

# **St. Louis Catholic School Pandemic Response Plan**

August 24, 2020 *(revisions will be as needed)*

St. Louis Catholic School is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all its' students, parents, employees, and guests. We have developed the following Pandemic Response Plan (PRP) for the 2020-2021 school year that will guide our decisions regarding the reopening of our school to students and employees. We recognize that through the implementation of the following efforts, we can greatly reduce, not eliminate, the risk of COVID-19 transmission in our school community.

St. Louis Catholic School will update this PRP as federal, state, and local guidelines and regulations change. It will also be included as a temporary addendum to St. Louis Catholic School's Parent/Student Handbook. Until communicated otherwise, the rules and guidance of this PRP control the extend that there is any inconsistency between it and the existing Parent/Student Handbook. If you have any questions regarding current policies and procedures, parents should contact the school office.

## **Reference Guide**

St. Louis Catholic School's Pandemic Response Plan is based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Ohio Department of Health (ODH), the American Academy of Pediatrics, Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards related to COVID-19 and Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and his recommendations and mandates as they pertain to COVID-19. In addition, the principal and teaching staff have worked together to develop this plan.

*According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, COVID-19 appears to behave differently in children and adolescents than other common respiratory viruses such as the flu, on which much of the current guidance regarding school closures is based. Although children and adolescents play a major role in amplifying influenza outbreaks, to date, this does not appear to be the case with COVID-19. Although many questions remain, evidence indicates that children and adolescents are less likely to be symptomatic and less likely to have severe disease resulting form SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) infection. In addition, children may be less likely to become infected and to spread infection.*

## ***Implementation***

To be effective, St. Louis Catholic School's PRP requires the full cooperation of all our school families and everyone is responsible for implementing and complying with the PRP. This plan includes steps, such as face coverings, physical distancing, screening procedures, contact tracing and signage placement.

This PRP addresses the health and safety procedures and responsibilities that St. Louis Catholic School has implemented including:

- Prevention procedures, including hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Procedures for safe physical distancing and limiting visitors and parents to the school
- Cleaning and sanitizing information
- Screening procedures and policies for anyone exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms
- Prompt identification and isolation of sick individuals and protocols for contact tracing
- Protection and controls for student pick up and drop off

## ***School Program: In-Person Learning/Distance Learning***

Our current plan is to start the 2020-2021 school year with in-person learning.

Safeguarding the health of our students, families and communities is our priority and we are prepared to switch to distance learning throughout the school year if public health guidelines require us to do so.

## ***In-Person Learning***

We are excited to welcome back students, offering a full-day schedule for K-6. We will have Mass, Library, specials including Music, PE and Art, and recess. St. Louis Catholic School's physical and human resources enable us to provide an in-person education under new health and safety guidelines. Some program modifications that you will see will include: physical spacing of desks/tables for students as far as our space allows. Each student using a desk will have a clear physical divider around the front and side of their desk. Student sitting at a table will be spaced apart from another student with a clear divider between them. Preschool guidelines differ from K-6 guidelines. They are not required to wear masks and social distancing will be done to the best of the teacher and teacher aide's ability. Increased use of outdoor spaces for student learning when weather permits and enhanced technology, including personal electronic devices for all students and digital access for K-6.

### ***Distance Learning if School is Closed by Public Health Officials***

In the spring when we were suddenly closed, we had to use the resources that were available to us on very short notice. We learned a lot through this experience and if we are required to move to full distance learning, our students will still experience the meaningful, faith-filled learning that represents St. Louis Catholic School's commitment to education. Students in grades K-2 will have access to their own Ipad, while students in grades K-6 will each have their own chrome book. Each student has a Google Classroom account, where assignments can be uploaded by the teacher, recorded lessons by the teacher, as well as live videos of instruction. Students in grades K-2 will also have available, an online teaching tool call SeeSaw, which is comparable to Google Classroom, but more geared towards K-2.

### ***Social-Emotional Support***

Supporting our students' emotional development is very important during these trying and uncertain times. Your child's teacher, Mrs. Tussing, as well as Father Walter will be available to help parents regarding adjustment back to school. Good communication between school and home is essential.

