



# St. Gregory the Great Academy

A Ministry of the Church of St. Gregory the Great

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Rev. Michael Hall, Pastor

Dr. Jason C. Briggs, Principal

Mrs. Michele L. Rivera, Assistant Principal

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 14, 2020

TO: All Parents, Faculty, and Staff

FROM: Dr. Jason C. Briggs, Principal

RE: **Return to School Update #7**

Good Friday to all! Today's update deals with some logistical questions and such that have come up, for which I think that it would be best to put together in one place. Again, as always, everything in these updates is subject to change based on conditions and how the virus progresses.

34. **NEW New Jersey Guidelines** – As luck would have it, after researching what is happening in other places and formulating a framework of actions to implement if/when a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 occurs in our school, the New Jersey Department of Health released a new document yesterday about this very topic. If you would like to review the document, you can follow [THIS LINK](#). This document contains guidelines and considerations for schools to follow for specific conditions. At some point next week, I will distill these guidelines to action steps for our school and then send them to you. What has not changed, in terms of any procedures, is that we will follow the directives of the Hamilton Township Health Department.

35. **School Lunch** – For planning purposes, know that we WILL be offering lunch through school this year for all grade levels, Preschool 3 – Grade 8. For the month of September, the daily offerings will be the same each day. These offerings will include a variety of sandwiches, wraps, salads, as well as cereal and bagel options. Lunches will be prepacked and delivered to the students. A major change will be that parents will need to preorder lunch via a web portal, details of which will be forthcoming. I believe there will be both daily and weekly options to order. More information about this will follow.

There have been some questions about bringing lunch from home and the use of lunch boxes and reusable bags. Students WILL be allowed to bring their lunches in lunch boxes/reusable bags if you desire. Remember that lunch will occur outside as often as possible, based on the weather.



36. **Freckle Math** – I have noticed that there are many students who have either not been keeping up with Freckle Math each week during the summer AND some other students who have not yet signed in at all! Remember that the purpose of Freckle Math during the summer is twofold. First, it provides important maintenance of Math skills during the summer months. Second, as the students complete the activities, the system is retaining records of each student’s strengths and weaknesses. This is important data for the teachers to have at the beginning of school. The more data the teachers have, the better they can understand the needs of each individual student. So, if Freckle Math has not been occurring as often as it should/could, please make an effort to have your child complete as much as possible. I know there are specific cases where some students have struggled with the system, and that is okay; however, if a student has not even signed in yet it is hard to make a case that the student struggled.

37. **Preschool Logistical Notes** – Here are a few items that are specific to both preschool levels:

1. Preschool 3 will have a welcome/orientation on Monday, August 31, 2020, at 9:00 am. This will occur outdoors in a location to be announced. Unfortunately, there will be no entry to the classroom of building for parents.
2. Preschool 4 will have a welcome/orientation on Tuesday, September 1, 2020, at 9:00 am. This will occur outdoors in a location to be announced. Unfortunately, there will be no entry to the classroom of building for parents.
3. Regularly scheduled preschool classes will begin on Wednesday, September 2, 2020. ALL PRESCHOOL STUDENTS WILL BE DISMISSED AT 12:00 noon on this day, as the rest of the school will be dismissed at 12:30 pm on this day. Specific details about the dismissal process will be coming next week; however, know that Preschool 3 will dismiss from the classroom via the external door (Room 310 in the Parish Center) and Preschool 4 will dismiss from their assigned outside location. Once again, there will be no entry to the classroom of building for parents.
4. In a CHANGE from previous years, we will no longer be providing snacks for snacktime for preschool students. The teachers will provide guidance on what to pack for snack time(s) at the orientation.

38. **K-8 Logistical Notes** – Here are a few items that are specific to Kindergarten-Grade 8:

1. First day of school for Grades 5-8: As previously announced, the first day of school for **Grades 5-8 will be Thursday, August 27, 2020**. Next week you will receive a map of where each grade level will gather in the morning. The timing for the process of *inmissal* (if leaving school is DISmisal, should not arrival be INmisal? – think about it...) will be the best estimate. There will be steps of gathering each homeroom into line properly distanced, temperature checks, and the time it takes to allow each homeroom to enter their assigned doors without crowding and bunching. We will have a procedure, but the only way to get a sense of the timing is to actually complete the procedure. Of course, the first few days will take the longest, and hopefully, the time will decrease once the process occurs a few times. So, on this first day of school, please plan to have your child(ren) to their assigned location no earlier than 7:30 am and no later than 7:50 am. Grades 5-8 do not come to school on Friday, August 28, 2020.

