



St. Cecilia School 2020-2021

Introduction and Philosophy

This document will provide information regarding the plan to return to IN-SCHOOL learning for the 2020-2021 school year. There are several important principles that we wish to share first that will help us to reopen school as safely as possible. The principles, listed below, will allow us to remain open AND to use virtual learning for those families who feel working from home is best for their children and their families.

Partnership

Catholic elementary schools are inherently a partnership between the parent and the school. This is never more important than at this time and an even greater partnership is now needed. It is our goal to open this school year and to remain open. This cannot be possible unless the school and the parents agree to the importance of monitoring your child's health daily. ***Most importantly, this means that for children who are experiencing symptoms – such as fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea – parents need to keep their children home until medically cleared to return to school.*** With parental cooperation in this matter, we will be able to keep the schools open and safe.

Cohorting

A cohort is a group of students in the same grade, most cases, this is a single homeroom but, in some situations, it could be a larger group.

Cohorting is recommended by many health organizations as an environmental measure to prevent the spread of disease. Although our school will be using other safety measures, cohorting will be a major part of the plan. With this, we will keep groups of children together for the entire day. They will attend lunch, recess and classes as a cohort. If a case of COVID-19 were to surface with a cohort, we would then move to virtual learning at home with just the identified cohort. The rest of the school would continue to operate with in-class instruction.

Monitoring health

Every day, parents are primarily responsible for monitoring the health of their children. Teachers will be reminded to check the health of their students during a common activity. Additionally, the school will implement random temperature monitoring.

Social distancing

Social distancing is also a fundamental practice in all our procedures of operations. Social distancing is deliberately increasing the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness. Keeping your distance from others lessens the chances of catching and spreading COVID-19. Travel in the hallway, lunch periods, and classroom instruction have all been planned to maximize social distancing.

Strategic Use of Masks –

Masks will be mandatory in the classrooms, throughout the school and on the bus. Students will be permitted to remove masks:

- If they are outdoors and able to maintain a distance of 6 feet from individuals
- Eating and drinking when spaced at least 6 feet apart;
- During an assigned mask break for up to 10 minutes

If parents indicate they would like their children to keep their masks on the entire day, all faculty and staff assure that this will be implemented at all times.

This policy will be in place unless an order exists from a governmental agency that mandates differently.

**Please note: students' masks should reflect the Catholic values of our school. At this time, we are not requiring mandatory masks. If students come to school with inappropriate words, designs or symbols on their masks, they will remove them and wear a disposable mask that St. Cecilia School will provide.*

Enhanced Cleaning

The school will increase the cleaning of common areas and highly used features such as door knobs, handrails, and counters. Bathrooms will be cleaned more frequently during the school day. Children are encouraged to bring their own water bottles to school, as common water fountains will not be in use. **Disinfecting machines** have been purchased to clean classrooms, the auditorium, and cafeteria after every lunch. **Hand sanitizer stations** will be at every entrance to the school and each classroom will have hand sanitizer in their classrooms. Frequent handwashing with soap and water will be encouraged as well. With this enhanced cleaning, a safer environment can be established.

Virtual Learning

Use of both distance learning and virtual learning. We will make two types of non-traditional learning available. (Details are included in the Virtual Learning Plan that was sent home.)

- If a child is sick, a parent suspects the child may be sick, or a parent is not comfortable sending his/her child to school, we will have an option where the child can join the class via a telecommuting practice. The major subjects will be available through this method. Materials will be exchanged through the Learning Management System (LMS), such as Google Classroom.
- In the case where a cohort has been dismissed from school and COVID-19 has been identified, the entire cohort will utilize distance learning for the isolation period. Lessons will be delivered through a telecommuting platform, with heavy reliance on the LMS.

Modified Attendance

Since we are encouraging parents to monitor health closely, and we also encourage keeping children home if they display symptoms, the grading of attendance has changed. Children will be marked as attending in person or attending virtually. Only when children cannot or do not participate in any of the virtual lessons, will they be marked absent.

Please note: in order to assure that students stay home when they are sick, there will be NO Perfect Attendance Awards.

Catholic Identity

What is at the heart of learning in a Catholic school is the inclusion of faith and Catholic identity in all we do. Catholic schools have a two-fold charge: providing an education that is academically excellent and one that is deeply rooted in Catholic identity. The challenge, then, is to ensure that the education that is delivered (no matter what the mode of delivery) meets this standard.

Daily Prayer

St. Cecilia School will pray together at the beginning and end of every day, whether in-person or virtual. Each cohort will pray their classroom prayers together and intentions, especially remembering those families affected by COVID.