### ***Considerations for Parents***

Parents are encouraged to reinforce the idea that children have an important role in keeping themselves safe and healthy, rather than emphasizing the many unknowns. Although no one exactly knows what the school year will bring, it is important that children feel a sense of comfort knowing that there are specific things they can do (e.g., handwashing, maintaining a safe distance) to help keep themselves and others healthy.

Ample evidence shows that maintaining balanced nutrition, getting moderate exercise, establishing good sleep habits, and having adequate social support are the best ways to counteract the effects of stress on children (and adults). Little things can help to make big improvements in the reduction of stress!

Parents can help St. Louis Catholic School by communicating with their children that although every family has dealt with COVID-19 differently, our school community supports each other. There will be a different set of expectations at school, and we hope that everyone will respect differences in how families have

approached dealing with the virus. We will consistently remind students that we take these precautions out of Christian love for each other.

### **Mitigation Strategies**

We recognize that through the implementation of coordinated efforts, we can greatly reduce, *not eliminate*, the spread of COVID-19 in our school community. St. Louis Catholic School strives to balance our mitigation policies with the known benefits of children experiencing in-person learning at school

We have implemented basic infection prevention measures, including the promotion of handwashing and respiratory etiquette and the use of face coverings and, to the best of our ability, physical distancing. Continual in-person learning will only be possible with all of us working together to follow these health and safety guidelines, in and out of school.

- **Handwashing**

Frequent handwashing is critical in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. A sanitizer dispenser has been placed at the entrance to the school as well as in each classroom (using sanitizer of greater than 70% alcohol). Students, employees, parents and visitors should wash or sanitize their hands after entering the building. Everyone is instructed to frequently wash their hands throughout the day for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, but especially at the beginning and end of their time at school, before and after mealtimes and after using the restroom.

- **Face Coverings**

Everyone in grades K-6 must wear a face covering upon arriving to school and provide their own face coverings. Students should have an extra face mask with them each day at school. We do have disposable masks available in the event that something happens during the day that they are unable to wear their own. There will be scheduled mask breaks throughout the school day. According to public health officials, individuals can spread COVID\_19 to others even if they do not feel sick. While not a substitute for physical distancing, the use of face coverings is an important way that we, as a school community, can protect each other by mitigated the spread.

Exceptions may be made with consideration for medical reasons and to accommodate eating and drinking outdoor and physical activities, including P.E.

CDC guidelines provide general considerations for wearing and maintaining a face covering, including the following;

- The mouth and nose are fully covered
- The covering fits snugly against the sides of the face so there are no gaps
- The wearer does not have any difficulty breathing while wearing the covering
- The face covering can be tied or otherwise secured to prevent slipping

Face coverings do not have to be worn by employees when they are alone in their classroom or office.

- ***Cleaning and Disinfecting***

St. Louis Catholic School uses CDC-approved disinfectants and has updated disinfecting practices. This includes routine cleaning and disinfecting throughout the school. We will frequently clean and disinfect high-touch areas, such as door handles, and railings.

All students and employees will practice healthy hygiene, including frequent handwashing, throughout the day.

If someone within the community contracts COVID-19, contact tracing will be used to identify and notify people who may have been exposed at school and to also determine the exposed areas and equipment within the building. These areas and equipment will be disinfected per CDC guidelines.

- ***Limiting School Access***

As virus spread is more likely among adults, we want to limit the amount of parent and visitors. When you do need to come into the school, all parents and visitors must wear a face covering, use hand sanitizer at the entrance and will be screened upon arrival. Parents will not be allowed beyond the school office to deliver items to students. WE ask you to help your child be prepared for school to avoid any unnecessary trips into the building.

- ***Physical Distancing and Barriers***

All individuals will maintain a safe physical distance as much as our space allows for. Classrooms are arranged to provide the most space available between them. Each student desk/table has a plastic physical barrier provided. Signage and markings throughout the school will reinforce physical distancing reminders.

Students will eat lunch in their classrooms. Milk will be available for purchase and brought to their classroom. When weather permits, students will eat outside, picnic style.

- ***Shared Items and Drinking Fountain***

Teachers will limit the sharing of classroom materials and workspaces between students and will sanitize items as needed. Only items that can be easily disinfected will be used.

Not personal toys allowed from home.

