

St. Joseph School Re-Opening Plan 2020-2021



From the Diocese of Catholic Schools

- With the permission of Most Rev. Daniel R. Jenky, CSC, Bishop of Peoria and Most Rev. Louis Tylka, Coadjutor Bishop of Peoria, the 42 diocesan Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the Diocese of Peoria will reopen for the 2020-2021 academic year.
- The Office of Catholic Schools' Diocesan Plan includes guidance on health and safety, human resources, finance, and communications and provides two options for families in which to enroll their student(s) for instruction: 5-days per week in-school or 5-days per week via online learning.
- This reopening plan was written with the guidance of: 1) medical community representatives in the Peoria and Bloomington-Normal areas; 2) the five Illinois diocesan Catholic schools' superintendents; 3) the principals of the Diocese of Peoria; 4) guidance documents from the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Illinois State Board of Education, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and 5) the Vicar General, the Chancellor and Diocesan Attorney, and the Superintendent of Schools in the Diocese of Peoria.
- There are three guiding principles of the OCS Diocesan Plan for the reopening of schools: 1. Our school buildings will provide a safe and faith-filled environment for our students. 2. The course of the pandemic in Illinois remains fluid. As such, the OCS Diocesan Plan may be updated on a continual basis as pandemic data and guidelines are regularly reviewed. 3. Our school families will be asked to serve the common good and to work in cooperation with not only their diocesan school but also with the Office of Catholic Schools to the best of their ability.
- In addition to these guiding principles, employees and students will be required to wear masks, social distance, practice proper hygiene, and be temperature-scanned throughout the school day. More details that pertain to the health and safety of our schools can be found in the OCS Diocesan Plan that will be published on the Catholic Diocese of Peoria's website (www.cdop.org) and the schools' websites.
- For more information about the reopening of the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Peoria, please contact an individual school's principal or the Superintendent of Schools.

E-Learning

- Teachers will send videos, assignments and directions for work in the afternoon after school dismissal. Remote learning students will be one day behind students receiving in-person instruction and will be required to complete 3 subjects each day. This is necessary due to videoing lessons, preparing assignments and uploading to the various platforms being used at that grade level.
- Please note that our teachers are providing “in class” instruction during the instructional day, therefore they will not be as readily available to answer questions or respond to emails until their students have left for the day.
- E- learning students would utilize that evening and the next day to complete their work.
- Due to In-person teaching, our teachers are not available to respond to E- learning questions or e-mails during the instructional day. This is a significant change from this past spring. Classroom teachers will respond to Remote learning questions within two hours of the end of the day. or at other scheduled times. Please give at least one day’s notice in requesting to schedule a 1:1 google meet session with a teacher. As with any school communication, please allow a teacher 24 hours to respond to student or parent emails
- E-learning students still must be in compliance with all the same requirements as in-person: immunizations, physicals, etc.
- Grading will be the same as In-person. Assignments will be expected to be turned in within 24 hours of the due date.
- Families may select one option at this time. Changes after the fact will need to be approved by the principal/pastor.

In the event of an extended absence such as quarantine, students will be automatically moved to Remote learning provided they are not sick. If a whole class is required to quarantine, remote learning will change as the teacher will have the ability to give their complete attention to remote instruction.

In- Class Instruction

- **THE COHORT MODEL**
- The Catholic Diocese of Peoria's elementary schools are to operate under a "cohort" model when buildings reopen. Under a cohort model, students and staff are grouped by grade level. These groupings are designed to allow the same group of students to stay with the same staff (all day for young children and as much as possible for older children) while minimizing the risk of cross contamination between cohorts. It also allows single classes to be quarantined in the event of infection, rather than closing the entire school building. Grade level teachers are considered part of the same cohort as their students, but other teachers (including specials' teachers) and staff are considered outside the cohort.
- Employees and students shall self-report when experiencing any of the symptoms that are associated with COVID19 during the school day.

