in October.
- No sharing of food, supplies or materials.
- Windows in classrooms will be slightly opened to allow circulation of air. Air filtering machines will be in all classrooms and common spaces.
- All students should have a securely closed water bottle each day. They may be refilled at water bottle filling stations. No other liquid, but water, should be in water bottle, for instance juice or soda.

School Schedule

1st Trimester

School begins on Thursday, September 9th.
September 9th & 10th – 12:00 Noon Dismissal

School Hours

Monday through Friday

- Students may arrive at school from 7:30 AM to 7:55 AM and proceed to their classrooms.
- Students entering after 8:00 AM will be marked tardy and must enter through the front door.
- Dismissal for all students will be between 2:15 PM and 2:30 PM as follows:

Pre – K3 through Grade 2 will be dismissed at 2:15 PM.

Grades 3 - 4 - 5 will be dismissed at 2:25 PM

Grades 6 - 7 - 8 will be dismissed at 2:30 PM

Entrances & Exits

Pre – K 3 – Kitchen Door in back of school

One parent may accompany child to cubbies during month of September.

Pre – K 4 – Garden Door in back of school

One parent may accompany child to cubbies during month of September.

Kindergarten – Back Porch Door

Grade 1 – 17th Street Door

Grade 2 – Modular Classroom

Grade 3 – 17th Street Door

Grade 4 – 17th Street Door

Grade 5 – Front Door of Convent

Grade 6 – Front Door of Convent

Grade 7 – Front Door of Convent

Grade 8 – 17th Street Door

Please keep 3 feet social distance as you wait to enter and you proceed upstairs.

Stay to right on stairs.

No Teachers may move their cars in parking lot until all students are dismissed.

Please note:

No students may use playground equipment after school. The playground will be reserved for the Aftercare Program.

Visitors

In an effort to maintain the health and safety of our community, the presence of visitors, guests and parents in the building will be limited.

Workmen and maintenance vendors who must enter the building will be required to complete a health screening with temperature check and wear appropriate face coverings. No workmen will enter the classroom while children are present.

Parents may enter school by appointment only.

Health & Safety

- All faculty, staff and students will be required to wear a face mask their entire time in the building, unless eating and drinking. Everyone should bring their own masks with an extra in a zip-lock bag.
- The school will perform thorough cleaning and sanitizing daily and will routinely clean high touch surfaces such as bathrooms, doorknobs and handrails.
- Desks will be wiped down regularly with disinfecting cleaning wipes or spray.
- Non-touch Hand Sanitizer Stations will be located throughout the school and students may carry a small personal bottle of hand sanitizer.
- Cleaning staff will use electrostatic sprayers for disinfection of the school daily.
- A new Nurse's Suite has been remodeled on the 2nd floor of the Convent, away from all classrooms. This space will be used as an isolation room for anyone feeling ill.
- Students' temperatures will be taken before they enter the building.
- The CDC considers a person to have a fever when he or she has a temperature of 100.4F.
- If a student becomes ill during the day parents will be called and they must pick up the child as soon as possible. Anyone who is ill will be isolated in the new Nurse's Suite in the second floor of the convent.

Health & Safety (Continued)

- Do not send your child to school if they are sick or if you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- Everyone should receive their flu vaccine early this year.

Health & Safety Outside of School

SFA Teachers, staff and administrators are doing everything feasible to keep your children safe from Covid during school hours. But families must do their part outside of our school to ensure the safety of our children and continuity of on-site learning. We ask every family to be mindful of student health and safety on the weekends and after school hours. Please follow all CDC and NJ state recommendations including social distancing, mask wearing, hand-washing in public settings or with groups of friends and family whose exposure is unknown. If your child is scheduled for or if you are considering any extracurricular activities in your city, we ask that you are extremely diligent about following the state guidelines. If we all work together we can minimize any risk. If families are not cautious during their personal time, it will pose a risk for all. It is strongly suggested that all who are eligible be vaccinated.

In Conclusion

Let us enter this new school year of 2021 – 2022 with a positive outlook and high expectations. It will only be with patience, understanding and the intercession of the Holy Spirit that we can help our students reach their full potential and deal with the repercussions of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Academically we will deal with learning loss, our teachers are prepared and students will have extra attention in our small reading and math groups. Extra help may be needed at home this year and lines of communication between teachers and parents need to be open and honest for the sake of the children. If you have concerns about your child's progress do not hesitate to call immediately.

Socially and emotionally we hope to create a normalcy with our day to day schedule. Extra curriculars such as music, kinderdance, gym, etc...will encourage socialization and friendship. We hope this will bring a lessening of anxiety to our dear children. Perhaps soon we will be able to eliminate masks indoors so we see the beautiful smiles of our children.

The very fact that your child attends SFA, a school with a strong Catholic identity, will bring hope through prayer and our Franciscan Charism of hospitality, gentleness and encouragement. Together we “will rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation and continue steadfastly in prayer.” (Romans 12:12)

Please be aware that all information in this plan is subject to change at any time.