

Return to School Plan

2020-2021

Information for Parents

Introduction

Schools in the Diocese of Youngstown are planning to reopen our buildings this fall for in-person instruction. A *Return to School Plan* has been designed to assist our schools in providing a safe and successful return for all students.

The items in this document provide the framework for all of the schools in the Diocese of Youngstown. Schools must apply these guidelines for their own unique building. They will provide parents with information needed for the start and operation of school that fit the unique needs of their buildings. The Diocese and the schools will monitor the situation and be responsive to make and communicate any changes in protocol as we progress through this school year. **Amendments and adjustments are inevitable in our current climate and we ask for your patience and support as we navigate a very different school year. We may even need to amend this plan before the school year begins.**

This year will continue to present challenges to families and schools and call for our sacrifices, as we are still in the midst of this pandemic. Some of the items in this document will be inconvenient. But they are necessary if we want to keep each other safe and keep our schools open for learning.

The guiding principles used for the creation of this document are:

- The health and safety of our students and staff is our foremost responsibility. In the current situation in the United States, there is no risk-free environment. But our policies are carefully developed to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 transmission.
- As institutions of learning, respect for science and the evolving knowledge gained about Covid-19 as provided by the Center of Disease Control and our Ohio Health Department as well as other research organizations will be used now and in the future to inform our decisions. Schools will consult with local health departments when making decisions related to issues caused by Covid-19. Directives of the Governor will be followed.
- Catholic schools are committed to delivering an excellent education rooted in our Catholic faith, regardless of the mode of delivery. While our intent is in-person classes, we will have active plans ready for the possibility that we may need to plan for brief periods of remote learning.
- A hallmark of our Catholic schools is the experience of Christian community built on relationships. In-person classes allow for a fullness of this experience. Faith and community are still woven into remote learning. Catholic Social Teaching grounded in the scriptures emphasize the human dignity of each person as well as the responsibility to act for the common good.
- All are learning to live in the time of history in which we find ourselves. While it may not be the times we wish, we are still charged with building the kingdom of God in our world.

Plan Contents

Our plan addresses the following areas.

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Calendar

School will open in the fall for all Catholic school students for full day face to face instruction.

Each school will communicate their calendar to school families. While it was originally intended that our schools would open according to the calendar that they developed and communicated to you last spring, there may be changes to that based on current needs and readiness requirements.

If it becomes necessary to address start and ending times at a school due to transportation or other issues, the school will communicate this to families.

Schools may stagger the start of students so that they can work with smaller groups of students to introduce them to the new routines and to get to know and assess the students in smaller groups.

Health and Safety

The plan reflects Ohio Department of Education *Reset and Restart Education Guide* and the Ohio Department of Health *Covid-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools*. Stakeholders as well as other medical and educational professional sources have provided input and review. In addition, each school will discuss their plan with their local health department. Our goal is to minimize the risk of Covid-19 spread as much as possible.

The Ohio Department of Health has identified five areas of focus for health and safety. Health officials have found that layers of protection working together provide the most protection.

Vigilantly Assess for Symptoms

Q. What are the symptoms of Covid-19?

A. High Fever (100 degrees F +) or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea. Symptoms range from mild to severe and may appear two to fourteen days after exposure to the virus.

Q. Should I take my child’s temperature each day before school?

A. Yes. A high fever is a key symptom of Covid-19. If the child has a fever of over 100 F, your child should be kept home from school. You should ask your child if he/she has any of the other symptoms of Covid-19. If your child complains of these symptoms, you should keep him/her home and contact your doctor. Parents should keep their child home for 24 hours until fever free without the use of fever reducing medication and may return to school if not experiencing any other symptoms of COVID-19.

Q. Will my child’s temperature be checked at school?

A. The first line of defense for the day is at home. It is imperative students and their parents or caregivers conduct daily health checks PRIOR to going to school, which should include temperature checks and assessing symptoms. Anyone with a temperature over 100 degrees F should stay home. Symptoms of Covid-19 range from mild to severe and may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus. (See the symptoms above.) Please purchase a thermometer for this purpose if for some reason you do not have one at home already.

Schools will communicate their temperature procedures to parents. Teachers and staff will be monitoring students for signs of illness throughout the day. If a student has a fever over 100 degrees F, he/she will be isolated in a separate room and a parent or guardian will be called.