Masks and Personal Protective Equipment

- All individuals in school buildings (students, employees) are to wear masks.
- All students will be provided with one mask from St. Joseph School. Families are asked to supply additional masks for their child/children. Reusable cloth masks are allowed with the stipulation that they be washed every night in preparation for the next school day if using the same mask. Disposable masks are preferred in the school setting with the intention of disposing at the end of every school day.
- Masks should not contain messages or images that would distract from the educational environment of the school.
- Schools will ensure an ongoing supply of PPE (disposable face masks, cleaning supplies) for all employees and will maintain a minimum supply of masks for students in case students forget or break their personal mask.
- Masks may be removed in special circumstances, i.e., when eating or drinking or engaged in outside activities or instruction. Individuals should wash or sanitize hands before putting their face covering back on.
- Schools will maintain a regular supply of gloves for cleaning surfaces and treating students with medical injuries/illnesses.

Arrival and Dismissal

- Students will enter one of the two doors when they arrive at school. There will not be morning recess at this time, that is subject to change if/when regulations change.
- All students and employees shall wear a mask when entering the building at the beginning of the school day.
 - Employees will be checked and are responsible for taking their temperature every day. Any faculty or staff member (and in very limited instances, volunteers) with a temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit will be sent home.
- Schools will perform “Wellness Checks” of all students. Employees shall temperature scan each student upon arrival, and any student with a temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit will be sent home.
- Students shall wash hands or receive hand sanitizer upon entering the school each morning to assist with safety and hygiene.
 - Parents and guardians should not enter the building to escort students to/from classrooms at arrival and dismissal.
 - Student bus riders will be socially distanced as much as possible, and students will wear a mask and use hand sanitizer when traveling via bus. No more than 50 individuals should be on a bus at one time.
- **DISMISSAL**
- As with arrival, schools will utilize as many exterior entryways as possible and assign classes to exit through only their assigned doorway upon dismissal. Employees will accompany students as they are dismissed.
- Parents will be instructed to remain in vehicles instead of congregating outside school exits. Schools should implement procedures to screen student pickups to ensure ongoing safety.

General Facility Cleaning, Hygiene and Shared School Supplies

- Schools will follow the building cleaning and disinfection procedures outlined in the guidance from the Catholic Mutual Group and in the ISBE/ IDPH's *Transition Joint Guidance*.
- Sharing of school supplies such as pencils, markers and art supplies will be eliminated. Students shall maintain their school supplies in individually labeled containers, cubbies, desks, classrooms, or book bags. Shared equipment, such as one-to-one devices, will be used by as few children as possible and will be cleaned and disinfected before use by another student.
- All rooms will have access to either a sink and soap in the classroom or in a bathroom for frequent hand washing and/or have access to hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Spray bottles of cleaning disinfectant will be readily available in each classroom and shared spaces for use throughout the day. Common surfaces in shared spaces (e.g. office, bathrooms, stair handrails, etc.) will be cleaned multiple times per day.
- Installing physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions in shared areas, where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least three to six feet apart (e.g. main office desk), may be considered.
- Food and drink will not be shared (including student snacks and lunches). Individually wrapped birthday treats may be shared during lunchtime.
- Drinking fountains will *only* be used to fill reusable water bottles. Signs will be placed on water fountains indicating their sole use is for refilling water bottles.
- For the 2020-2021 school year, schools shall discontinue the use of perfect attendance awards.

CORE CLASSROOMS – REMAINING WITHIN COHORT OR CLASSROOM SUBJECT

- Students and staff will continue the use of masks within cohorts and classrooms.
- Declutter classrooms with the intent of maximizing floor space. Consideration should be given to eliminating shared spaces, such as reading nooks or instructional breakout tables, until the pandemic has passed.
- Arrange desks in rows facing the same direction and provide as much distance between desks as possible. If tables are used instead of desks, attempt to spread out students at tables. Consider taping off tables to separate student workspace.
- Frequently clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces daily, including desks and door handles.
- Shared classroom spaces, such as science labs, should be cleaned before and after usage by each cohort or classroom.
- Students and employees should use hand sanitizer or wash hands with soap after returning to the classroom from any location.

Preschool Classroom

- Follow guidelines that apply to K-8 classrooms.
- Classroom supplies may be shared, given the unique educational practices of early education, but limited to *essential use only* and cleaned frequently.
- Snacks: Will take place in the school cafeteria. Students may remove masks while eating. Minimize student movement and prevent food sharing. Clean surfaces immediately after snack time.
- Naptime (*if applicable*): Do not permit sharing of cots or bedding. Spread children out as much as possible, and masks may be removed if children are at least three to six feet apart.

