



COVID-19 School Return Plan 2020-2021

Contents

Prayer and Introduction.	1
A Catholic Perspective.	2
Health and Safety.	3
CDC Recommendations for Mitigating Risk of Transmission.	3
Face Coverings.	4
Social Distancing.	4
Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette.	4
Disinfecting and Sanitation Plan	5
Symptom Monitoring and Self-Assessment.	5
School Nurses.	5
School Policy on Vaccinations and Sickness.	6
Procedure for On-Site School Outbreak.	6
Academics and Student Success	6
Instructional Plan.	6
Technology.	6
Distance Learning.	7
Grading for Distance Learning.	7
Social Distancing in the Classroom	7
Movement of Individuals in the School Building.	7
Daily School Life	8
Arrival and Dismissal from School Day	8
Classrooms.	8
Movement of Individuals in School Building	8
Mass	8
Cafeteria	9
Special Classes	9
Recess	9
Extended Day Program	9
Sports	9

Prayer & Introduction

Prayer for a New School Year

Lord Jesus, we ask for Your help as we begin this new school year. Allow us to experience Your presence in the many blessings You place before us. Open our eyes to the new challenges and exciting opportunities that this new school year brings. Open our heart and mind to new friends and new teachers. Give us a generous spirit to be enthusiastic with our studies and courage to accept new challenges. Help us to be attentive to what is asked of us, to be flexible as changes in routines and school this year will be necessary. Help us to always remember you are with us, and we are beloved sons and daughters of Our Father, who never leaves us alone. Jesus, along with the Holy Spirit, inspire me to do my best and be my best this year! Amen.

Introduction

First, I would like to thank the parents, faculty, staff, and students who made our first and sudden distance/online learning as successful as possible this past spring. We could not have done it without the prayer, commitment, guidance, and support of our families! Each of you is a blessing!

As we look to begin another school year, we strive to be prepared to face whatever challenges and unforeseen circumstances that may come our way. The spiritual, emotional, physical, and educational well-being of our students are always first and foremost in our minds as we make plans for the future educational experiences in our schools.

We plan to have our children back in our schools each day if possible and will be working diligently alongside the Lancaster County Health Department, our Diocesan Education Office, and our local public and private schools to make this goal a safe and productive reality.

We greatly appreciate your prayers for this endeavor and ask for your patience as there will likely be changes in routines and expectations as new guidelines, requirements, and recommendations are put forth by our local health agencies, government, and Diocese. I know we all have opinions on exactly what should happen. I would ask that we pray for unity and work for the same, as the devil would love to have us in varied and opposite camps on what should happen in school. Regardless of how we feel, there will be rules that we need to follow if we are to return to school, I pray we can do so with charity. Or if some families are unable to return to school, let us not be judgmental. For those who will be home schooling, we would like to assist you, please contact the school and we will talk about the details.

May Mary Queen of Peace help us to navigate these times of trial and change. She is also the Mediatrix of Grace, so let us beg her to help us find the graces and blessings in daily life.

In Christ,
Sister Mary Michael, CK

A Catholic Perspective

As Catholics and/or members of a Catholic School, it is important that we remember our first duty of prayer for our fellow brothers and sisters who may have been, presently are, or will be adversely affected by the pandemic. The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us, “Our prayer is efficacious because it is united in faith with the prayer of Jesus” (CCC: #545). Thus, let us pray and not grow weary.

One very common definition of the merciful love of God is His ability to bring good out of evil. As we struggle through this difficult time of financial, physical, emotional, and spiritual concerns; recall that 2 Timothy 2:13 tells us, “...even if we are faithless, God always remains faithful for He cannot deny Himself.” We are not alone! God will bring good out of our struggles if we allow Him to do so. Perhaps, you have noticed blessings during this time of greater suffering and isolation. We have seen some families reconnecting and spending more time together talking, riding bikes, and going for walks. Many have enjoyed a slower pace of life and have found that sometimes “less is more.” I even have a few friends who have become great cooks!

We must also remember that as members of the Catholic Church, we are called to follow Jesus’ practice of preferential option for the poor (economically, spiritually, and emotionally). May we support one another in prayer and in every other way possible. So often an individual’s poverty is invisible to us. May the community of believers with Jesus as our Source and Summit enable us to journey together in this time of trial.