Q. Should I inform the school office if my child appears ill or has a fever?

A. Yes. The procedure for reporting an illness is the same during this Covid-19 pandemic as it is during non-Covid times. Parents are required to phone the school office each day by the time designated by the school to report a child off, relaying the reason and symptoms of the illness. Even in non-Covid times, schools report some illness numbers to the local health department for their trending data. This is particularly important data during the pandemic.

Wash and Sanitize Hands to Prevent Spread

Q. How will the school support frequent handwashing?

A. Each school will have hand sanitizer available in high traffic areas and in each classroom in addition to the regular handwashing facilities already available. The school will communicate those locations. One of the first activities upon entering the building in the morning will be handwashing. Regular handwashing throughout the day will become a part of a classroom’s daily routines, especially when hands are dirty, before and after eating, and after using the restroom.

Q. How will students be taught about the importance of handwashing?

Students will be instructed in proper handwashing techniques, including washing with soap and water for 20 seconds and the proper way to apply hand sanitizer. Signage reminders will be posted, and school personnel will conduct lessons on important hygiene safety techniques. Students will be encouraged to refrain from touching their eyes, nose, and mouth since the virus easily enters the body through these membranes.

Q. Will my child be permitted to bring in his/her own sanitizer to use during the day?

A. Schools will set their own policies and procedures depending on the unique circumstances of their building, including the age of the child.

Thoroughly Clean and Sanitize the School Environment to Limit Spread on Shared Surfaces

Q. What will be the required protocols for the safety and cleanliness of our school buildings?

A. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has developed guidance on disinfecting facilities that schools will use to develop their plans.

Schools will develop a checklist of cleaning protocols that will ensure that the building will be cleaned frequently, with a focus on high-traffic areas and common surfaces. Shared areas such as hallways, gymnasiums, cafeterias, and bathrooms will be cleaned at multiple points during the day. Windows and/or air vents will be open as possible to maximize air flow. If there is a report of an infection, the school may bring in an outside means to deep clean the affected area.

Q. How will the classrooms be sanitized?

A. When possible, the school will keep the same students in a classroom during the day, with just the teachers moving during a class change. A mid-day sanitation will be scheduled.

However, there are some learning situations in which it is necessary for students to change classes, and even be in classes with different students. When students change classes, the desks and seats will be sanitized in between classes.

Approved cleaning products, sanitation wipes or disinfectants labeled for use against SARS-CoV-2, will be available in each room and common space.

Q. How will the school handle shared materials?

A. As much as possible, supplies and texts will be assigned to one student. If shared materials are needed, they will be sanitized as possible between users.

Students may still bring backpacks, but we ask that parents clean them on a regular basis.

Lockers and storage areas for student belongings will be as separated as possible.

Practice Social Distancing

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

A. When possible, keeping a distance of six feet or more between people adds another layer of protection against the spread of Covid-19 by minimizing the chances of coming into contact with the virus through respiratory droplets. Schools will be using distances of three to six feet as the standard for developing

social distancing routines. Exactly how much space for each activity will be determined by the nature of the activity or routine as well as the other layers of protection that are in place (such as masks and face shields and different kinds and locations of physical barriers).

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

A. Each school will carefully design and evaluate drop-off and pick-up procedures. Schools will use various entrances and exits to minimize contact between students. Parents are asked not to congregate near the school doors nor walk their child into school. Your principal will communicate specific drop-off and pick-up procedures to you ahead of the start of school.

Q. How will breakfast and lunch take place when school reopens?

A. Schools will need to think differently about breakfast and lunch procedures. Each building will need to examine their spaces and procedures so physical distancing can be achieved. They may be considering such things as placing dividers on tables, markers on seats to indicate physical distancing, staggering lunch schedules, eating in classrooms, and boxing or bagging purchased lunches.

Q. What about recess?

A. Schools may still conduct recess with defined safety requirements. If recess is outside, masks may be removed with some distance requirements between students. It is important that some physical movement be a part of a child's day; physically, academically, and emotionally.

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

A. As a service to our parents, schools may continue to offer extended care with safety procedures in place. Guidance from the Ohio Department of Education and the Governor's office will be used to foster a safe environment.

Q. Can I still volunteer at school?

As one of the safety measures to mitigate risk, we are limiting adults in the school to essential personnel. Thus we have made the hard decision to not allow volunteers and visitors at this time in the school.

If a parent needs to come to school during the day for any reason, they will be limited to just the office area. Each school may also develop a drop box system if feasible for parents to drop off items during the day.

