

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Educating Today's Students To Be Disciples of Christ by forming the mind in love.



Re-opening Plan

FEBRUARY 23, 2021

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ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

On Friday March 13 2020, we were instructed that all schools in the diocese would be temporarily closed to meet the challenge of the COVID 19 virus. Within a matter of hours we had to inform parents, reassure students, and consult with the teachers about how to continue not only instruction but also the life of the school. Many of our teachers, including myself, were not familiar with the techniques of distance learning. We all had to learn fast. Most of us imagined that we would be back to school within two weeks after the Easter vacation. Unfortunately, this proved not to be the case. As we begin for our Fall semester all schools in the Imperial Valley and many other schools in California are closed until the conditions improve. We are plunged into great uncertainty. We must turn our attention from an uncertain future to a certain present. We know the challenges. We know with the benefit of experience what will work in terms of online instruction. The teachers have spent their summer vacation working out strategies, attending webinars, and generally improving their hold on online pedagogy.

I know that you are all concerned about your children. You want the best for them. We promise to work with you to ensure that our students will not only endure this distance learning period but flourish. Many of you found yourself enlisted as 'teacher's aides' during this time. It is a role for which many of you did not feel entirely qualified. Your patience and dedication has shown that you truly want the best for your children. Our teachers will support you in this new role and will do all they can to ensure that the process of distance learning is as easy as possible to follow. What is important is that you communicate with us whatever anxieties or difficulties you may have so that we may help to resolve them. We all want to be back in school. The children miss their friends and their teachers and the routine of school. We pray that this epidemic may soon burn itself out and we can all be together again.

St Mary's School Principal: [Fr. Allan White O.P. \(760-352-7285\)](#)
Vice Principal for Instruction: [Mrs. Cecila Teran \(760-352-7285\)](#)

School Office: (760-352-7285)

[St Mary's Catholic Church \(760-352-4211\)](#) Pastor: [Fr. Mark Edney](#)

This plan has been updated to reflect the State of California's COVID-19 *Reopening in-Person Instruction Framework and Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School year* issued on January 14, 2021. Covid.19.

As required, the school has posted a COVID-19 Safety Plan (CSP) on the school's website. THE CSP includes the school's Cal/OSHA COVID 19 Prevention Program (CPP) and the COVID-19 School Guidance checklist. The detailed plans outlining how our school meets the requirements prescribed in the CSP elements may be found in the Operations Plan.

Reopen Plan Academic Year 2020-2021

Please note that these policies and procedures are based on guidance from the Imperial County Office of Education, the California Department of Public Health, the Center for Disease Control, the Imperial County Public Health Order, and the Diocese of San Diego as of August 28, 2020. All policies will be updated as new information is gathered.

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Section One: Referenced Documents

The following lists the documents used as guidance for the re-opening of our school and the policies and procedures required by the California Public Health Order regarding best and safest practices to combat the spread of COVID-19. The guidance has been used to form the policies and procedures we will institute at St. Mary's School as we reopen to ensure we are implementing the best and safest practices.

In addition, this Reopening Plan may be found on the school's website: www.elcentrostmarys.com and the Diocese of San Diego's website under the heading School Reopening Plans: [School Reopening Plans](#).

Under each heading, you will find a hyperlink to the document listed. These documents and guidelines are subject to change as we learn from experience and receive more information about the current state of the pandemic.

1. [Pathway to Re-opening our Schools Imperial County Office of Education](#). August 3, 2020
2. [California Department of Public Health COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs](#)(updated August 3, 2020)
3. [Center for disease Control Guidance for Reopening Schools](#)
4. [Diocese of San Diego Office for Schools- School Re-Engagement](#)
5. [American Academy of Pediatrics COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry](#)(Last Updated: 6/25/2020)

Section Two: General Health and Safety Guidelines

This following lays out the general health and safety policies that St. Mary's School will be implementing beginning when school reconvenes. All policies are in accord with the documents referenced in Section One and serve the best interests of the students, faculty and staff.

1. Screening for symptoms at home

Parents should screen their children at home for signs for symptoms or illness **PRIOR** to coming to school.

To screen your child for symptoms prior to arrival at school, please look for the following:

- Fever (100 degrees or higher)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat

- New loss of taste or smell.
 - Detect and report contact with any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 and/or if anyone in their home has shown signs of COVID-19
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea
- If your child has any of these symptoms **OR** has been in direct contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, please keep your child at home. (Close contact is defined as someone who has spent 15 minutes or more within 6 feet of an individual with the COVID-19 virus during their infectious period, which includes, at a minimum, the 48 hours before the individual developed symptoms).
 - If your child remains at home due to illness, you are obliged to call and inform the school of their symptoms and if they have been seen by a doctor. If they have seen a doctor, you are required to inform the school of his or her diagnosis.

St Mary's School strongly recommends that all students and staff be immunized against influenza unless contraindicated by personal medical conditions.

Vaccinations contribute:

- To protecting the school community
- To reducing demands on health care facilities
- To the decrease of illnesses that cannot be readily distinguished from COVID-19 and would therefore trigger extensive measures from the school and public health authorities.

Nothing in this guidance should be interpreted as restricting access to appropriate educational services.

