



*St. John the Evangelist Catholic  
Elementary School*

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**St. John the Evangelist Reopening Plan for School Year 2020-2021**

Dear St. John the Evangelist Families,

I hope this letter finds you well and in good spirits despite all the challenges we are being called to navigate at this time. First, allow me to thank the entire St. John the Evangelist community for your patience and understanding as I studied resources, pondered feedback, and considered suggestions to determine the best way forward for our special school. Your prayers, emails, phone calls, and kind words of support have been appreciated as we focused as an administration and teaching staff on our safe return for the 2020-2021 school year.

St. John the Evangelist will be opening on Tuesday August 25, 2020 with 75% distance learning and 25% blended learning for the first quarter of the upcoming school year. We will reevaluate at the end of the quarter to determine what changes if any need to be made at that time.

A great deal of time and consideration went into creating this plan as well as everyone's mental and physical well-being as our main priority. I want to thank the School Advisory Board along with the faculty and staff for providing their feedback and important concerns. I also want to thank our families for participating in the surveys to provide us with guidance as we prepared the reopening plan. The stakeholders of our school community play a very important role in these decisions.

The decision outlined in this plan was made based on the guidelines mandated by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, state and local officials, the local health department and the guidance given by the Archdiocese of Washington.

From the parent survey that was sent out in July, 75% of our families participated. 55% of those indicated they would want their child to participate in distance learning. We are very excited about our plan and schedule for distance learning. The teachers and I have been working diligently this summer fine tuning and creating an amazing virtual learning environment for our students. The focus will be instruction in small group settings. It is

recommended that each child have his/her own device available for them to use. If you are in need of a computer, please reach out to the school to obtain a loaner device.

40% of families indicated that they would like to have their child participate in a blended learning model which would include students coming on campus. In keeping the safety of the students and staff our main priority, we feel that it is best to limit the number of students that are invited on campus. The number of students will be limited to a fourth of the student population which equates to 50 students. Families will be invited to attend the blended learning based on these 3 criteria:

1. Academic Need
  2. Essential Workers (medical/ military/first responders)
  3. Parent Survey indicating interest in blended learning or full time
- Qualifying families will meet 2 out of the 3 criteria.*

It is our hope that we can meet the needs of our families in an equitable manner while still focusing on our main concern of safety. You have received an email or phone call if you have met 2 out of the 3 criteria. If you don't meet the criteria but feel that your child needs to be on campus, please contact me and we can discuss it further.

School will open on Tuesday, August 25th under the distance learning model for the entire school population. The first day of school that the campus will receive the blended learning students will be Wednesday, August 26th. Those students who do blended learning will come to school 3 days a week, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

## **Health and Safety**

St. John's has made every effort to ensure that all students and staff will be safe while on campus. The arrival and dismissal times will be staggered and students will enter at different designated entrances. Everyone will go through the Daily Arrival Screening of having their temperature taken before entering the school building and everyone will wear a face covering at all times.

The restrooms will be cleaned on a set schedule throughout the course of the day that will coincide with student bathroom breaks. Classrooms will be cleaned after students eat lunch while they are outside for recess. Frequently touched surfaces such as door knobs and handles will also be cleaned throughout the day. The school building will be thoroughly cleaned on Tuesdays and Thursdays when no students are in the building.

Parents will be given a questionnaire to complete each week and are asked to follow a set of guidelines and to communicate any out of state travel or exposure they and their child(ren) may have come in contact with.

If someone does display symptoms of COVID-19 they will be held in a separate isolation room and be removed from the school campus as quickly as possible. The family will be encouraged to contact their physician for screening and testing. If someone within the school community tests positive the level of risk will be determined in collaboration with the local health department. This will determine when and for how long the school will be closed.

### **Operations and Facility Usage**

The cleanliness and sanitation of the school will be ongoing throughout the course of the school day and the school will go through a deep cleaning by a certified company on the days when students are not on campus.

Students will attend in person school for a full day on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The staggered arrival schedule will be from 7:30-8:00 and dismissal will be from 2:30-3:00. Due to staffing constraints, we are not able to offer Before and Aftercare at this time.