Junior High Students

- 7th and 8th grade students will receive instruction from Ms. Moore and Mrs. Dare.
- 7th and 8th grade subjects will be blocked together to allow for less transition between classes.
- Example: 8th grade with Mrs. Dare for Reading, Language, Math in the morning then after lunch 8th grade with Ms. Moore for Religion, SS, and Science.
- No locker rooms will be used until further notice.
- Students will still have lockers but frequency to the lockers during the day will be limited

PE, Music and Spanish

- PE will be held outside to the extent possible to allow for students to participate without masks.
- If PE is held in the gym, students and the teacher are required to wear masks.
- Music will be held in each classroom, the teacher will travel and students will stay in their classroom.
- Spanish will be held in each classroom, the teacher will travel and students will stay in their classroom.
- Specials' teachers will minimize shared supplies (e.g. art supplies). In any case, supplies will be cleaned between each use particularly when used by different cohorts or different grade levels.
- Music classes will try to avoid singing or asking students to play woodwinds, brass instruments, and recorders, in order to minimize risk of cross contamination *unless* social distancing can be maintained

Lunch and Recess

- Students will wash their hands or apply hand sanitizer before and after eating.
- The lunch/ recess schedule has been changed to allow cohorts to stay together and allow less students at recess and in the cafeteria at a time. Lunch/ Recess will run from 11am-12:30pm
- Surfaces used for lunch should be disinfected after eating.
- Students will eat lunch in the cafeteria with their cohort.

Recess

- Recess equipment, will be cleaned between cohorts' usage.
- When recess is outside, masks may be removed and social distancing maintained. As students re-enter the building, masks will be worn and hand sanitizer used.

Medical Needs

- Schools will provide ongoing medical care as described in the school's handbook policies. This includes the authorization to administer approved medications, prescriptions, and basic first aid (with the exception of nebulizer treatments, which should not be administered at school).
- Staff should wear gloves and masks when providing medical care for students.

Visitors/Volunteers

- Visitors and volunteers will have extremely limited access to the school building during the pandemic including events such as Grandparents' Day, etc. Parents will be limited to the main office only.
- When volunteers are needed to assist under certain circumstances, the principal shall approve and ensure that health and safety protocols are followed.
- The school office will keep accurate records of all visitors and volunteers, including the individual's reason for the visit, contact information and all locations visited in case contact tracing is needed.

Family Travel

- Students will self-quarantine after traveling to another country or to another state that is experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks, as determined by the most current guidance from the Governor of Illinois, IDPH/ISBE, and CDC.
- Parents/students should inform schools immediately if they display COVID-19 symptoms during the self-quarantine period. Schools should follow the *Infection Protocol* (outlined below) in such instances.

Special Events/ Drills

- Large group gatherings of special events will be avoided or conducted virtually.
- Including
 - Back to School Night
 - Parents Club
 - Extra-Curricular Committee
 - (Art Club, Lego League, and any other extracurricular group)
- **Athletics**
- IESA has released information stating that no fall sports will take place at this time (Cross Country, Softball, Baseball)
- The guidelines published by the IDPH and the Governor of Illinois will be observed as dictated by the current and ever-changing course of the virus.
- Field trips are prohibited during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Choir, Drama/School Play, Christmas Programs**
- These programs will be canceled or may be performed virtually unless OCS grants permission to schedule in-person following the *Restore Illinois* plan guidance for phased reopening.
- **Band**
- There is no scheduled band instruction at this time, in the future this will be reconsidered per health and safety guidelines and an instructor will be hired at that time
- **EMERGENCY DRILLS**
- Emergency drills in all diocesan schools will be conducted per OCS and ISBE requirements.

INFECTION PROTOCOL-WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE GETS SICK

- **DEFINITION OF EXPOSURE TO COVID-19**
- **To be considered exposed to COVID-19**, you need to have prolonged close contact with a person who has the virus. **Close contact includes** living in the same household, caring for a sick person with the virus, being within 6 feet of a sick person with the virus for at least 15 continuous minutes without the use of a face covering, or being in direct contact with secretions from the sick person.