2. Arrival and Screening procedures

If your child is healthy and ready to come to school, please observe the following procedures to ensure the safety and health of all students, faculty and staff

- School drop off will occur between 7:30 am and 8:00 am.
- Pre-school parents and students should use the pre-School parking lot.
- Other parents should not use the pre-school parking lot unless between the hours of 8:15 am and 2:00 pm.
- Pre-school children will have their temperatures taken at the entrance to the pre-school classroom.
- Parents will also be asked to certify that the child has not displayed any symptoms or been in contact with anybody with COVID-19.

- Parents who are waiting for screening at the pre-school classroom entrance, are requested to maintain a social distance of 6 feet from others to ensure the safety and health of everyone.

Entrance and Exit Procedures for K through 8th students

- Parents of K through 8th students should enter the school by the Waterman Ave. entrance.
- Parents, including children, and other occupants of the vehicle should wear appropriate face covering.
- Parents should remain in the car until approached by a responsible member of St. Mary's staff. Parents will be asked the required health questions and the child's temperature will be taken, using a no-touch thermometer, and recorded. Parents should not exit the vehicle during this process.
- If there are no reported COVID-19 symptoms and the child's temperature falls within the prescribed range the child may proceed to the class. Parents should then leave the school premises.
- If the child's temperature exceeds the prescribed range or if COVID-19 symptoms are reported the child should return home.
- On arrival at the classroom hand sanitizer should be used to disinfect the child's hands.
- During this procedure the student should wear appropriate face covering.

All health information regarding students will be kept confidential and stored in a safe and secure location. The information will only be accessed by employees of the school.

After a student has been found to be healthy for school, they will walk directly to their designated hand washing station. Once they have properly washed their hands, they will walk directly to their first class to begin their school day. Their designated teacher will be waiting in their classroom for their arrival.

Each classroom will be provided with hand sanitizer for students and staff.

The school will provide directional arrows and tape markings to indicate to students the direction of traffic in order to promote social distancing and reduce the amount of individual contact. Suitable signage will be provided to reinforce these directions and to remind students of proper handwashing and hygiene practices. Students will also be reminded to wear face covering when moving about the classroom and the school

If a student does not comply with the health screening process and is judged to exhibit one or more symptoms, the parent must take the child home and keep the school informed of the development of these symptoms. See below on the policy of students returning to campus after an illness. Parents are expected to comply with these regulations. A lack of compliance will provoke a meeting with the administration and may result in appropriate measures including expulsion from the school.

3. Sick student guidelines

The following are the guidelines for health screening children either at school on arrival or if they fall ill during the day:

- Fever (100 degrees or higher)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue

If a child exhibits any of these symptoms at the arrival screening or during the school day, a parent **MUST** pick them up and take them home as soon as possible. In the event of the student becoming ill during the day they will be isolated and kept under observation until the parent or designated person may pick them up from school.

If a child has an identified condition that will result in a positive screening (i.e. allergies, eczema, migraines, asthma, etc.), the school may use their discretion in allowing the student to enter campus. If a student has a pre-existing condition that may present itself as COVID-19, the school must be provided with a doctor's note describing the condition and its symptoms. The note should contain the doctor's name and contact details.

Required Reporting Covid-19 Positive Cases

- The school will notify the local health office of any known case of COVID-19 among any student or employee who was present on campus within the 10 days preceding a positive test for COVID-19. Specifically the school shall report the following information:
- The full name, address, telephone number, and date of birth of the individual who tested positive.
- The date the individual tested positive, the school (s) at which the individual was present within the ten days preceding the positive test, and the date the individual was last on-site at any relevant school (s)
- The full name, address, and telephone number of the person making the report.

- This information shall be reported to the local health officer by telephone within twenty-four hours, from the time an individual within the local educational agency or private school is first made aware of a new case.
- Arrangements will be made for the cleaning and disinfection of the classroom and primary spaces where an infected individual spent significant time. Normally, this will be completed when staff and students have left school for the day.
- The school liaison to the LHD is: Mrs. M. Ayuso.

COVID-19 specific exclusion criteria.

3.1 If a member of staff or a student displays what may be COVID 19 symptoms. The criteria for investigating symptoms is provided in [CA School Sector Specific Guidelines](#). The person(s) in question should be isolated and sent home. Testing may be suggested. If positive see number 3.3 below, if negative see number 3.4 below. The School and classroom remain open and no further action is required.

3.2 If a staff member or student has sustained close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case they should be sent home and quarantine for 14 days. Testing may be proposed, but if this is negative the 14 day quarantine period will still be necessary. The school and the classroom remain open. It may be considered appropriate to inform other members of the school community e.g. classmates.

3.3 If there is a confirmed COVID-19 case of infection the public health department must be notified. The person in question should be isolated and remain excluded from school for 10 days from the onset of the symptoms or the test date. Contacts should be identified and these should be excluded from school. It is likely that this will include the entire cohort. The period of exclusion should be for 14 days after the last date the person was present at school while infectious. It is recommended that contacts should undergo testing. A test will not shorten the period of 14 day quarantine. The classroom in question should be disinfected along with other primary spaces in which the person(s) in question spent significant time. The school remains open. The school community should be informed of the case.

3.4. If a person tests negative after exhibiting symptoms, they may return to school 3 days after the symptoms resolve and have not reappeared. The school and the classroom remain open. It might be considered to notify the school community if there had been prior awareness of testing.