All students must wear a face covering and adhere to social distancing while they are in the school building. Students will follow a staggered arrival and dismissal schedule and participate in the daily arrival screening of having his/her temperature taken each morning before entering the building. Parents will wait in their cars to ensure that their child has been screened before entering the building. Once the child has been cleared, the parent is free to leave. Parents and students must acknowledge and agree to all of the safety protocols set forth by the school.

Students will stay in one classroom throughout the course of the day. All classrooms have been measured and set up to allow for at least a 6 feet distance. All rooms will be well ventilated and are set up for appropriate distancing. All materials and equipment will be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use. Students will have their own school materials to use and will not be sharing manipulatives or supplies. Students will be asked to provide a "milk crate/storage container" for under their desk to place belongings.

Students will be expected to bring his/her own lunch and water bottles. Hot lunch will not be provided. Students will eat lunch in their classrooms which

will be followed by recess to allow the cleaning staff to disinfect the room before the students return to the room.

The school is set up with visual reminders for all of appropriate distancing and washing of hands with signs and bulletin boards throughout the school. Arrows and lines have also been placed on the floor as another reminder about keeping the appropriate distance and which side to travel in the hallway. Hand sanitizer will be available along with other required PPE items. Dividers have also been placed between the restroom sinks with individual soap dispensers at each sink. Toilets and urinals already have divider walls.

## **Academics**

### St John the Evangelist's Distance Learning Plan

St. John's distance learning will focus on direct teacher-led instruction in small groups. The schedule will incorporate times for students to meet as a class to provide social opportunities for the students and times for students to meet with their teacher in a small group setting. The goal is to mimic the traditional classroom as closely as possible to ensure student learning and success. Attendance will be recorded and students will be assessed using the traditional grading scales.

#### PRE-K thru 5<sup>th</sup> Grades:

The National Board of Professional Teaching Standards Recommends 1-2 hours online each day for students in grades Pre-k thru 5<sup>th</sup>. In order to meet individual student's academic needs in a developmentally appropriate manner we have developed the following schedule:

Each class will begin at 8:00 with a morning meeting check in with the teacher and the entire class. The teacher will then host four small group meetings for instructional time. There will be a lunch break and then a whole class specials class. Students will end the day with another small group meeting with their teacher.

During the time that students are not meeting with their teacher, they will continue to work on assignments and activities that were taught in their small group along with videos and other supplemental resources like IXL and Mystery Science to name a few. The goal is to alleviate the parent from having to teach their child. That is what our dedicated teachers and staff are here for. Your child should be able to complete his/her work independently. If they are having trouble or need additional help, please contact the teacher via email so that they can work with them during their small group time. All

meetings will be recorded and archived for students to refer to at a later time if needed.

The classroom teacher will provide students/parents an outline of lessons and assignments each Friday for the upcoming week. Students will have a consistent schedule for the entire course of distance learning.

This plan mimics our on-campus classroom as teachers work with small groups while the other students are working independently on the concepts introduced/taught by the teacher. All meetings will be recorded and available for students to go back and review if needed. Teachers will continue to use See Saw for grades PreK thru 2<sup>nd</sup> and Google Classroom for 3<sup>rd</sup> thru 5<sup>th</sup> grades.

#### Middle School:

Middle School will continue with the traditional on-campus schedule of 45 minute classes each day that will include a lunch break and one special class each day. The teachers will continue to use Google Classroom to provide all assignments, information, resources, communication, and class recordings.

Depending on student need, this schedule may be altered to 4 days a week leaving Fridays for a teacher help desk to work individually with those students that may need additional support and provide all students with additional time to complete assignments. If we find that students are overwhelmed by this schedule and in keeping with the recommendations of The National Board of Professional Teaching Standards recommendation of Middle School students being on line for 2-3 hours each day; we will look into the option of shorter class meetings in the mornings and having a teacher help desk for students in the afternoons.

Those students with learning accommodations are encouraged to take advantage of the Help Desk times. We will also continue the weekly check-ins with these students to ensure their accommodations are being met. Mrs. Panciera will be in touch with those families to discuss this further.

Our counselor, Mrs. Ciaravella will be available to meet with students in need of her support. She will also provide advisory classes to all students to continue to promote a healthy mental well-being.

Distance Learning expectations will be provided in an addendum to the handbook which will be available to you on August 19, 2020.