Health & Safety

Although at some point COVID-19 will become a distant memory, we have been planning diligently to make our school a blessed place to learn. As we collaborate to best meet our needs amidst the changing nature of this unpredictable pandemic, we must realize this document will continue to be updated as we discover what will best meet the needs of our students and school.

As we plan, we will:

- Be attentive to guidance from the Diocese
- Listen to guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Lancaster County Health Department
- Continue to collaborate among our Catholic Schools
- Collaborate with local public schools
- Implement plans to mitigate the risk of resurgence of the virus and other sicknesses
- Encourage self-assessment and monitoring of symptoms
- Continue wellness education and practices
- Be cognizant to protect those who are at the highest risk for severe illness

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Recommendations for Mitigating Risk of Transmissions

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

Lancaster County <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Know how it spreads:

- There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)
- The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus
- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person
 - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet)
 - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks
 - These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs
 - Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms

Face Coverings

- Wear face masks to prevent the spread of the virus through being in close proximity while speaking, coughing, and sneezing. Research shows that COVID-19 can be spread by those who lack symptoms (“asymptomatic”) and even by those who eventually develop symptoms (“pre-symptomatic”).
- All individuals working in and/or visiting our school are encouraged to wear face masks and may be asked to as recommended by our local health department at any given time.
- Face masks may be purchased or homemade.
- We will be implementing face shields in our classrooms. We have found face shields that are much more user friendly than masks. We find the shield:
 - More comfortable to wear
 - Does not easily fog over
 - Cooler than a mask
 - A blessing to see PEOPLE’S FACES!
 - Does not distort vision like one would think
 - It fits adults and small children without adjustment



Social Distancing



- Practice social distancing, also called “physical distancing”
 - Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people
 - Do not gather in groups
 - Stay out of crowded places and avoid large gatherings
- Floor cues, wall signs, and verbal reminders of social distancing will be used when and where appropriate
- Our schools will be following the guidelines of the Lancaster County Health Department to allow for proper social distancing as possible in classrooms, cafeterias, hallways, sport practices, etc.

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

Wash your hands often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.



- If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.



Cover coughs and sneezes

- If you do not have on a face mask of some kind, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains **at least 60% alcohol**.
- Wall signs and verbal reminders will be used when appropriate to remind everyone of proper respiratory etiquette.



Disinfecting and Sanitation Plan

Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks. An electrostatic sanitizer has been purchased to enable frequent disinfection with greater efficiency.

Symptom Monitoring and Self-Assessment

- **Be alert for symptoms.** Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of **COVID-19** (sore throat, chills, muscle or body aches, fatigue, new loss of taste or smell, etc.).
 - **Take your temperature** if symptoms develop.
 - Do not take your temperature within 30 minutes of exercising or after taking medications that could lower your temperature, like acetaminophen.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

School Nurses

Our school nurses will be hard at work to prepare for the coming school year. They will make sure the nurse's office has additional supplies (face masks, thermometers, disinfectant wipes, etc.). We will have several isolation areas for children who do not feel well near the nurse's office. The actual nurse's office will be reserved for children with injuries or who need to take medicine.

School Policy on Vaccinations and Sickness

In an effort to keep all individuals safe and healthy in our schools, we ask that families abide by our **Student Immunization Policy** and **Wellness Policy**. If your child has a fever, please do not send them to school until your child is fever/symptom free for 24 hours.

Procedure for On-Site School Outbreak

St. Peter School will be working closely with the Lancaster County Health Department to determine a responsible and appropriate course of action should a break-out of COVID-19 or another sickness occur at one or more of our school buildings. Exposure to the COVID-19 would be treated differently than confirmed cases. Initial indication is that those with direct contact to a confirmed case would need to be out of school for two weeks. The need to “cohort classes” as much as possible becomes more imperative when we consider the implications of a COVID infection.

Academics & Student Success

Instructional Plan

We head into the school year with the intention of learning taking place in our school buildings. We would only resort to total distance/online learning if required to do so by the governor, county health department, DEO, and/or our Bishop.

Special attention will be given to both making sure students are ready academically to proceed with a new school year and to programs that will enhance social emotional learning and well-being.

Technology

St. Peter School is very blessed to have a great technology department and technological resources and equipment that help our faculty and students make use of technology to enhance the learning experience.

As the new school year begins, we will be utilizing PowerSchool Learning as a means of communication and support to families throughout the year. This will allow for a more fluid transition should distance learning need to commence at any time throughout the school year.