If a student has had close contact with a positive case of COVID-19, they must self-isolate for 14 days after last exposure before returning to school. Testing in such a case is strongly recommended.

Close contact is defined as defined as someone who spent 15 minutes or more within 6 feet of an individual with the COVID-19 infection during their infectious period, which includes, as a minimum the 48 hours before the individual developed symptoms.

If a student has symptoms of COVID-19 but cannot get access to testing, they must self-isolate at home and meet the following requirements:

They must ensure that they have met CDC criteria in order to discontinue home isolation, including

- 24 hours with no fever without medication
- symptoms have improved **AND**
- 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

If a student shows a pattern of any of these symptoms throughout the school day, the school as stated above, will remove the student from the classroom. They will be required to stay in the designated isolation room with a face covering and under observation until a parent picks them up to go home.

Please refer to the Instruction and Learning section for policies and procedures around the opportunity to live stream classes for children who must remain home but are well enough to do schoolwork.

4. Sick staff guidelines

Teachers and staff will observe the same health guidelines stated above in the student section. Below are the procedures applying to staff:

Teachers are encouraged to self-screen at home prior to coming to school using the procedures stated above.

Upon arrival at school, teachers will undergo a health screening and temperature check, which will be recorded in a confidential binder. Screening will involve the use of the questionnaire in assessing signs, symptoms and contact with COVID-19. If the temperature is above 100 degrees or they identify signs, symptoms or contact with COVID-19, they will be sent home immediately. Signs and symptoms include:

- Fever (100 degrees or higher)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- New loss of taste or smell

- Contact with any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 and if anyone in their home has shown signs of COVID-19
- All health information regarding faculty and staff will be kept confidential and stored in a safe and secure location. The information will only be accessed by authorized employees of the school.
- If teachers and staff are deemed healthy after the screening, they must wash their hands before entering the classrooms.
- If throughout the day, a teacher or staff member develops a fever or any symptoms, they will be sent home immediately.
- If the services of a substitute teacher are required, they will also be screened following the same procedures.
- Teachers and staff will be permitted to return to campus if they meet the guidelines listed above in the sick student section.
- If a teacher shows symptoms and is isolating at home, testing is strongly encouraged. If they are well enough to teach remotely but must remain at home for a variety of reasons, that option will be allowed while the test results are awaited. The students will be supervised in the classroom by a school employee.

Under new guidance, teachers and staff are required to be tested for COVID-19 regularly, which means at least every other month. At least one staff member should be tested every week. At the time to be tested, staff are recommended to reach out to their primary care provider, visit a community health clinic or visit CVS and demonstrate you are an essential worker. The test results will then be confidentially shared with the Principal and Administrative Assistant.

St Mary's School strongly recommends that all students and staff be immunized each autumn against influenza unless contraindicated by personal medical conditions. This procedure is recommended in order to help:

- Protect the school community
- Reduce demands on health care facilities
- Decrease illnesses that cannot be readily distinguished from COVID-19 and would therefore trigger extensive measures from the school and public health authorities.

Nothing in this guidance should be interpreted as restricting access to appropriate educational services.

Please refer to the Instruction and Learning section for policies and procedures relating to the opportunity to live stream classes for teachers who must remain home but are well enough to teach.

5. Contact Tracing

The school community will be notified if the administration is made aware of any positive COVID-19 cases both on and off campus. In this case confidentiality will be maintained. If a member of the household or person who has been in contact with a family member tests

positive for COVID-19, the families affected should inform the school immediately. More information relating to positive cases on campus may be found in the Cleaning and Sanitation Procedures section.

If the school is made aware of a positive COVID-19 case, the administration will document and track incidents of possible exposure and notify health officials, while still maintaining confidentiality. The school will also consult with Imperial County Health and Human Services to determine whether further steps, including isolation, quarantine, closure, communication, etc., are necessary should such cases arise.

Positive COVID-19 Cases

In the event of the diagnosis of a positive case, the school will: follow these procedures

1. Schools must adhere to reporting requirements and notify, as described below, the Local Health Department (LHD) of any newly reported case of COVID-19 in a student or staff member if the LHD has not yet contacted them about the case.
2. If the affected person is present in school at the time the school is notified, the person must return home and be excluded from school for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms or, is asymptomatic, 10 days from the date the specimen was collected for the positive test diagnosis.
3. The school will assist LHD in identifying any close contacts of the affected person. A notice, compiled in collaboration with LHD, will be sent to parents and staff to inform them that a case of COVID-19 has been reported and that the school will work with the LHD to notify any person who may have been exposed to the virus.
4. The school will arrange for the cleaning and disinfection of the classroom and primary spaces where the affected person may have spent significant time. Such cleaning will take place when all staff and students have left for the day.
5. Implement distance learning for any affected students if they are well enough to participate.

6. Travel Guidelines

If a child, household member, teacher or staff member travels outside the country for an extended period of time, they are required to inform the Administration of any such absence.

If a child, household member, teacher or staff member travels to another country exhibiting widespread community transmission for an extended period of time, they will be required to remain in isolation at home for 10 days after their return home before coming back to school.