School Masses

Generally, school masses begin in October. When in-person instruction is possible, school Masses will require their own protocol that will maintain the appropriate social distancing.

- Attendance of parents and general community at the school liturgies may have to be suspended depending on local guidelines. If the Mass is live-streamed, parents and families should be invited to attend.
- Because of social distance, part of the school may attend the Mass and the rest of the school live streaming the Mass should make a spiritual Communion.

Religious Traditions and Practices

Religious statues, prayer corners, and religious posters should be part of every classroom and pictures of these can be sent home for the virtual students to have accessible during times of prayer.

Some of the traditions, which historically have been done in large groups (All-Saints' Pageants, Christmas Pageants, etc.), will need to be restructured virtually, in the classroom cohort or a combination of both.

Prayer services, retreats, prayer partners/buddies activities can be done in cohorts, virtually, or a combination of both. Service projects, especially writing to the elderly, essential workers, and special volunteers, should be continued.

Arrival / Beginning of the Day

Students will wear masks when entering the building. Students, teachers and staff will wear masks throughout the school day. At this time, every St. Cecilia School student will wear his/her own cloth mask to school.* If a student forgets a mask, a disposable mask will be provided. . As the students enter school, they are to wash their hands at the sanitizing stations and then move directly to his/her homeroom.

Hallways and stairwells will have only one direction in order to allow for social distancing. Signs will be posted for to show the direction the students should follow as they enter the building. For those who eat breakfast, he or she will go directly to the Cafeteria. All chairs will be arranged to maintain six feet social distancing.

Bus Riders: All students must wear their masks while on the school bus and as they exit the bus.

Bus companies will be responsible for health monitoring and social distancing of students.

Students arriving on the bus will go directly into the building, wash his/her hands, and report to their homerooms. Arrival times will be extended to allow for safely distanced lines from the busses.

(Arrival routines may need to be adjusted to allow for more busses and for the safe exit of students from their busses.)

Walkers: All walkers must have their masks on as they arrive on the school property.

Parents will be responsible to monitor and report their child's health, temperatures and presence and/or absence of other symptoms. Upon arrival, students will go directly into the building, wash his/her hands, and report to their homerooms. Students will go immediately to his/her desks and wait specific instructions from their teachers on how to empty and safely store belongs. No parents will be permitted into the schools during times of arrival. Parents who walk their children to the school (i.e. Pre-K and Kindergarten), must have their masks as they arrive on the school property. No parents or family members may remain in the school yard.

Arrival times will be extended to allow for safely distanced lines from the cars. (Arrival patterns may need to be adjusted to accommodate more car riders.)

If children forget school supplies, lunches, etc., parents/guardians will not be permitted into school to drop the things off. There will be bins outside school with grade levels marked. We will distribute them to the students in a timely manner.

Entering Classrooms and Emptying/Storing Belongings:

Students will go immediately to his/her desks and wait specific instructions from their teachers on how to empty and safely store belongs.

During the Day

While hand sanitizing dispensers are placed at the main entrances, every classroom will have hand sanitizer at classroom doors. Students will sanitize their hands before entering the room.

For upper grades, students will remain in their classrooms and the teacher will move to the cohort. Specials area teachers will go into the classrooms for instruction in Art and Music. Physical Education classes will be in the gym. Technology classes will be held in the Computer lab or in the homerooms. Devices must be disinfected after each use.

Classroom setup:

Desks will be set six feet apart and all desks will be facing the same direction. If there is not enough room between desks, clear plastic barriers will be placed between students. Students will remain in their seats for instruction with some flexibility for movement around the room. Tables will still be used for PreK. Students and students will be assisted to safely distance themselves throughout the day.

Instruction:

Teachers will stand at the front of the room in order to be safely live-streamed to the students at home. Students in the classrooms will not be on the live-streamed video. Clear, movable barriers will be available to the teachers so that can walk around the room, work with children, and conduct student conferences safely. PreK and Kindergarten classes will still have their circle times and other age-appropriate activities, while maintaining social distance. Students may use hands-on materials which will be provided as individual sets for single students use and sanitized daily.