Prevention

- **PREVENTION**
- As outlined in the *Health and Safety* section, temperature checks of all students and employees will be taken on arrival each morning. Any student, employee (or volunteer) who has a temperature above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit will be sent home and encouraged to contact a doctor.
- Schools will provide professional development in regard to the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 as provided by OSF Healthcare, local public health departments, Catholic Mutual Group, or other medical agencies.

RESPONSE TO COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

- **Contact:** Person is without symptoms but has been made aware a COVID exposure has occurred (family, community, work).
- Get tested at least 5 days after the exposure. *Testing done prior to 5 days from the exposure may be falsely negative due to insufficient viral reproduction time.*
- May continue to work/school while awaiting results and wearing a mask, social distancing, and hand washing.
- Check temperature and symptoms twice a day. Any symptoms should be reported and quarantine begins immediately until test results are returned.
- Family contact (see below).

- **Symptomatic:**
- Anyone who is symptomatic for COVID (with or without) known exposure will be sent home immediately.
- Should also go for PCR nasal testing immediately. *Return to work will be guided by test results and CDC criteria.*
- Symptoms for COVID include: fever of 100.4 degrees, loss of taste/smell, fatigue/achy muscles, sinus/nasal, sore throat, nausea/vomiting/diarrhea, cough, shortness of breath.
- It is recommended that student's parents or employee contact their pediatrician or doctor to discuss the symptoms and arrange for an evaluation.
- Quarantine (no work/school) until: COVID negative or an alternate diagnosis is made (ear infection, strep, flu, etc.)
- If the pediatrician or doctor feels that an alternate diagnosis is confirmed or likely, the student or employee can return with a physician/APN/PA note AND cessation of symptoms for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medication (Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen).
- If the student or employee does not seek medical evaluation, does not receive COVID testing, or no alternate diagnosis is discovered, they should be considered a presumptive COVID positive case and shall remain out of school for 10 days from the on-set of symptoms PLUS at least 24 hours from resolution of fever reducing medication (Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen).
- No need to notify classmates/colleagues unless COVID test is positive.

COVID19 Positive

- Quarantine minimum 10 days with 24 hours from resolution of fever-reducing medication ((Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen).
- Even if not symptomatic, quarantine.
- Any confirmed case of COVID19 within the school will lead to notification of faculty, staff, students, etc., who have pertinent exposure in order that monitoring can begin.

Isolation Protocol

(revised 08.22.20)

- **If any student, employee or volunteer is COVID19 positive**, principals will immediately contact the Superintendent of Schools. While every situation is unique, the following steps will likely be implemented:
 - 1. The student, employee (or volunteer) will be sent home and monitored for ongoing symptoms, as described above, quarantined for **10 days from the start of symptoms**.
 - 2. The Superintendent will create a notification letter for the principal to send out parents and employees, as deemed necessary. Note: it is essential that the privacy of the effected student or employee be protected. Principals should *not* disclose the specific identity of the infected individual to parents or any employees who do not need to know.
 - 3. The student or employee's classroom/work area will be thoroughly cleaned. Windows in the area will be opened to maximize airflow.
 - 4. The principal will carefully monitor the health of students and teachers who are part of the infected individual's cohort (in the high school, the entire school population). Principals will contact the Superintendent of Schools for further instructions *before* initiating an entire Cohort or School Self-Quarantine.
 - 5. If an entire Cohort or School is placed into self-quarantine, the Superintendent of Schools will create a notification letter for the principal with the goal of notifying families and employees of the cohort or school closure.
 - 6. The principal will work with the Superintendent of Schools to decide if and when some or all of the cohort members or entire school can return to school.
 - 7. Students will be allowed to complete and submit academic work via remote learning while self-quarantined.
 - 8. Before a COVID19 positive student or employee is allowed back into the school, the physician or pediatrician should provide a statement that clears the student or employee to return to in-class instruction or to work. **Employees should not have a negative test to return to school. A clearance letter is sufficient, as the molecular tests can remain positive for quite some time even after the person is no longer infectious.**
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Isolation Protocol

- **EXPOSURE TO A FAMILY MEMBER WHO IS COVID19 POSITIVE**
- Any student or faculty/staff member, **with a family member who has tested COVID19 positive**, will be sent home and required to self-quarantine for 14 days from the last time of exposure to the positive person. **If you cannot isolate from that person while living with them, then you must quarantine for up to 24 days (the 10 days of symptoms plus the 14 days from the last day of exposure....EXCEPTION: if you get sick or test positive for COVID yourself, then you have a 10 day quarantine from the day you get sick or have a positive COVID test.)** This requirement *includes all students or members of the affected family member who are at the school*, regardless of whether or not they, themselves, have tested negative. The student(s) will be allowed to complete and submit academic work via remote learning.