If a child, household member, teacher or staff member travels on a train, airplane, bus, cruise ship or river boat, they must use the following regulations:

- Self-monitor for symptoms
 - Check temperature twice a day
 - Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, and other symptoms of COVID-19
- Avoid contact with people at higher risk of severe illness
- Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop

If a child, household member, teacher or staff member travels to another state with widespread community transmission, they must observe the following regulations:

- Practice social distancing
- Be on the alert for symptoms
 - Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, and other symptoms of COVID-19
 - Take temperature if symptoms develop
- Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop

St. Mary's School would appreciate open communication about travel and potential exposure to keep everyone safe during this time. After travel, everyone is expected to continue using the daily temperature checks and screenings to ensure health and safety.

7. Face coverings policy for teachers, parents and students

Face coverings must be used in accordance with CDPH guidelines unless a person is exempt as specified in the guidelines, particularly in indoor environments, and in areas where physical distancing alone is not sufficient to prevent disease transmission.

The Administration and teachers will undertake the following:

- To teach and reinforce the use of face coverings, or in limited instances, face shields.
- To remind students frequently not to touch face coverings and to wash their hands frequently.
- Information will be provided to all staff and families in the school community on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.
- Training should also include policies on how people who are exempted from wearing a face covering will be addressed. Training for staff will be conducted by the principal. Training for students will be conducted by teachers.

Students and Face Covering Requirements:

- Under 2 yrs old: No face covering is required
- 2 yrs old - 2nd grade: Face covering is strongly encouraged**
- 3rd grade - high school: face covering required unless the student is exempt

**Face coverings are strongly encouraged for young children between two years old and second grade, if they can be worn properly. A face shield is an acceptable alternative for children in this age group who cannot wear face covering appropriately.

- Persons younger than two years old, anyone who has trouble breathing, anyone who is incapacitated, and anyone who is otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance is exempt from wearing a face covering.
- A cloth face covering or face shield should be removed for meals, snacks, naptime, or when it needs to be replaced. When a cloth face covering is temporarily removed, it should be placed in a clean paper bag (marked with the student's name and the day's date) until it needs to be used again.
- In order to comply with this guidance, schools must exclude students from campus if they are not exempt from wearing a face covering under CDPH guidelines and refuse to wear one. St. Mary's School will provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering to school, in order to prevent unnecessary exclusions.

Staff and Face Covering Requirements:

- All staff must use face coverings in accordance with CDPH guidelines unless Cal/OSHA standards require respiratory protection.
- Bandanas, gaiters and similar face coverings are no longer acceptable for staff.
- CPDH recommends disposable 3 ply surgical masks, which are more effective than cloth face coverings.
- In limited situations, where face coverings cannot be used for pedagogical or developmental reasons, (i.e. communicating or assisting young children or those with special needs) a face shield may be used instead of a cloth face covering while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others, to the extent practicable. Staff must return to wearing a face covering outside of the classroom.
- Workers or other persons handling or serving food must use gloves in addition to face coverings. Employers should consider where the use of disposable gloves may be helpful to supplement frequent hand washing or use of hand sanitizer; as in the cases of workers who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items.
- All students will be required to wear face coverings during their arrival and dismissal from school. They will also be required to wear them when moving throughout hallways, to the bathroom and to and from recess and lunch.

All classroom desks will be arranged to ensure the required social distance is maintained.

Face coverings are not required while students are eating snacks or lunch.

Students will be required to wear their face coverings while they play at recess and lunch if they are unable to maintain social distancing (minimum 6 feet apart). If students are able to maintain social distance during recess or lunch, they still must have their face covering with them in the event that the 6 feet distance is broken. High intensity activities will not be allowed during recess and lunch due to the use of face coverings. Wearing face coverings during this time allows for slightly more flexibility in permitting children to play more closely with their classmates while still implementing safety measures.

For more information regarding Recess and Lunch procedures, please read the Physical Distancing on Campus Section.

The school will have disposable face masks available should a child forget to bring theirs. They will receive the face covering at the arrival screening station. After each day of use, the cloth face covering should be washed thoroughly before reuse.

Testing

Symptomatic testing: if a student or employee exhibits COVID-19 symptoms, the individual is to be sent home (or to remain at home). Testing for COVID-19 is encouraged. The student or employee may use the testing sites available on the County's website. While waiting for results, the student or employee should not return to school.

Response testing: If a student or employee is exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19, the student or staff member is required to quarantine for 10 days. Testing for COVID-19 is encouraged. The student or employee may use the testing sites available on the County's website.

Asymptomatic testing: Employees participate in asymptomatic testing. The schools has established a schedule for testing so that employees are tested once every two months.

All contacts of positive COVID-19 require a 14 day self-quarantine even if there is a negative test result during that period of time. All staff will be placed on a scheduled rotation for COVID-19 tests. These tests will take place every 2 weeks.

8. Dismissal procedure

At the end of each school day, all students will remain in their classroom under the supervision of their last period teacher. Dismissal will last from 2:00-2:30 pm each day and 12:30-1:00 pm on Wednesdays.

At least two designated staff members will be outside at the same entrance to school used for arrival.

Once a parent arrives to pick up their child, they will display a sign with their child's name so that the staff may alert the school office. The teachers will be notified through the school's PA system to send the child out to go home. All students will sanitize their hands before leaving campus.

