



DIOCESE OF LAS VEGAS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Reopening Safely: A Planning Framework for the 2020-2021 School Year

INTRODUCTION

This plan has been created to aid in navigating the reestablishment of our schools where employees, students, and families feel safe - while reducing the impact of COVID-19 conditions with enhanced precautions and hygiene protocols in place. The guidelines referenced in this plan are based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD), and World Health Organization (WHO). Regular updates to this plan will be made based on information provided by the CDC, WHO, and all applicable federal, state and local agencies.

In addition, the development of our reopening plans has been guided by the Diocesan Restoration Advisory Council, established by Bishop Thomas, with representatives from a wide array of disciplines, including medical, education, civic, law enforcement, engineering, gaming, logistics, and pastoral ministries.

Our strategies for a return to on-campus instruction center on two principles: health and safety. Our classrooms will be configured to maintain the necessary distancing of students and limiting contact between classes during the school day in order to minimize the potential spread of any illness from group to group. Specific modifications to anticipate include: physical distancing; facial coverings; frequent hand washing; class-level groupings; the expanded use of campus/parish spaces for instruction; and temperature checks upon entry. Schools will see changes to their daily arrival and dismissal procedures, the set-up of classroom desks and furniture, as well as additional approaches to accommodate these new protocols. The layout for every school campus is unique; therefore, specific plans pertaining to these modifications will vary by each individual school.

Due to the unpredictability of public health conditions, our schools will prepare distance learning plans should they become necessary. As schools are permitted to open, parents will be given the opportunity to elect for virtual learning as well. Over the past months we have come to appreciate how vital Catholic schools are to our students; serving as centers of faith, academic excellence, community, and growth.

When we return to on-campus instruction, our goal is to minimize any health risks to our students, educators, and community. We will reduce the risk of COVID-19 by remaining vigilant, consistent, and flexible. Every tool available will be used to ensure that our students are in school - learning and growing in the safest environment possible. Though some protocols may be inconvenient, they are absolutely necessary in order to maintain this safety. We must all work cooperatively to support a healthy learning environment under these new conditions.

Prior to the commencement of the school year, all faculty/staff will be required to submit to COVID-19 testing and will be retested as needed. Any faculty/staff member who tests positive must follow CDC guidelines and quarantine before returning to on site work.

To ensure the highest standards of health and safety, we have obtained the essential Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), hand sanitizers, no-touch thermometers, water stations, and sanitizing materials, etc. We will also continue to mandate strong hygiene practices with additional cleaning and appropriate sanitizing measures added throughout the school day.

Safeguarding the health and safety of our students, families, and faculty/staff is of the utmost importance. Please understand that there is no method that can guarantee that COVID-19 cannot be spread among members of the school's community. All actions directed toward safety are to **mitigate and not eliminate** risk. By choosing the in-person schooling option, parents are acknowledging the inherent risks associated with such attendance.

Campus Protocols

BUILDINGS & CLASSROOMS

Signage to indicate direction in which to travel in hallways for consistent flow, social distancing, and proper distancing for lining up and movement of students and/or classes.

Classrooms may only accommodate space for a limited number of students to allow for distances of six feet.

Designated areas have been established for recess for each cohort group.

All students are to be facing one direction and are not to be grouped in configurations that would require facing one another.

There will be limited use of shared spaces (cafeteria, gym, library, science lab, etc.). These spaces may be appropriated for additional classes as per social distancing norms and expectations as long as teacher/student ratios and distancing are in place for teaching purposes.

Student lockers will not be in use.

All water fountains should be turned off with water stations in place. Reusable water bottles must be labeled with the student's name.

Hand (air) dryers are not to be utilized in restrooms.

The number of students in a restroom may not exceed the number of sinks in the restroom (with proper spacing marked outside of restrooms).

Hand sanitizer stations should be located at the entrance of the building as well as at the entrances and exits of each classroom and throughout the building as appropriate.




DIOCESE OF LAS VEGAS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Protocols to ensure safety include:




PLEASE BE SURE TO WEAR A FACE MASK OR OTHER PROTECTIVE COVERING WHENEVER ON CAMPUS.



PLEASE WASH OR SANITIZE YOUR HANDS OFTEN.



KEEP AT LEAST 6 FT. OF DISTANCE BETWEEN YOURSELF AND OTHERS.




PLEASE WAVE INSTEAD OF SHAKING HANDS.

SAFETY PROTOCOLS IN PLACE

CAMPUS ENTRY SCREENING

COMPLETE SURVEY PRIOR TO ENTRY



DISINFECT MASK? GLOVES

RESPECT EVERYONE'S SPACE

GOOD MORNING!

SMILE CHECK TEMPERATURE WASH



DO YOU HAVE YOUR SUPPLIES?



HAVE A GREAT DAY!