Further Guidance On Symptoms of COVID 19

- This area is very challenging. With the fall season upon us, allergies, seasonal infections, and the not-so-distant influenza season will have similar symptoms to COVID19. Therefore, the latest guidance from OCS' advisory group, IDPH, and CDC is that if a student wakes up in the morning with a new or disconcerting symptom, the **parents will contact the pediatrician or primary care physician and discuss these symptoms with them**, especially if the *family has been traveling* in or out of state and have been exposed to someone who is suspected of or who has tested positive for COVID19. If a student or employee has symptoms, they will be sent home from school. That guidance **includes all members of the same family** who are in the school, as we know that the family unit is the highest source of exposure. A student or employee will need to **provide a clearance letter** in order to return to in-class instruction or work.

Pending Test

- Students and employees who are sent home, or who are home and have pending COVID19 tests, must continue to self-quarantine until they have received the results of the COVID19 test and are cleared to return to school or work. This guidance is simply given to limit, to the best of our ability, the risk of spreading the virus for the good of all. **Pending tests should include all family members; so if you have one child out pending a COVID test, then all other children/parents in the school must also remain away from school.**
- Any parent who chooses **NOT to get a COVID19 test** for themselves or for their child(ren), and are displaying symptoms of the virus or have been exposed, will be asked to self-quarantine for 10 days. A clearance letter must be provided in order to return to in-class instruction.

COVID-19 Waiver

- Per the Diocese of Peoria , for your student to attend In-Class instruction for the 2020-2021 school year parents must complete the following COVID-19 waivers.
- Adult Waiver
- Extra- Curricular/ Athletic Waiver
- Student Waiver

- **OCS Advisory Group**
- **Medical Community, Peoria**
- Terry Ho, M.D., OSF Healthcare, Pediatrics
- Douglas Kasper, M.D., OSF Medical Group: Infectious Disease
- Lori Racska, D.O., UnityPoint Health-Methodist

- **Illinois (Arch)Dioceses Offices of Catholic Schools**
- Mr. Mike Kagan, Superintendent, Diocese of Rockford
- Dr. Jim Rigg, Superintendent, Archdiocese of Chicago
- Rev. John Belmonte, Ph.D., Former Superintendent, Diocese of Joliet
- Dr. Michael Boyle, Superintendent, Diocese of Joliet
- Ms. Brandi Borries, Superintendent, Diocese of Springfield
- Mr. Jonathan Birdsong, Superintendent, Diocese of Belleville

- **Offices of the Bishop and the Chancery, Diocese of Peoria**
- Most Rev. Daniel R. Jenky, CSC, DD, Bishop of Peoria
- Most Rev. Lou Tylka, DD, Coadjutor Bishop of Peoria
- Rev. Msgr. Philip D. Halfacre, Vicar General
- Ms. Patricia Gibson, JD, JCL, Chancellor and Diocesan Attorney

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- **Medical Journal Articles**

- <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2006100>
- <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2007617>
- [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642\(20\)30177-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642(20)30177-2/fulltext)
- [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370\(20\)30177-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370(20)30177-2/fulltext)

- **American Academy of Pediatrics**

- <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>
- <https://www.pjstar.com/news/20200718/peoria-pediatrician-weighs-in-on-controversy-back-to-school-during-covid-19>

- **Illinois State Board of Education/Illinois Department of Public Health**

- <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Part-3-Transition-Planning-Phase-4.pdf>

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/preventgetting-sick/prevention.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html>
- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2020/07/21/how-long-should-you-isolate-if-you-test-positive-coronavirus-new-cdc-guidance-says-10-days-not-14/>

- **Catholic Mutual Group**

- <https://www.catholicmutual.org>

Resources