Please be patient during the pick-up process since it will take longer for children to leave their classrooms and walk across campus safely. All parents must use a face covering when speaking to staff members.

As mentioned above, the students will be required to wear their face covering during the dismissal process.

9. Visitor policy

Only essential visitors will be allowed to come onto campus. Unfortunately, this means we cannot have parents or volunteers helping in the classrooms.

If you have to come to school for a meeting or an urgent matter between the hours of 8 am and 3 pm, please call the office if you do not have an appointment to ensure that we can help you safely. Appointments with teachers and staff are strongly encouraged so that we can ensure safety of everyone.

If you come to campus, you will be required to wear a face covering and any necessary meetings will take place whilst maintaining a 6 foot distance between parties. All visitors will be screened by having their temperature checked and will be asked about identifying signs, symptoms or contact with COVID-19.

10. School closure guidelines

St. Mary's School will follow diocesan and public health order guidelines regarding a possible temporary closure of campus.

When a student, teacher or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 and may have exposed others at school, the following steps will be taken:

- In consultation with the local public health department, it will be decided whether a school closure is warranted. The length of time of such a closure will be determined on the estimated level of risk to the community as determined by the local public health officer.
- Given standard guidance for isolation at home for at least 14 days after close contact, the classroom or office where the patient was based will typically need to close temporarily as students or staff isolate.
- Those who have engaged in additional close contacts at school outside of a classroom should also self-isolate
- Additional areas of the school visited by the COVID-19 positive individual may also need to be closed temporarily for cleaning and disinfection.
- The school community will be notified within 24 hours of the school knowing of an individual's positive test result.

If a school closure occurs, depending on the estimated duration of the closure, we will move to a distance learning structure. More information around distance learning can be found in the Instruction and Learning Section.

Cluster or outbreak at school

When either a school or LHD is aware that an outbreak may be underway, the LHD should investigate in collaboration with the school, to determine whether these cases emerged from a common contact at the school (e.g. a class or staff member, transport on a bus, or other common means of exposure outside of school). CDPH defines a school outbreak as 3 or more confirmed or probable cases of staff or students occurring within a 14-day period who are epidemiologically linked in the school, are from different households and are not contacts of each other in any other investigation cases (e.g. transmission likely occurred in the school setting).

During the investigation, the school will:

- Notify parents/guardians and school staff of a cluster outbreak investigation related to the school and encourage them to follow public health recommendations.
- Identify, as part of the CSP, one or more school staff members who can liaise with the LHD regarding the cluster/outbreak investigation by confirming which classes and stable groups include confirmed cases or symptomatic students and staff members, and if recent events or gatherings involved any cases or symptomatic persons.
- Identify absenteeism among those in affected classes or stable groups, and coordinate with the LHD to contact these absentees to screen for symptoms of COVID-19 if they were exposed to a case during the infectious period.
- Coordinate with the LHD to share a line list of cases and contacts with dates present at/or absent from school.
- Arrange for cleaning and disinfection of classrooms or other areas where cases or symptomatic students or staff members spend significant time.
- Coordinate with the LHD on notifications to the school community, including specific notifications of stable groups or classrooms regarding their exclusion status and related instructions.

11. School communication

The school community can expect to receive communications from the Principal through email, slide presentation and/or video and by newsletter. The Principal will communicate more regularly if needed.

Communication between home and school is vital during this time.

During distance learning, and prior to returning to in person school, the school will provide training for staff, parents and students relating to Reopening Plan policies, CDC guidance for monitoring symptoms and spread of the virus, proper hand washing, and proper face covering use. The staff will be trained by the Principal prior to the start of school. Students will be trained by their teachers during distance learning and once we reopen during class time. Parents will receive emails of the training materials and will be required to sign the Reopen Plan Acknowledgement Statement, indicating they have read and become familiar with the training materials.

The school community will be notified within 24 hours of the school's learning of a positive test result. Confidentiality must be maintained, according to FERPA and HIPPA.

Section Three: Catholic Identity

Our Catholic identity is the cornerstone of our school. While we must comply with health and safety regulations, we can be creative in how we bring our faith to life in our school community.

1. Mass Policy

St. Mary's School intends to continue weekly school Masses on Fridays at 8.30 am. Public health and diocesan guidelines will be followed in the course of such celebrations.

When the celebration of Mass inside is permitted the appropriate guidelines in force at the time will be followed.

To ensure the safety of everyone, the following Diocesan guidelines will be observed:

- Face coverings will be worn by all who attend Mass
- Students will sit with their class but maintain social distancing throughout the Church pews
- During this time, we will suspend the Choir and student participation in altar serving
- There is to be no physical contact during the Sign of Peace or singing during Mass
- All who intend to receive communion will receive it in the hand. The time of distribution of communion will be determined by the diocesan authorities.
- Parents are welcome to join us for Mass as long as they wear a face covering and sit socially distanced in the unused pews. Local guidelines in force at the time will be observed.
- Methods of contact tracing will be determined in accordance with diocesan guidelines.

2. Days of reflection/retreat policy

Each month, a different grade level will participate in a Day of Reflection mini retreat in the morning.

In order to maintain proper safety and hygiene, the Days of Reflection will be held in the classroom, which allows the students and teachers to maintain social distancing.