Implement Face Covering Policy

Q. Will students need to wear masks at school?

A. Yes. Per guidance from the state, students in grades 3 through 12 will be required to wear masks while at school. In an effort to protect people with special circumstances, a school may use its discretion to require students younger than that to also wear masks. Masks may be removed for brief periods of time under certain circumstances (such as outdoor play and lunch). When masks are removed, physical distancing must be practiced.

Q. Will students be required to wear masks on school buses?

A. Yes. This will apply to any student K-12 who uses bus transportation to and from school.

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

A. Yes. Schools may provide some masks for students, but parents should plan on having masks available for their children. Parents may opt to purchase either 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 day's use, and parents should send at least one reusable mask as a spare.

Q. Can face shields be used instead of masks?

A. No. However, there may be an activity in which a face shield can be utilized with other layers of protection in place. This limited use will be defined by the school.

Q. What if my child has a health condition that may prevent him or her from wearing a mask?

A. A doctor's note to that effect must be presented to the school office stating the need for this step.

Infection Protocols

Please note that the school will always consult with and follow the recommendations of the local health department in these situations. The following gives the possible guidance that will be given.

Q. What should I do if my child has symptoms of Covid-19?

A. If your child shows symptoms of Covid-19, you should immediately contact your doctor. Your doctor may ask that your child participate in a Covid-19 test. Please alert your school's main office and do not send your child to school.

Students, staff, or any other person present in the building who start to show symptoms or have a temperature above 100 degrees F while at school will be isolated from others in a designated room in each of our buildings while they wait to go home. Areas of the building occupied by the person will be thoroughly sanitized.

Individuals who test positive for Covid-19 must experience an improvement in symptoms and isolate for a period of time before returning to school. The local health department will provide a protocol for individuals to follow and work with the school.

Q. My child has Covid-19-like symptoms, but tested negative for Covid-19. When can he or she return to school?

A. If your child does not have Covid -19, but has another illness, you should keep your child home until the illness' symptoms disappear. If the child had a fever, he or she must be fever-free without the use of fever reducing medication for 24 hours. The school will require you to provide a negative Covid-19 test and OR a doctor's note verifying the negative test and clearance 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 contact the school office. You should not send your child to school.

Q. When can a student return to school after receiving a positive Covid-19 test?

A. If a student tests positive for Covid-19, the student must isolate and not return to school until they have met the CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation and followed the protocols set by the local health department. This includes:

1. Three or more days without a high fever; AND
2. A reduction of other COVID symptoms by at least 75%; AND
3. At least 14 days, or the number designated by the health department, have passed since symptoms first appeared.

A doctor's note may be required. **Note:** As more is learned about the disease, this could be amended.

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

A. You should immediately contact your school office. Your school may ask that you keep your child home for 14 days or whatever is directed by the local health department. If your family member recovers from Covid-19 (through meeting the criteria in the in the previous question) AND your child shows no Covid-19 symptoms for the designated period, your school will allow your child to return.

Q. What happens if my child's teacher or another student in the class tests positive for Covid-19?

A. When a report that a member of the school community has contracted the virus is reported to the administration, the administrator or designee will make contact with the person or the parent of the student to get the details of the situation. The administrator will then consult with the local health department regarding the circumstances, and the procedures required by the health department for any student or staff member who has been exposed will be communicated to those families. All school parents will receive email updates to keep them informed of Covid-19 related information.

If a person has been exposed, a period of quarantine will most likely be required and follow-up with the person's doctor recommended. A student or staff member may not return to school until the period of quarantine is completed or has been tested and the negative diagnosis and permission to return to school is given in writing by the person's physician.

If advised by the health department, a class, part of the school, or school may be shut down for a period to allow for deep cleaning or a possible quarantine. During that time, teachers will provide and support remote instruction.

In all cases of exposure to the virus, the administrator will follow the direction and advice of the local health department.

Note: Individual names of persons infected or exposed will NOT be shared with the health department. However, when a positive case is reported to the health department through testing results, the Health Department may contact families for contact tracing.

Q. Could my child’s school building be closed down due to Covid-19 this year?

A. If a Covid-19 surge occurs, we will work closely with state officials to determine if we can continue face-to-face instruction. If the Governor or the local health department issues an order to close schools temporarily, we will comply. Ohio’s county color system may affect a school’s decision to hold face to face instruction or remote learning.

We will do our best to ensure a safe and healthy environment. However, if numerous cases appear in a single school, resulting in the isolation of multiple classes, we may need to close that building temporarily. We will follow the protocol given to us by the local health department.