St. John the Evangelist Blended Learning Plan

Students will participate in the morning meeting with his/her teacher each day. They will follow the same schedule as the distance learners while working with another on-site teacher on their assignments throughout the course of the school day until it is time for their small group session.

Middle school students will follow their set schedule with the assistance of another on-site teacher in the room to help monitor and assist them.

If parents elect to not participate in the blended learning program, they will not be admitted once school begins. If a parent elects to participate in the blended learning program, they may choose to opt out and do completely distance learning at any time.

### Scantron

In order to best meet our student's needs, we are requiring them to come to school to take the Scantron assessment for math and language arts. We will schedule small groups to come in over the course of several weeks. Students will be appropriately distanced from each other and all will be required to wear a face covering and all cleaning and safety procedures will be adhered to as well. Testing will take place in the multi-purpose room. The test has been altered to provide a shorter, 25 questions version of Scranton's Performance Series test while still providing the same reports and measurement scores. The testing window is from August 17<sup>th</sup> – September 30<sup>th</sup>. A schedule will be forthcoming in the next few weeks. I ask that you please contact me if you would like to make special arrangements for your child to be tested.

### **Catholic Identity**

As we continue to be rooted in our faith, our Catholic Identity will continue to play a large role in our foundation each day. Each day will begin and end in prayer and students will participate in Religion classes throughout the week. Teachers will also continue incorporating our Catholic values throughout the other subject areas. We will also host a virtual mass each Friday. We will continue to work on activities to provide our students with service and outreach opportunities.

### **Tuition and Fees**

As mentioned in previous correspondence, fees for 2020-21 have been staggered to assist families with their financial needs. The Instructional fee of \$210 p/child and the Technology Fee of \$150 p/child are necessary at this time of the school year to offset all manipulatives and renew all on-line components that offset the curriculum. Tuition was reverted back to the 2019-2020 scale, again to assist families' financial needs. The acknowledgement of the Tuition Agreement by 7/1/20, allows the school to

provide the Parish with a solid budget of its intended income to offset salaries and benefits of our wonderful and dedicated staff who continue to work full time. If you have not signed your Tuition Agreement we ask that you do so as soon as possible. As always, if you have any questions regarding TADS or financial matters, the Development Office is always available.

### **Communication**

Communication is a vital piece of the success of distance learning. The faculty and staff will continue to be available to you by email and by phone. Please remember that they are not available to respond to you during the day while they are teaching but will get back to you within 24 business hours.

Teachers will continue to send Friday letters each week and provide an outline of the upcoming week's assignments and expectations. Special classes' information will be found on the classes SeeSaw platform or on the grade level Specials Class Google Classroom.

It is important to be sure that you can access your Plus Portals account and receive the text messages that we will be sending. I will send out additional information to ensure that you are set up.

Back to School meetings will be scheduled for August 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup>. Your child's classroom teacher will be in touch with you next week in August in regards to that meeting and with directions on logging on the first day of school and your child's schedule.

Student supplies will be available for parents to pick up on August 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup>. More information will be coming home next week regarding the schedule and guidelines.

As Principal, I also will be sending correspondence frequently that will contain updates and important information. I am always available to parents either by phone or email and I encourage you to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

As data and information are ever changing we are prepared to re-evaluate our approach as we near the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. However, please keep in mind, the Governor and Department of Health can change recommendations and mandates. There is always the possibility that we must return to a full distance learning model for all students at any given time.

Finally, as a team of educators, we learned a great deal as we moved from our traditional teaching practices to an online format. It was incredible to

witness. I commend our teachers for their hard work, dedication, and professional integrity throughout the vicissitudes of the tumultuous spring semester. As we take our program to the next level of this new frontier it is our shared objective for students to continue to thrive and achieve academic excellence in a trusted school environment. Rest assured, we take this responsibility very seriously. There is no undercutting the massive amount of work ahead of us all. I am confident we will conquer it united in common interests. With a community minded approach I believe Philippians 4:13 when it says we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. Together we will face this challenge with the help of his strength, grace, and ever present mercy. In the meantime, we are praying for a happy and healthy summer for you and your family as we look forward to welcoming you back to school in the fall.

Blessings,  
Ms. Gillespie  
Principal