3. Daily prayer/reflection opportunities

Under the current guidelines, we will not be able to gather together outside as a school in prayer each morning. Each morning will therefore begin with a virtual prayer assembly using zoom and our smart boards. Each Friday before Mass there will be a virtual assembly for the whole school led by the Principal and Vice Principal for Instruction. Before this assembly the Principal will give a spiritual reflection.

Before meals, the students will pray together as a class. They will also pray together at the end of the school day.

Students will continue to have dedicated class time for Religion, which will allow them to explore and deepen their faith, as well as reflect on their relationship with God.

4. Engagement of families with faith

We know that family and faith go hand in hand and we are determined to be creative in how we integrate our faith community at St. Mary's School. As stated above, we will be able to welcome parents to join us for weekly Mass, as long as proper guidelines are met and capacity allows it together.

Our school and parents must operate in partnership in our mission of providing a faith based education to students. The school will continue to explore multiple ways to engage in our faith as a community while still obeying public guidelines.

Section Four: Physical Distancing On Campus

This section is intended to provide insight into the physical school layout, which will adhere to health guidelines, and promote productive learning and play.

1. Classroom setup

- Each grade level will be assigned a specific classroom, where all of their instruction will occur (except PE). If the students have different teachers for different subjects, the students will remain in their base classroom while the teachers rotate. The students will not be left unsupervised.
- Adhering to local and state guidance, all students will be 6 feet apart from one another to ensure social distancing.
- Teacher desks (if there are any in the classroom) will also be at least six feet away from any students.
- Teachers will maintain appropriate distance from students for their safety but will ensure that the students' social, emotional and academic needs are met.
- While on campus, teachers are expected to remain socially distanced from each other and avoid shared spaces. All meetings will be either socially distanced with facial coverings or held in a virtual manner.
- All policies described below allow the teachers to be socially distanced, whether in the classroom or in a supervisory role.

Cohorting

A cohort is a group of no more than 14 students and with no more than two supervising adults in a controlled environment. The members of the cohort will remain together for all their activities, including means and recreation. Contact with others outside the cohort is to be avoided.

2. Student Schedules

Students' schedules are designed to limit the amount of contact between grades while on campus in order to reduce the risk of virus transmission. Students' schedules are designed in a cohort based model, which means they will interact only with their grade level physically in the classroom, and outside for recess, lunch and PE. This involves two staggered recesses and lunch times at designated locations.

Parents are encouraged to review their children's schedule to better understand the temporary system we have in place.

The school will provide directional arrows and tape markings to provide assistance to staff and students in which directions they should be moving to promote social distancing and reduce the amount of traffic. In certain locations, the arrows indicate one way entrances and exits, and there are markers for social distancing outside the classrooms in the event that staff or students need to form lines. These arrows and markers should be followed by staff and students during all movements throughout the day. The campus will also have signage acting as reminders of signs and symptoms of COVID-19, proper hand washing technique and proper facial covering usage.

3. Recess/ Lunch Policy

Due to our staggered schedules students will be able to enjoy a 15 minute outdoor recess and 30 minute outdoor lunch each day. They will be assigned a specific location and rotate between 10 minutes of play time and 5 minutes of eating time for recess, and 15 minute rotations of play and eating for lunch.

Prior to coming to lunch and recess, students will visit their designated hand washing station to thoroughly wash their hands. Face coverings will be worn to and from recess. The students will be supervised throughout the duration of recess and lunch.

Eating Policies:

- Students will sit at their designated lunch area. There will be markers indicating where the students are to sit, limiting the tables to two students each. Face coverings will be removed for eating and drinking.
- Once students are finished eating, they will receive hand sanitizer from their supervising teacher. Students will have to wait for the end of their eating time (15 minutes for lunch) before engaging in play.
- A member of staff will wipe down the tables and benches where children sit to prepare for the next class.

Playing Policies:

St. Mary's school recognizes that play is an important part of the school experience. We also understand it is nearly impossible to have students play 6 feet apart. Under current guidelines and to allow slightly more freedom to students at play time, face coverings must be worn unless students can ensure a 6 foot distance from one another.

- High intensity activities will be prohibited during play time, as it is not safe to engage in them while wearing a face covering.
- Students will not be allowed any physical contact with other students and may not share play equipment. Students will be encouraged to engage in parallel play.
- Each grade level will have a designated bin of appropriate play equipment, which will not be shared with other grade levels. Students may ask permission to use a piece of equipment to play with, however, they have to use that equipment for the duration of play time and cannot share with another student.
- After play time is over, the equipment will be sanitized by a member of staff.

4. PE Policy

PE will be taught to students twice a week by grade level. Similar to the Play Section above, each grade level will have a designated bin of equipment, which they may also utilize for PE, although not every class will require equipment. Equipment may not be shared and will be sanitized after each class's use by a member of staff.

Face coverings will be worn to and from PE. Depending on the planned activity face coverings might be required for PE.

5. Supply policy

Due to health concerns relating to students sharing supplies, each student will be required to bring and use their own supplies during the school day. Backpacks must be left outside the classroom. Each student's desk has a storage place to house items needed during the day. Each student will be required to bring their own supply case to contain their own supplies. Please label all of your student's supplies so they do not get lost or mixed up.