If either of the two scenarios above become reality, the school will transition to remote learning for that period of time. Parents will be updated regularly should that need arise.

Q. Is it possible that a hybrid learning situation (staggered days of instruction with staggered days of remote learning in a week) might be used?

A. Our intention is to open for five full days of face to face instruction, with plans to change temporarily to remote learning if health and safety concerns for the community exist.

We are currently not considering a hybrid learning model. However, we will be attentive to the directives and needs of the community. This option is the very last resort, and will only be used if circumstances dictate it.

Q. What if my family needs to travel out of town?

A. While it is recommended that travel be limited during the pandemic, if it is necessary for your family to travel, please consult the CDC’s Travel Guidance (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>) If you are traveling to an area that is having a surge, please report this to the school and plan to quarantine for 14 days upon your return. If you are traveling from a state officially designated by the Governor, your child must quarantine for 14 days before returning to school.

Academics and Programming

Q. What will my child’s curriculum look like this year?

A. Schools will still deliver high-quality instruction based on our learning standards for each grade in core subjects (Religion, Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science, and Health) just as in the past. The importance of health and safety requirements will create new challenges in instructional strategies, but our commitment remains to provide your child the best possible faith-based education.

There is no doubt that our required environment may change the ways instruction can be delivered. But our teachers are creative and have multiple professional development options to support them with their new challenges.

Q. Will my child's classroom look different?

A. To incorporate physical distancing and maximize floor space, teachers will need to determine furniture and items that may be non-essential at this time. Desks will be arranged in a more traditional manner to accommodate distancing and any other safety measures.

Q. I have a child in preschool or kindergarten. Is high-quality learning possible?

Yes. We are working closely with our early education teachers to continue the best possible quality of instruction for our early learners. While the health and safety requirements are in place, teachers will continue to work hard to ensure that your child grows intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. (Please Note: separate guidance is issued for Preschools that comply not only with the health and safety guidelines but with licensing requirements from the Ohio Department of Education.)

Q. Will students still change classes?

This is a local school decision based on the age of the student. Where possible, particularly at the middle school level where departmentalization of classes is the norm, the teachers will be moving to the classrooms rather than students moving when possible.

Regardless of the scheduling needs, the appropriate health and safety measures, including sanitation, will occur.

Q. Will schools still offer classes in special subject areas (e.g. art, music, PE, etc.)?

A. Yes. When possible, special subject area teachers will travel to each class' homeroom for instruction. This will be most likely for subjects such as art, music, health, and foreign language. If students visit spaces such as the gymnasium, computer/ STEM lab, library, or a designated room for music that allows for more space, the room will be cleaned after every group.

Q. What about technology devices?

A. As much as possible, schools are working toward a one-to-one ratio of device per student. Students will be assigned a particular device for personal use. If that is not possible, devices will be cleaned between uses.

Q. How will technology be integrated into the curriculum?

A. While a technology device is a critical need for remote learning, it is also a valuable learning tool integrated into face to face learning.

Students in Grades 3 through 12 will use Google Classroom as their main technology platform. For students in grades Preschool through Grade 2, Class DoJo or SeeSaw will be used. (Some early educators may also use Google Classroom.)

In addition, each school will choose adaptive programs for student use that support learning at a child's own pace as well as other apps that facilitate learning. Students will be trained in these programs from the beginning of school so that in the event of a brief return to remote learning, the student will be prepared to use these platforms.

Q. Will standardized tests still be given this year?

A. Yes. It is important that we continue to gauge student academic growth throughout the year. Students in grades K-8 will take the STAR Reading and Math assessments at least three times a year. We are still planning on administering the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, the Aspire to grade 8 students, the PSAT and ACT in our high schools along with other annual assessments.

Q. Will students participate in field trips?

A. Due to the Covid -19 pandemic, we are asking schools not to participate in in-person field trips during the 2020-2021 school year.

Q. My child has an ISP/IEP or a student support plan because of an identified learning, behavioral, or physical need. Can the needs of my child still be met this year?

A. As each student plan is different, your school will be evaluating each one to determine whether additional of different modifications are needed in light of Covid-19-related health and safety protocols. You will be contacted by the school if it is determined this will be needed. If you have questions, you should not hesitate to contact the school through phone or email.

Q. My child has experienced stress and feelings of anxiety throughout these last months. How will the school support my child?

A. Our schools are keenly aware of the social-emotional needs of students in this pandemic and will place an emphasis on those needs in the classroom. Schools are investigating support programs and making connections with counselors who can support both students and staff.