Distance Learning

If instruction is to be administered completely online at any given time, the school will send out an updated explanation of how we would proceed. The fourth quarter from this last school year brought to our attention a lot of “dos” and “don’ts.” The priority would first be on the core classes (as it pertains to each grade level). We also realize the need to make use of textbooks when possible to alleviate the strain for those who may have minimal internet access. The desire for direct instruction was voiced and heard as well. We have found that recorded lessons were preferred to Zoom, enabling more flexibility for use. To make the distance/online instruction manageable, the number of graded assignments per subject would likely be reduced, but expectations would remain high. Our teachers will create ways to keep in contact with their students and to address specific questions of students or parents.

Grading for Distance Learning

We will plan to use our current grading system for core classes to maintain a spirit of consistency and rigor. However, the number of assignments given, number of grades recorded, and expectations for given assignments may be altered to accommodate various needs.

Social Distancing in the Classroom

As we begin the new school year, we will attempt to practice social distancing to the best of our abilities. Students will most likely be sitting in separate desks in straight rows facing the front of the classroom. We will minimize shared supplies that cannot be easily sanitized between uses.

Movement of Individuals in the School Building

The Lancaster County Health Department is encouraging minimal movement of individuals within the school buildings. Because of this, at times teachers may be asked to switch rooms instead of students. Details will have to be adjusted with usage.

Daily School Life

Arrival and Dismissal from School Day

Keeping distance in the areas where children gather before school will be challenging. Due to the variety of arrival times and the need to enter common entrances, we will be asking children to wear a mask when they arrive at school. The same will be true as they depart. We are making preparations to check temperatures of children as they arrive daily. This plan will be reevaluated as we have more guidance from the Health Department.

Classrooms

As prolonged wearing of masks is problematic in many ways, we plan to require masks only at arrival and dismissal. When children are in their classrooms, socially distanced as is practical at their desks, no face coverings will be required. We will likely use face shields, or masks if a child prefers one to a face shield, when moving in the hallways or engaging in group work and other activities which involve closer interaction.

Movement of Individuals in School Building

There will likely be a traffic pattern in both individual classrooms and hallways to mitigate exposure.

Mass

Mass attendance will largely be dictated by directive health measures at the time we return to school. For those who attend Communion, it will be received on the hand, and the Sign of Peace will not be physically extended. Depending on the suggestions of the Lancaster County Health Department, the number of students present for any given Mass may vary. Singing will be limited and those assisting in the sanctuary (servers, readers) may also be minimal. For students who are not at Mass, the emphasis will be on Social Emotional Learning using the Choose Love curriculum during Mass time.

Cafeteria

All cafeteria workers will wear gloves while on duty with special attention being given to handwashing and sanitizing surfaces and utensils used in food preparation. Children will wash hands or use sanitizer immediately before lunch. Appropriate plastic guards will be in place to separate the food from those being served. We will be unable to use the salad bar as in recent years. We hope to be able to eat in the cafeteria. Disinfecting the tables between each lunch period will be standard. Social distancing in the cafeteria will be implemented to the degree possible. Children will sit one person to a bench, and tables will be distanced. Normal conversation should still be possible in the cafeteria among the students. We are blessed with a lot of space in our cafeteria, which will be a real benefit.

Specials Classes

Our Computer, Music, PE, Art, and Library specials will still operate but in different manners. We are working on details to “cohort” groups. Cohorting is defined here as keeping the same group of students together and reduce the mixing of individuals among groups. We will cohort classes to some degree and hallways to a larger degree. Details of exactly how this will play out are forthcoming. The younger the child, the more cohorting will be possible. The specialization of teachers in the upper grades make some mixing of children necessary.

Recess

Getting outdoors and/or having frequent movement is imperative for students. We intend to be creative to get children outside and active within the guidelines of the local health department along with being creative and introducing games that naturally make use of social distancing.

Extended Day Program

Extended Care is our licensed daycare program for outside of school hours. Providing extended care to our families is a necessity for many and we do plan to operate our extended day care program. Though this program may have to look different, we will work with our Lancaster County Health Department and our DHHS licensing to maintain healthy and positive experiences for the children attending.

Sports

Our Athletic Director and the Athletic Department will work closely with the Lancaster County health department to provide a safe, educational, and fun environment in which our students may engage in sports. As the time for each sport season arrives, our Athletic Director and coaches will be in contact with parents and students to inform them of any new practices and

requirements during the season. A focus on social distancing where possible and disinfecting equipment will be a regular expectation.