If for whatever reason, a student needs to borrow supplies from the school or teacher, they must be sanitized before and after student use.

The students are not permitted to share supplies with other students without proper sanitation in between uses. Since this can be difficult for the teacher to facilitate, it should be assumed that students cannot share supplies, thus each student needs to come to school prepared.

Staff should not share supplies. If staff members need to use a shared item (such as the copier or water station), they must use the hand sanitizer located next to it prior to use and after use.

6. Technology policy

In the event of students using a device such as a chrome book or computer the device must be designated for the exclusive use of that student for that particular day. Once the Technology Use Agreement is signed by the student and parent/guardian, the student will be assigned a device to use each day. The teacher will provide the device to the student and the teacher will ensure the sanitization of devices at the end of the day.

7. Assembly/Gathering policy

Under the current guidelines we will not be permitted to hold whole school physical gatherings during the present COVID-19 situation in the Valley.

Morning assembly will occur virtually every morning and be streamed to each classroom until it is judged safe to gather outside together again. Other school wide gatherings will be done virtually unless we are able to divide the school up into small groups and still maintain social distancing.

Field trips are suspended until the present COVID-19 situation changes.

We will continue to monitor the situation and will be happy to move to in-person assemblies and gatherings when it is safe to do so.

Section Five: Cleaning and Sanitization Procedures

1. School cleaning and sanitization procedures

Prior to the school's re-opening, all carpets will be professionally cleaned and all air filters will be upgraded.

At the end of each school day, each space used by either teachers, students or staff, will be sanitized thoroughly so that when people arrive the next morning, the campus is safe and healthy. All products used for sanitization are EPA approved.

After play equipment is used by individual students, it will be sanitized thoroughly by a member of staff before reuse.

Once a sitting of lunch is concluded the lunch tables will be sanitized by a member of staff before use by another group.

Each grade level will have a sanitizer dispenser available for use all day. Each grade level will also be assigned a specific hand washing station for use throughout the day.

If a case of COVID-19 is positively diagnosed, the locations of extreme exposure will be closed off for at least 24 hours so that they may be thoroughly disinfected.

2. Teacher cleaning and sanitization procedures

Each teacher will have disinfectant wipes and a cleaning solution available to them in each classroom to facilitate cleaning sanitization. Outdoor spaces used by students will also have sanitizer available.

Teachers will be responsible for sanitizing any used items in their classroom (i.e. supplies, technology, etc.) at the end of the school day before they are used again.

3. Student cleaning procedure

Students will not be involved in the sanitizing process of surfaces or classrooms at the end of the day. Students will be responsible for cleaning their own hands before they enter school in the morning, before recess, before they eat, after lunch and at the end of the day.

During the day, the students may be asked to assist in the cleaning of surfaces or supplies by using soap and water. The teacher will spray the cleaning solution and the student will use a paper towel to wipe it down.

Section Six: Instruction and Learning

This section outlines the instruction and learning expectations based on a socially distanced model. Since the resurgence of COVID-19 brings the potential of more school closures, St Mary's School aims to be proactive in creating a system that may be easily transferred to a distance learning model. St. Mary's School also recognizes the extreme importance of adding additional social emotional learning opportunities for students as they return to school after many months away.

1. Digital Learning Platform

St. Mary's will continue to use Google Classroom as its learning management system for students in grades 3rd-8th. Each student (grades 3-8) has received a school email and password. This Google account should be used for schoolwork only and not used for any other purpose, neither should it be shared with any other person to avoid the possibility of hacking. For grades Kindergarten -2nd, the main platform will be SeeSaw. Parents each have access (in different ways) to the platforms and each have settings to inform them of student progress.

The advantage of having most classroom materials available on a digital platform all year round are many, but there are two main reasons for the benefit this offers to members of the St. Mary's community. First of all, in the event of another mandated school closure, the move to distance learning is much easier and seamless for the students. Secondly, since the guidelines regarding sick students are much stricter than before, this allows students much easier access to their classes if they are at home but well enough to engage in their schoolwork. Both are explained in more detail in the section below.

2. Distance Learning Platform

St. Mary's will offer a Distance Learning option, even if the school resumes in person learning. Students will be able to watch a live streamed class from home through zoom or another platform. All curricular materials will be sourced through our distance learning platform (SeeSaw for K-2 and Google Classroom for grades 3-8), so that access is available to all students in any situation.

- School Closure

In the event that the school is ordered to close due to COVID-19, we will return to distance learning. Students will access their class materials remotely and experience both synchronous and asynchronous learning with their teachers.

- The school will provide a weekly schedule to families, informing them of the expected classes each day. Teachers will also email parents of their expectations for learning.

- Students will experience a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning. Synchronous learning is when all students log onto Zoom with their teacher and conduct a live lesson. Asynchronous learning is when teachers will pre-record lessons or devise materials and make them available to students to work on at any time throughout the day. St. Mary's will mostly operate with synchronous learning.
 - Students will access their class materials through their digital learning platform (SeeSaw for grades K-2 and Google Classroom for grades 3-8) and turn in any necessary work or assessments to their teachers remotely.
 - For any given standard, if a student has not shown sufficient evidence of learning, they will receive a grade of "NE" meaning No Evidence.
 - During distance learning, St. Mary's will continue to use standard referenced grading as its system for assessing students and providing feedback. If students do not attend synchronous classes or submit any assessments, the school will communicate with the family to undertake measures to improve the situation.
- Mandated student isolation/sickness

Please refer to the Sick student guidelines section regarding mandated student isolation or sickness.