Q. What if the school needs to return to remote learning for a period of time this year. How will the transition take place?

A. The school will be taking the many lessons learned from our remote learning experience in the spring of 2020 to make a plan that will be ready to implement if needed. Each school will communicate that plan to their school families. The teachers will also be teaching and using the technology needed in school so students are prepared to use them at home if need be.

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

A. We are taking every step to ensure the safe return of our students this fall. However, we do understand that some families may include individuals in at-risk groups for Covid-19, raising the anxiety level for school return.

Virtual learning options are currently being developed. These will be communicated to families who reach out to schools to discuss this option. Parents are asked to communicate with the school as soon as possible if this is a consideration for them.

A school may ask that a family considering this option commit to virtual learning for a certain period of time.

Q. If I choose the virtual learning option offered by my school, will my child be able to participate in extra-curricular activities?

A. No, if the extra-curricular activity is in-person. The purpose of offering a virtual alternative is for health and safety reasons. It makes no sense to avoid the school setting only to embrace the risks associated with in-person activities. The student will be welcomed to participate in any virtual extra-curricular or event.

Q. How will extra-curricular activities be impacted this year?

A. Extra-curricular options are a valuable part of a child's school experience. When deciding how to conduct these activities, health and safety considerations will be foremost. Some may be in-person; others may be virtual. If health and safety requirements cannot be met, these activities will be conducted virtually or canceled.

- **Athletics:** We will follow the guidance issued jointly from the Governor's office and the OHSAA unless we determine that we cannot provide the appropriate level of safety. Decisions related to athletics will most likely be day by day, week by week.
- **Band:** Lessons may take place either in person or through videoconference for individual students. Rehearsals for small groups (15 or fewer, depending on the available space for ample physical distancing 6 feet or more) may take place for non-wind instruments (e.g. percussion, strings, etc.). Rehearsals or lessons for wind instruments (woodwinds or brass) must occur virtually. Full band concerts may only occur virtually.
- **Choir, Drama, School Programs:** Due to ongoing health concerns, schools will conduct such programs virtually or cancel them for the 2020-2021 school year.

Catholic Identity and Community Life

In addition to our focus on learning and knowledge, our commitment to nurturing faith, fostering service, and building leadership continues in all settings of school life; regardless of the format for learning. We may need to rethink how we have accomplished these things in the past and make

adjustments for our current situation. The core values remain; the ways of living and celebrating them may be altered.

How we are responding to the pandemic is an expression of our faith as we care for our community and make sacrifices of things we might wish to be doing in exchange for doing things that benefit the community at large.

Q. Will school Masses take place.

A. The school will work with the local pastor and parish in determining how/whether Masses are scheduled. The specific guidelines defined by the Diocese for Mass celebrations will be followed. For health and safety reasons, Masses may be scheduled strictly for the students and not open to the public.

Q. Will First Reconciliation, First Communion, and Confirmation take place this year?

Your child's school will continue to provide preparation for the Sacraments. The schools and parishes will follow any Diocesan directives in this area. Local pastors will work to determine how the celebrations of those Sacraments may take place.

Q. Our school has many traditions and traditional events. Will we be able to continue these?

A. Just as we had to rethink how to celebrate many traditions and milestones last spring, that same creativity may be needed for adjustments to current traditions and creation of new ones. Schools will be thinking about how to foster that feeling of connectedness and community in virtual ways.

Q. Can we still have meetings of stakeholder groups such as Home and School, Booster Club, Advisory Councils, or Boards?

A. We are so grateful for the parent involvement for which our schools are known. Having to restrict parents to physical school access goes against our very nature. Yet these are unusual times. When adult meetings cannot be managed with small groups, masks, and social distancing, virtual meetings need to be considered. If a school holds a meeting at the school after hours, the room will need to be sanitized afterwards. Meetings cannot be held during the school day.

Q. What about fundraiser events, such as the annual gala?

A. Fundraisers are a necessary part of school operating funds. Without them, a hole is left in the school budget that must be filled in another way. Following the health and safety guidelines highlights the need to rethink traditional fundraising. If considering an in-person fund-raiser event, please contact the local health department to discuss what should and should not be a part of such a fundraiser.

Communication

Q. How will the school communicate with us to keep us informed and updated?

A. Your school should communicate with you at least once a week through emails, newsletters, one calls. Many schools will use a communication app such as Remind or Class DoJo.