KEEPING CLASSROOM CLEAN

ROUTINELY CLEAN



TEACHERS CLEAN HANDS; WEAR GLOVES



RESPECT EVERYONE'S SPACE

RESTROOM USE

LOOK, ENTER IF OPEN SINK



USE STALL PREP TOWEL WASH

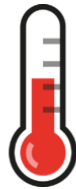


Daily Protocols & Procedures

GENERAL GUIDELINES

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the potential risk of exposure to members of our community, students and staff will be required to submit to daily screenings. Those registering a fever of 100.4 will be quarantined and sent home. In extreme heat, temperatures may have to be retaken. If exhibiting any of the other [COVID-19 symptoms](#) such as a sore throat, coughing, or nausea, all are asked to remain at home.

Schools strongly recommend that parents take their child's temperature each day before coming to school. If the temperature is 100.4 or greater, the child must remain at home and should see a doctor. This will ensure that students who likely would be excluded upon arrival will self-monitor and remain home.



Temperature Screenings

Temperature screening and screening questions as outlined in the CDC "Preparing K-12 School Administrators for a Safe Return to School in Fall 2020" will be taken as each staff member and student enter school buildings.

Persons who have fevers of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above or who are exhibiting other signs of illness shall not be admitted to the school. If the school has a nurse, the nurse will conduct the screening. In schools where a nurse is not present or is unable to conduct the screening, trained school personnel will be designated to do so.

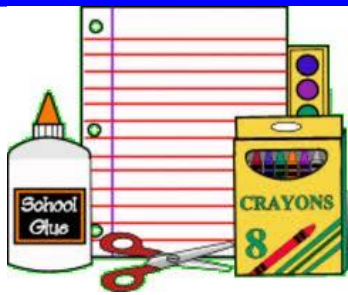


Face Coverings

Each school will follow the State mandate as it applies to face coverings: All Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade students and all school staff must wear face coverings while in school buildings or on school campuses unless approved for an exemption – producing documentation from a medical professional that they are exempt. Masks may be removed for brief periods of time and under certain conditions (such as recess, physical education activities, outdoor play, or lunch). However, when masks are removed, students must remain physically distant from one another (at least six feet). For those who will struggle with this, we would also be permitting the use of face shields.

Facing coverings are also mandatory, without exceptions, for all other adults in school settings, including parents, volunteers, and visitors.

GENERAL GUIDELINES



School Supplies

Items and supplies will not be shared. Students and staff are not permitted to share electronic devices, clothing, toys, books, games, or learning resources. **Items must be cleaned and disinfected between uses if devices are shared.**

Ensure the safety of children at all times by making certain that disinfecting products or cleaning materials are kept away from them and that when such items are utilized, proper ventilation is guaranteed.



School Visitors

Once school is back in session, visitors will continue to be limited while COVID-19 risks persist. All visitors must be pre-approved by the school's administration and require the same screening process as employees. All non-essential deliveries, including food, personal items, are suspended until it is deemed safe.

We will re-evaluate at the end of the 1st Trimester.



The following practices and training will be provided at each school:

- All constituents are to be taught—and will be expected to review on a periodic basis—the proper methods for using tissues and to cough/sneeze into a tissue or their elbows.
- Students will be reminded not to touch or remove face coverings, and if they are removed for any reason, not to place them on school surfaces.
- Students and staff shall practice frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least twenty seconds, scrubbing thoroughly, and drying; upon arriving at school, before meals and snacks, after using the restroom, periodically throughout the day, as well as any other time requiring hand hygiene.

- Hand sanitizer will also be available for when hand washing is not possible. It should not replace hand washing, which is the most effective protection against germs and the spread of disease.
- School leaders shall reiterate the importance of “non-touch acknowledgements” to show friendship and to reiterate the importance of socialization and human connection to teachers, staff, and students.
- Students shall not be permitted to congregate in large groups before, during, or after school.
- Windows and doors should be opened as frequently as possible, weather permitting, even when the space is occupied by the students, to allow for maximum air flow.

Each school has communicated the protocols that are unique to their individual campus. For your convenience, FAQ sheets are included within this plan in order to answer those most commonly asked questions.

Guidance For School Re-entry COVID-19 FAQ



Q: What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has identified several [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, including high fever (above 100.4°F), sore throat, coughing, nausea, headache, muscle aches, loss of taste or smell, runny nose, fatigue, diarrhea and difficulty breathing.

Q: What should I do if my child has symptoms of COVID-19?

If your child shows [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, do not send your child to school, and contact your child's doctor. Your doctor may ask that your child participate in a COVID-19 test. You should alert your school's main office and not send your child to school. If the symptoms occur during the school day, your child will be immediately sent to a quarantine area and you will be contacted to pick your child up from school.

Q: My child had COVID-19-like symptoms, but tested negative for COVID-19. When can he/she return to school?