- If a student is at home but still able to attend class, the teacher should be notified by email so that they may be aware of their presence.
 - The student at home will log onto Zoom at the appropriate class time on their schedule. Their microphone should be muted for the duration of class unless they wish to ask questions or the teacher invites contributions from them. If attending class remotely, the student should be dressed in their St. Mary's uniform.
 - Most work that the class is assigned will be available to the student through their digital learning platform, so that they do not miss out on learning opportunities. During in-person classes, the student should expect to ask their teacher questions by means of the chat box or via email.
- Parental Choice

If a parent chooses to have their children remain in distance learning after we have opened in person learning, they will follow the same criteria listed above in the section describing Mandated students isolation/sickness. The principal will coordinate with the family regarding when a reentry is desired, if at all.

3. Grading Policy

Students who turn in assessments or work late will not be penalized in terms of their score, whether it is standards or achievement based. Students will be assessed on their progress towards mastery of grade-level standards. Grades K-8th will continue to receive feedback on progress towards mastery.

The standard or achievement grade consists only of the student's demonstration of learning. Also, as a reminder, not everything a student does is graded. The non-graded work, whether it is done at home or at school, is often where the learning occurs and where vital feedback is given.

As indicated in the Distance Learning Platform section, the only major change in terms of grading policy will be that whenever there is a standard that lacks evidence due to insufficient work from the student, it will be evaluated as “NE” meaning No Evidence.

All grades will continue to be recorded on GRADELINK. Students and parents can keep track of student progress through this system management platform.

4. Instructional Considerations

With the guidelines designed to ensure the safety of every student, teacher and staff member, we know that school will both look and feel different. We are happy to adjust our plan as restrictions change, but we will continue to help students feel safe, loved and cared for on campus to promote their human integration and love of learning.

While under these new restrictions, students may not move throughout the classroom as previously, teachers will accommodate this change by planning ways for students to collaborate from their places, whether verbally or virtually. Group projects and discussions are still eminently possible and will be encouraged.

Teachers will also be very aware of the amount of time students spend on their computer screens. While we know more screen time might be necessary in the interest of maintaining connection, it should not be used unnecessarily.

Much of the learning process could be described as ‘hands-on’. Typically, ‘hands-on’ resources are shared among the class. Teachers will be prepared to modify those activities in order that students may still experience learning through exploration and inquiry, but the sharing of supplies and materials is forbidden. Parallel exploration will then evolve, where students each have their own set of materials and can experience learning both together and individually.

Lastly, St. Mary’s students’ return to school will be exciting, but we also anticipate some underlying stress and anxiety. We are still very much in a pandemic and we know that everyone has dealt with this differently and experienced it in very different ways. We want students to WANT to come to school and when they are home, have time to relax, decompress and spend time with their loved ones. We value family connection amidst a stressful time. Therefore we will commit ourselves to giving students the necessary amount of homework in order to prioritize family time.

5. Social Emotional Learning

St. Mary’s aspires to support the social emotional learning of our students. The return of in-person learning rouses a large array of emotions, and we want students to feel safe when they step onto our campus, so that the new rules and regulations may appear less intimidating.

Academic instruction is important, but research confirms that students cannot learn in an environment where they do not feel secure or supported. As we return to our school, we aim to establish our safe environment first, so that learning can occur. Teachers are spending a lot of time designing specific ways to address the social and emotional needs of our students.

One concrete way of responding to these needs is through the addition of a specific homeroom period in the morning. The students will spend a designated time with their homeroom teacher, either individually or as a group exploring how they are feeling and adjusting to this new situation.

6. Equity

St. Mary's School will always promote equality and inclusion. Our practices must demonstrate that. St. Mary's School will strive to ensure that students have access to appropriate means of technology. In the event of reversion to distance learning, we will continue to loan out devices to those in need.

St. Mary's Re-Open Plan Acknowledgement Statement

By signing this document, I, _____, acknowledge that I have read the St. Mary's Re-Open Plan 2020-2021 in its entirety. I also acknowledge that this plan is subject to change based on updated and/or revised information regarding the safety and health of the students, teachers and staff. I acknowledge that I will be notified of any changes to this document.

I also acknowledge that I understand if I have any questions or concerns regarding this document, I will submit them to the Principal, the Revd. Dr. Allan White O.P. I also acknowledge that I understand that St. Mary's School will continue to follow local, state and national health orders regarding COVID-19. In the event of a declared and authorized policy does not meet with my approval or agreement with, I understand it is required through being based on the local, state and national guidance for re-opening schools.

I also acknowledge that by signing this document and returning the Acknowledgement Statement to the school, I am ready for my child return to campus, as long as it continues to be safe and while, all of these policies stated above are in effect. I acknowledge that I will comply with all of the policies pertaining to parents, particularly in the guidelines relating to the health of my child. And the well-being of all who study or work in the school.

Parent Name (printed)

Parent Name (printed)

Parent Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

Student Name

Student Name

Student Name

Student Name