2. First day of school for Kindergarten-Grade 4: As previously announced, the first day of school for **Kindergarten-Grade 4 will be Friday, August 28, 2020**. Next week you will receive a map of where each grade level will gather in the morning. The timing for the process of *inmissal* (Yep – I am still pondering if leaving school is DISmissal, should not arrival be INmissal...) will be the best estimate. There will be steps of gathering each homeroom into line properly distanced, temperature checks, and the time it takes to allow each homeroom to enter their assigned doors without crowding and bunching. We will have a procedure, but the only way to get a sense of the timing is to actually complete the procedure. Of course, the first few days will take the longest, and hopefully the time will decrease once the process occurs a few times. So, on this first day of school, please plan to have your child(ren) to their assigned location no earlier than 7:30 am and no later than 7:50 am. Kindergarten-Grade 4 do not come to school on Friday, August 28, 2020.
  
3. Dismissal for Kindergarten-Grade 8: Dismissal will nominally occur at 12:30 pm for K-8 on August 27<sup>th</sup> (5-8 only), August 28<sup>th</sup> (K-4 only), August 31<sup>st</sup>, September 1<sup>st</sup>, and September 2<sup>nd</sup>. **THERE WILL BE NO BUSING TO OR FROM SCHOOL ON ANY OF THESE DAYS**. When it is time for dismissal, all grade levels will return to their arrival location from the morning. Again, this is going to be a very different process. The students will be called from their location by LAST NAME (for example, students with last names that begin with A-F). When a range of letters is called, the parents and the students will come to the reuniting location. Parents WILL NOT approach the class locations. Once a family is connected, they are to return to their car (or horse, bicycles, starship, etc.) and depart. The idea is to manage a set number of people at one time safely, get them moving, then the next set, and so on without bunch or gathering. Much like the morning procedure, the timeframe for this is not going to be accurately determined until we actually complete the procedure a few times. I can tell you that it is going to take time, for sure. The first few days are going to take a whole bunch of time, so I suggest that you not make any 1:00 pm lunch reservations. Of course, we will also be adding buses into the mix on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, which will add even more fun!

Next week I will be sending maps with bullet points for both inmissal and dismissal. (Yep, I think I have decided that is going to be a word.)

39. **Public School Remote Opening** – As you know, many school districts are reevaluating their reopening plans based on Governor Murphy's announcement allowing districts to apply for opening with full remote instruction. The question has been raised as to what will happen to St. Gregory the Great Academy if Hamilton Township opens with full remote instruction. The short answer is that SGGA will open in person as planned even if the local public district does not open in person for reasons that are not related to a new outbreak of COVID-19. The longer, more complex answer is that while we will open for in-person instruction, the status of services provided using state funding is muddy at best. These services include transportation, Chapter 192/193 services [Speech, Comp. Ed., Supplemental Instruction], Chapter 226 services [nursing]. This issue has yet to be sorted out by the New Jersey Department of Education. The NJDOE Nonpublic Advisory Committee will be convening

next week to try to get some clarity on these issues. I will report any status updates that I receive as soon as I receive them. Remember though, we are SGGG – **How are we going to make this work?**

### Items from Updates 1-6

1. **Class sizes and teachers changing classes instead of students** – No changes.
2. **SGGA school supplies and no backpacks** – No changes.
3. **No transporting of books home** – No changes.
4. **SGGA adopting mask usage** – Superseded by Item #22.
5. **Freckle Math** – No changes.
6. **Desk Shields** – No changes.
7. **Remote instruction for individuals** – No changes
8. **Student homerooms, cohorts, and clustering** – No changes.
9. **Bus transportation** – Parent contacting of all students who have been placed on a bus is in progress.
10. **Screening and quarantining** – Superseded in part by Items #26, #27, and #28.
11. **Masks and shields** – Superseded by Item #22.
12. **Uniforms** – No changes.
13. **In-house Class Livestreaming** – No changes.
14. **Full Remote Instruction** – No changes.
15. **Sanitizing Procedures** – No changes.
16. **Ventilation** – Superseded by Item #21.
17. **Desk Shields** – No changes.
18. **Wish List** – THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!
19. **Elective Remote Instruction** – No changes; our current number of students who will begin the year on Elective Remote Instruction is currently about 25 students.
20. **Outdoor Space** – No changes.
21. **Ventilation/Indoor Climate** – Installation in progress.
22. **Masks** – No changes; please see Item #29.
23. **Mornings** – See Item #38 in this update.
24. **Accommodations** – No changes.
25. **Readiness to Open** – We remain on target.
26. **COVID-19 Diagnosis in the Building** – Superseded by new NJ DOH guidance.
27. **COVID-19 Diagnosis of a Family Member/Close Contact** – Superseded by new NJ DOH guidance.
28. **COVID-19 Suspicion Based on Symptoms** – Superseded by new NJ DOH guidance.
29. **Exclusion from School** – No changes.
30. **Parents/Visitors/Volunteers** – No changes.
31. **Masks** – No changes; apparently it is “gaiter” and not “gator”. 
32. **Water** – No changes.
33. **Opinions** – No changes.

### Current Wish List

[St. Gregory the Great Academy Wish List](#)