Lunch and Recess:

All classes will eat lunch in their classrooms so that they can remain in their cohorts. As a result, St. Cecilia School will be a **NUT-FREE SCHOOL**. Students may not bring peanut butter sandwiches or snacks for lunch or recess. The Nutritional Development Services (NDS) lunch program will continue this year. There will be serving stations in each building: in the Cafeteria for Grades 6 – 8 and in the former Kindergarten classroom for Grades Pre-K – 5. Each classroom will have the opportunity to eat in the Auditorium (K to 5) or Cafeteria (6 to 8) on a scheduled, rotating basis. Seating will allow for social distancing. Teachers will monitor the students during lunch. Recess will follow outside in designated locations to keep cohorts together and will be extended to thirty minutes to allow the students to have more time outside. Students will wash their hands before lunch and after recess. The Auditorium, Cafeteria, and classrooms will be cleaned after every lunch.

Transitions During the Day:

Students will wear their masks as they walk in the hallways and move throughout school. Classes will move in cohorts with scheduled times for bathroom and outside recess times, when possible. Hallways will have one-way traffic patterns and directional arrows will be displayed throughout school.

4th to 8th grade classes will remain in their homerooms while teachers will move into the classrooms to teach their individual subjects. This will limit exposure during transitions and minimize the numbers of students in the hallways throughout the day. Students will keep all materials they need for their day in the classroom. Students will not share textbooks and novels.

Students will be able to use the bathroom as needed or go to the nurse as needed. They will need to wear masks, practice social distancing, and clean their hands during these times.

Health Monitoring:

Parents will be responsible to monitor their child(ren)s health before sending them to school. Parents will take their child's temperature and check symptoms before the children come to school. Students with an elevated temperature or who exhibit other symptoms will stay home and attend class remotely.

Teachers will do health checks at mid-day by monitoring for symptoms. Random temperature checks will also be taken. Please refer to the HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN SUMMARY for specific details about health monitoring.

Sanitizing Student Spaces

Classrooms, bathrooms, stairways and railings and other high-touch areas will be sanitized throughout the day. The entire school will be sanitized at the end of each day including carpets.

Dismissal/End of the Day

Bus Riders

Bus dismissal will be staggered to accommodate the extra buses that will be needed. This area will need to be adjusted as we monitor the buses during the first weeks of school. Dismissal will be extended to provide for safe transition throughout the hallways. Students will stay in their classrooms until their bus is called and then will walk, keeping a safe distance through the hallway and will board the bus. Since there are two bus runs, the second bus lines will wait outside for the late buses to come back. Additional exits may need to be used to facilitate the safe dismissal of our bus riders.

Walkers

Pre-K and Kindergarten will be dismissed at 2:30 p.m. Pre-K will exit first, using the door by the CORA trailer. Students will be lined up at safe intervals to wait for their parents. They will exit the door by their classroom. Kindergarten will follow the same routine. ***For safety purposes and in order to avoid students from other cohorts entering the Kindergarten classrooms, we ask that Kindergarten parents pick up their children this year. They will not be dismissed to their older siblings this year.*** Walkers will stay in their classrooms until their cohort is called. Once called, the students will move safely through the hallways, keeping a safe distance and will exit the building and walk with their line. Additional exits and staff will be available to assist with this procedure.

CARES

Students attending CARES will remain in the classroom until all bus riders and walkers have been dismissed. They will then be dismissed in their cohorts to the Cafeteria for snack and then to their CARES areas. Students should remain in their cohorts during CARES.

All students, parents, faculty and staff must wear their masks as they leave their classrooms and walk out onto the school property.

Large Group Events/Field Trips/Classroom Events

Field Trips

Due to the risk of exposure by combining cohorts on busses and traveling to other locations field trips (actual) will not be provided this year. If possible, students will have the opportunity to participate in virtual field trips.

Classroom Celebrations

Sharing of food will not be allowed. Food (like cupcakes, birthday cakes, pretzels, etc.) will NOT be permitted for any celebration this school year. Students will receive a birthday prayer/memento from the teacher and his/her name will be called over the morning announcements.

Large Group Events

Events with large groups of people, which bring in people from various locations, would also break the cohort. Events which traditionally have occurred will be discontinued for the school year or restructured to be provided virtually.

Back To School Night

This large group event will be restructured. The general information will be recorded and sent to parents to view as their schedule allows. The individual classroom meetings will also be recorded and posted on the school websites for families to view as their schedules allow.

Parent Teachers Conferences

Parent teacher conferences will be held by phone with appointments during the week scheduled for these conferences.

Classroom Supplies

We know that some items are hard to find. As a result, we do ask that the students bring their own little bottle of hand sanitizer to keep in his/her backpack, lunch box, etc. We also ask that students bring in their own tissues as well. If you do see Clorox or Lysol wipes, you may also continue to send these in to your children's classrooms.