If your child does not have COVID-19, but has another illness, you should keep your child home until the illness' symptoms disappear. Your school will require you to provide a negative COVID-19 test and/or a doctor's note before your child can return to school.

Q: What should I do if my child tests positive for COVID-19?

You should immediately contact your doctor for additional instructions. You should also contact your school's main office. You should not send your child to school.

Q: When can a student return to school after receiving a positive COVID-19 test?

If a student tests positive for COVID-19 or does not seek medical attention, students must isolate and not return to school until they have met [CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation](#). This includes:

1. Three or more days without a high fever (without the use of fever-reducing medication);
2. A reduction of other COVID symptoms by at least 75 percent; and
3. At least 14 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Q: What should I do if a member of my household (who is not my child) tests positive for COVID-19?

You should immediately contact your school's main office. Your school will ask that you keep your child home for at least 14 days. If your family member recovers from COVID-19 (through meeting the criteria in the previous question) AND your child shows no COVID-19 symptoms for the 14-day period, your school may allow your child to return.

Q: What happens if my child's teacher tests positive for COVID-19?

Should any employee have COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19, we will follow the same protocols used for students (see above). If your child's teacher becomes sick and is unable to work, your school will provide a substitute teacher.

Q: What happens if another student in my child's class tests positive for COVID-19?

Your school will make all parents aware that a student has tested positive for COVID-19. All students in the cohort will be monitored closely for COVID-19 symptoms. If more than one student tests positive for COVID-19, it is likely that the entire cohort will be isolated (sent home) for at least 14 days. Students will be allowed to complete work virtually while the cohort is away from school.

Q: What testing resources are available?

The [Southern Nevada Health District COVID-19 Resources page](#) includes links to the following:

- [COVID-19 Testing](#) Sites (update regularly)

- [CDC 's Coronavirus Self-Checker](#)
- CDC: ["What To Do If You Are Sick"](#)

Q: Could my child's school building be closed down due to COVID-19 this year?

We will do our best to ensure a safe and healthy environment in the coming year. However, if numerous cases appear in a single school, resulting in the isolation of multiple classes/cohorts, we may need to close the school building and transition all students to virtual learning for an extended period of time. Parents will be updated regularly should that need arise.

Guidance For Elementary School Re-entry Health and Safety FAQ



Q: What does "reopening our schools" really mean?

Gathering as a school community is an integral part of Catholic education. We are approaching our Catholic schools re-opening both responsibly and cautiously. This means that all students are welcome to return to classes for face-to-face instruction in August. We have developed an in-depth plan that addresses numerous aspects of the reopening process and how schools will function once reopened.

Q: Will students be safe when school is reopened? Has your plan been reviewed by medical professionals?

In constructing our reopening plan, we have closely studied guidance from federal and state authorities, as well as the medical professionals who have provided guidance as members of our Diocesan Restoration Advisory Council. We are confident that our students can return safely to school in August as we implement this guidance.

Our mission to ensure that each student flourishes compels us to take all necessary precautions to minimize the spread of COVID-19 within our schools. Safety is always our top priority in Catholic education.

Additionally, we have diligently worked with the Diocese to measure and map out all of our facilities and address specific areas to address in our individual school reopening plan.

Q: Who decides when a school has met the requirements to reopen? When will this happen?

Our plan includes specific requirements that schools must meet in order to reopen safely. Schools must complete a "Return To School Plan" and submit it to the Diocesan Restoration Council for review and approval. All plans must be submitted 20 days prior to the first day of the school year. Only with such approval will a school be permitted to reopen.

Q: Will all students be allowed to return to school at the same time?

Yes. Our plan provides for the return of all Catholic school students for full-day instruction.

Q: How will schools safeguard the health and safety of students?

Social distancing, including desks spaced 6 feet apart, wearing of masks, hand-sanitizing stations in every classroom and work/play area, frequent hand-washing, outlined traffic/walking patterns throughout the school, staggered recess/lunch schedules, daily health screening for all students and employees (prior to entry), as well as daily deep cleaning are among many of the safeguards put into place. Please refer to the "Guidance For School Re-entry COVID-19 FAQ Sheet for additional information.

Q: Will students need to wear masks at school?

Yes. As per directives of the State, all students, Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12, will need to wear masks while at school. Masks may be removed for brief periods of time under certain circumstances (such as recess, outdoor play or lunch). However, when masks are removed, students must remain physically distant from one another (at least six feet). For those who will struggle with this, we would also be permitting the use of face shields.

Q: Do I need to purchase masks for my child?

Yes. We are asking all parents to purchase masks for their child. Parents may opt to buy disposable or reusable masks. For disposable masks, each mask must be thrown away at the end of every school day and parents should send extra masks to school with their child. For reusable masks, masks should be cleaned after every use and students should have at least one extra reusable mask at school.