Students and employees should bring a refillable water bottle with their name on it. There are water refiling stations outside the office and in the multi-purpose room.

- ***Field Trips***

There will be no field trips scheduled at this time.

- ***Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up***

Everyone must wear a face covering when arriving to school. Students will have their temperatures taken when arriving at the door. Others should maintain social distancing when entering the building and as temperatures are being taken.

### ***Health Screenings and Symptom Assessment and Reporting***

As defined by the CDC, individuals with COVID-19 may have any of the following symptoms, which appear two to 14 days after exposure to the virus; Cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills muscle or body aches, congestion or runny nose, new loss of taste or smell, persistent pain or

pressure in the chest, confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. Also, according to the CDC, this list of symptoms does not include all possible symptoms. Please contact your healthcare provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you. St. Louis Catholic School has implemented the following policies and procedures to assess a person's health status prior to entering the building; to provide guidelines for screening individuals before they are allowed to enter the building; and to provide a process for families to report when they are sick, experiencing symptoms, or if they or anyone in their household have come into close contact with someone who has COVID-19.

- ***Before arriving to school***

Anyone who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or knows that they have COVID-19 should isolate at home. In addition, parents should communicate with St. Louis Catholic School, using the methods below, if one of them or a member of their household tests positive for COVID-19, experiences symptoms of COVID-19, or has close contact\* with someone who is positive or symptomatic of COVID-19. (\*CDC currently defines 'close contact' as 'someone who was within six feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the patient is isolated').

Parents should take their children's temperature before arriving to school and keep their child home if they have a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above.

Parents should continue to report student absences, COVID-19 symptoms, close contacts, and COVID-19 diagnoses via telephone or email to the school office.

All parents will receive regular reminders to monitor their child's health and stay home if they are sick or showing symptoms. When it comes to attendance, we expect everyone to err on the side of caution when making decisions about sending your child to school.

- ***Screening procedure for Students***

Students will have their temperatures checked upon entering the building each day. Any student with a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above must return home.

- **Screening Procedures for Employees, Parents, and Visitors**

Employees, parents, and visitors will have their temperatures checked upon entering the building.

Any adult with a temperature of over 100 degrees Fahrenheit or above must immediately leave school or placed in an isolated area.

All individuals should wash or sanitize their hands after entering the building.

- **Policies for Individuals Exhibiting Symptoms at School**

If a student is sick or experiencing symptoms at school, the teacher or other designated adult will escort the student directly to an isolated area.

Employees or other adults in the building who become sick or experience symptoms while at school, should notify the appropriate office staff and leave the building immediately or report to the designated isolation room until able to leave the building.

- **Contract Tracing and Returning to School**

Contract tracing is part of the process of mitigating the spread of infection. St. Louis Catholic School has a plan to work with public health officials if a student, employee, or community member tests positive for COVID-19. Public health officials will work with the infected person to identify close contacts and will notify community members who may be close contacts. Patient confidentiality will be maintained. Instructions that follow current CDC and state of Ohio guidance will be provided to the infected person and all close contacts regarding isolation and quarantine. If you have any questions about the plan, please contact the school and we will contact the Wood County Health Department with your question if we are unable to answer.

- **Returning to School**

Anyone who is absent or sent home due to illness shall not be permitted back in school again until they have:

- Been fever and fever medication free for at least 24 hours and
- Other symptoms have improved



Please consult your family's healthcare provider if you have specific concerns about your or your child's health or would like further medical evaluation.

Anyone who is absent due to a positive COVID-19 test shall not be permitted back in the school until at least 10 days after the positive test result.

Anyone who is absent due to close contact with a person who has COVID-19 shall not be permitted back in school until 14 days after the last exposure. This person should check temperature twice daily and be observant for any onset of symptoms.

***In addition to the aforementioned requirements, anyone who is required to be off-campus due to a COVID-19 related concern must consult and receive clearance from the St. Louis Catholic School principal before being allowed back to school.***

### ***Training and Preparedness***

This document will serve as the St. Louis Catholic School response plan for COVID-19. St. Louis Catholic School will provide employees with this response plan and training on implementation.

Additional communications and training will be ongoing as COVID-19 guidelines and requirements change. If you have any questions, please contact the school office by calling (419)669-1875.