Q. If a case of Covid-19 is determined to affect the school in any way, how will that be communicated?

A. The school will communicate this information through parent emails. Names of the infected or exposed people will not be shared in these communications; only the circumstances and any needed actions taken.

Q. If I need to meet with a teacher or my school principal, can these meetings occur?

A. Yes. This communication is vital between home and school. At this time, these meetings should take place virtually by phone or video chat. All staff members have school email addresses as well.

Q. How can I assist with school communications?

A. Your school needs to know what you are thinking and how they may be able to help. Here are ways that you can assist.

- Communicate questions or concerns before they become big issues. So many things can be handled quickly before they may become big issues.
- Please address your concerns first to the person most able to help.
- Keep the teacher informed about any issue your child may be having either with school or something that may affect his or her school life. These are different times and we want to support you as parents with your child.
- Make sure that the school has your current contact information, including email and phone.
- If the school is using a communication app and invites you to participate, please sign up. The apps are secure.
- Rumors that circulate more likely than not contain half-truths or little resemblance to the truth. When rumors appear on facebook or other social media, reputations, both of people and institutions, can be hurt needlessly. This pandemic is stressful to all in so many different ways. Kindness and hope may help to counteract the stress.

How Parents Can Help

Q. Due to social distancing and other health and safety requirements, traditional ways parent have helped before may not be available. How can I still stay involved?

A. Communication actions listed above are critical ways for parents to stay involved.

While events that also provided socialization for school families may not be held in their traditional settings, work with the administration, teachers, and your Home and School to develop virtual community

opportunities. As you know, fundraising is a part of the school's operational budget. Schools will need to rethink how this will happen this year. This is an added burden to our pastors and administrators and they will appreciate any assistance in this area.

Q. How can I prepare my child for this school year?

A. While we recognize the need to return to the school setting, it will not be the same place the children left last March. As you digest the information that you will be sent from your school, talk through things with your child. Help them to understand the things that will be expected. Remind them what will be the same, and what will be different. Help them to become comfortable in wearing a mask. Help young ones learn to communicate with people wearing masks.

Your attitude toward the situation will be felt by them. Regardless of your individual feelings about the required protocols, please present them as something that are necessary to keep people as safe as we can so we can go back to school and hopefully stay there. Let them know they can handle it. You and the school will help them.

Tuition

Q. Will schools collect tuition this year?

A. Yes. While the school year may look different, our schools will continue to provide a rigorous academic experience while supporting the spiritual, emotional, and physical development of each student. Our Catholic schools depend upon tuition revenue to pay our employees who do this work and support other school-related expenses.

Q. Will fees be charged this year?

A. Each school develops their own fees based upon their local needs. Fees may be adjusted if a program or an activity has been directly impacted by Covid-19. For example, if a fee is collected for a particular field trip, it is likely that the fee will not be collected this year.

Q. I am having difficulty paying tuition, as my own workplace has been impacted by Covid-19. What do I do?

A. We know that some families may have difficulties paying tuition due to the loss of pay during workplace closures and will do all that we can to support those in need. If this is happening to you, please contact your school's principal. We understand your situation and will do our best to work with you.

We have developed this plan with the best information available at this time. This is an ever-evolving situation, and amendments and adjustments will be made as needed and permitted as the year progresses. Please pray for all as we live in our world affected by the pandemic.

A Prayer For Uncertain Times

God of infinite mercy, hear our prayer!

In this time of bewilderment and fear, we ask you to give us the courage to take care of one another as Jesus did. For those who are ill, especially those who are frightened and alone, for those who cannot access healthcare, for those who are homeless and lost, hear our prayer!

In the midst of our sadness and grief, we ask you to give us words to comfort one another. For those who are dying, and for those who have already died from this virus, for those who tend them and for those with no one to tend them, hear our prayer!

In the midst of our own anxiety we ask you to give us the courage to support one another as you would. For those who are unexpectedly unemployed, for employers who share what they can, for our government and financial institutions and those who lead them, hear our prayer!

In the midst of our struggle to ensure a healthy future for all who live on this planet, we ask you to give us the hope that surpasses our current understanding. For healthcare workers, spiritual leaders and our faith communities, for artists and poets, for prophets and teachers, hear our prayer!

In the midst of our growing awareness that all life on Earth is connected, we ask for the heart to respect and cherish all life. That all peoples recognize that we are all your children, hear our prayer!

We trust in you and your power working in us. Please hear and answer our prayers.
Amen!

— Sister Cynthia Serjak —
Sister of Mercy