Q: Will teachers teach children how to use masks?

Yes. We know that students (especially young children) will need training to learn how to properly wear masks. We will spend time at the beginning of the year helping children learn how to safely keep masks in place.

Q: Will students be required to physically distance at school?

Our plan calls for each student to be part of a larger group of students called a “cohort.” Each cohort will roughly align with a homeroom class. When students are with their cohort, they should remain as far apart as possible. Homeroom teachers are also part of cohorts, and can walk around their classroom to monitor student classwork. Students must also remain at least six feet apart from other cohort groups. We believe the cohort model provides for better containment should there be a positive case of COVID-19.

Q: Should I take my child’s temperature every day before school?

Yes. A high fever is a key symptom of COVID-19. Parents should take their child’s temperature every day before their child is taken to school. If your child has a fever of over 100.4°F, your child should be kept home from school. You should contact your child’s doctor and the school’s main office. Similarly, you should ask your child if he/she has any of the other [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, such as a sore throat, coughing, or nausea. If your child complains of these symptoms, you should keep him/her home and contact your doctor and the school office.

Temperature checks/screenings will take place each morning before entering classrooms. (Please see below).

Q: How will drop off and pick-up be handled?

We are asking each school to carefully evaluate drop off and pick up procedures. Schools will use various entrances and exits to minimize contact between student cohorts. Parents will be asked not to congregate near school doors. Your principal will communicate specific drop off and pick up procedures to you ahead of the start of school.

In addition, when students enter school every day, they will be asked to participate in three tasks. These are:

1. A temperature check, administered by a school employee (please note that parents should also take temperatures every day, as stated above).
2. Students will wash their hands with soap or use hand sanitizer.
3. Students will be asked if they are feeling well.

If a student has a temperature above 100.4°F or complains of other COVID-19 symptoms, he/she will be immediately brought to a quarantine area. Parents will be contacted and asked to pick up the child.

Q: What does the plan say about safety and cleanliness requirements for school buildings?

Our plan includes very specific requirements for the ongoing cleaning and sanitizing of our
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school buildings. Generally speaking, buildings will be cleaned very frequently, with a particular focus on high-traffic areas and common surfaces. Windows and/or vents will be opened to maximize air flow. Barriers will be installed in main office areas. Our plan contains instructions for schools on managing shared areas such as hallways, gymnasiums, lunch rooms/cafeterias and bathrooms.

Q: How will lunch take place when school reopens?

Our plan asks that schools think differently about lunchtime. Presently, lunch rooms/cafeterias may only seat 50 or fewer students, and students must be physically distanced. As such, each school is developing a customized plan that fits their unique building. Most schools will have students eating lunch in their classrooms and/or have students use the lunch room/cafeteria in staggered shifts.

Q: What about recess?

Schools may still conduct recess, but schools must fulfill defined safety requirements. For example, cohorts must be spread out from one another. If recess is outdoors, masks may be removed, but students will stay at least six feet apart.

Q: Can I still volunteer at school?

We have asked schools to minimize the number of volunteers this year in an effort to mitigate risk. Thus, your school will likely limit volunteers – especially during the first trimester. We will re-evaluate at that time.

Q: Will extended care (before and after care) be available this year?

Yes. Schools may continue to offer extended care. Our plan includes specific requirements for such care (including face coverings, social distancing, and limiting the number of participants).

Q: My child and/or another member of my household is in an at-risk group for COVID-19. Should I send my child to school?

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has defined [conditions in which certain people may be more at risk for severe illness through COVID-19](#). If your child or another member of your household is in an at-risk group, we encourage you to speak to your doctor. Ultimately you should decide whether it is safe for your child to attend school. Our schools will work to accommodate the essential needs of your family. Please contact your school's principal to further address.

Q: What do I do if I do not feel safe sending my child back to school?

We have taken every step to ensure the safety of students at our schools in August.

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Families may have health concerns or may include family members in an at-risk group for COVID-19. As such, a virtual learning option will be available to any family who desires this alternative. The family will remain enrolled at their current school and will be asked to continue paying tuition. Our schools are committed to working with you to provide a high-quality distance learning alternative.

Q: Is it okay for my family to travel out of town during the COVID-19 pandemic?

A: We recommend that you do not plan to travel out of town during the current pandemic. However, if travel is necessary, we encourage you to become familiar with the [Southern Nevada Health District](#) and [CDC Health Advisory and Travel Guidelines](#).

Q: What happens if there is a COVID-19 surge in Las Vegas and the state imposes more restrictions on schools?

If a COVID-19 surge occurs, we will work closely with state officials to determine whether we can continue face-to-face instruction (even on an alternate schedule). If necessary, we will return to at-home distance instruction. As always, the safety and health of our students, teachers, and staff are our priority.

Our schools have distance learning plans and protocols in place if needed.