



## **Commonly Asked Questions**

### **Will you be opening the school in September?**

We fully expect to open our school for in-person learning for all students, and as originally scheduled. We will be incorporating new procedures based on the recommendations issued by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Archdiocese of Boston Catholic Schools Office.

### **Whose decision could affect that opening?**

Either the Governor of the Commonwealth or the RCAB Catholic Schools Office could issue a directive that would modify our plans to reopen in September.

### **Could you tell us about some cleaning measures you are currently doing to keep our children safe?**

In March of 2020, our cleaning crew immediately started to empty classrooms, strip floors, and sterilize all rooms. This process has been completed and daily cleaning will continue to take place during the school year using a 360 degree misting sterilizer system.

### **What about continual cleaning and sterilization?**

We have purchased a cleaning and sterilizing machine much like you see used in airlines and stadiums which we will use once, twice or three times daily as needed.

### **What will classrooms look like?**

Classrooms will still look warm and loving, but have been streamlined and emptied of unnecessary materials, rugs, extra tables, etc. to make room for the adequate spacing of student desks. Some classrooms have been reconfigured to accommodate guidelines.

**What other supplies have been purchased?**

We have purchased a supply of antibacterial wipes, antibacterial gel, and infrared thermometers. Additional items will be purchased as and when recommendations are issued by the Commonwealth and/or RCAB Catholic Schools Office.

**What about seating arrangements for the younger students?**

Kindergarten students will be seated at individual desks rather than tables. Preschool students will be seated at tables but will be separated and spread out around the classrooms as much as possible.

**Will drinking fountains be utilized?**

No, drinking fountains will be disabled and water bottles will be encouraged.

**How will you manage visitors to the building?**

All visitors will be required to make an appointment and will meet either in Dr. Sullivan's office or the teachers' room.

**What do I do if my child is sick?**

Please do not send your sick child to school. If a student is not feeling well at school, we will call you and ask that you come to school to dismiss them. Students should not attend school unless they are fever free, without the use of medication, for at least 24 hours. We will be able to accommodate some form of remote learning for your child while they are recovering at home.

**How will lunches be handled?**

We are pleased to be able to continue to offer hot lunches through Laurie's 909 and Friday pizza days. Students will continue to eat at their desks and faculty members will bring lunches to the classrooms to minimize traffic in hallways. Lunches are individually packaged and delivered to our school by Laurie's commercial kitchen.

**What about masks?**

Adults (including educators and staff) are required to wear masks/face coverings at all times.

Students in grade 2 and above are required to wear a mask/face covering that covers the student's nose and mouth.

Students in grade 1 and Kindergarten will be encouraged to wear coverings when in Mask Zones.

Masks are required in “Mask Zones” and while moving around classrooms. Students will have breaks from mask use as often as possible throughout the day.

Mask/face coverings should be provided by families. The office will have disposable masks on hand for students that forget their masks.

**What are “Mask Zones”?**

Mask Zones are any area outside of the classroom. For example, hallways, stairwells and restrooms are Mask Zones.

**Have there been any modification to classroom and facility configurations?**

Some classrooms have been relocated throughout the building to accommodate social distancing for larger classes. Each desk has been spaced no fewer than three feet apart and facing in the same direction to maximize physical distancing.

**What about ventilation?**

Our oversized windows will remain open except in extreme weather conditions. Our hallways have broad powered fans strategically located with 3 in each classroom to continually circulate fresh air throughout the building at all times.

**What are the personal hygiene requirements?**

Students and staff are required to exercise appropriate personal hygiene habits. This includes hand washing or sanitizing upon entering school, before eating and before dismissal. This also includes coughing and sneezing into elbows and other practices that Mrs. Haladay periodically reviews with students and staff.

**Do you have a COVID isolation space?**

Saint Joseph School will have a designated COVID isolation space separate from the nurse’s office where any student who shows COVID symptoms will be kept until dismissed to their parents. This separate room is located in the lower level of the building.

**Will there be screening procedures upon entering school?**

Due to proven evidence of false positives and false negatives, temperature checks are not recommended by the CDC. We do not anticipate utilizing temperature screening unless this recommendation changes.

**Are immunizations required?**

Yes, all students entering Saint Joseph School must have up-to-date immunizations as required by law. Please consult with your child's physician with any questions regarding immunization requirements.

**Will we receive additional information and updates?**

Yes, we will communicate additional information and updates as we receive additional guidance from the Commonwealth and/or RCAB Catholic Schools Office. In the meantime, please feel free to contact [Dr. Sullivan](#) or [Mrs. Flynn](#) at 781-245-2081 with any questions.



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# Special Alert

## DESE Released Draft Guidelines for Fall

June 25, 2020

Dear School Families,

Today, Governor Charlie Baker and State Education Commissioner Jeff Riley announced that schools will open on schedule in Fall 2020.

As part of that announcement, they released draft guidelines for parents and schools. The most important elements of these guidelines are rules about how schools and parents should handle the public health issues raised by the COVID-19 virus.

We thank Governor Baker and Commissioner Riley for listening carefully to concerns voiced by parents and educators as they developed these draft guidelines. These guidelines are much more practical than we feared initially.

First, all children in grades two and higher will be required to wear face masks or coverings. Exceptions will be allowed for children with health issues. We were concerned about this requirement being applied to younger children; thankfully they are exempt from this mandate. Parents are expected to send their children to schools with the masks.

Second, the state decided NOT to set a maximum limit for the number of students in each classroom. Previously, we expected a maximum of 10 students per classroom, which would have been very hard to implement in most schools.

Third, the state is requiring students to be seated at least three feet away from each other during class time. This is the standard put forth by the World Health Organization (WHO). This is less restrictive than the 6 feet minimum mandate we were expecting.

Fourth, the state urges schools to minimize the mixing of students in one classroom with students from other classrooms. This is meant to avoid cross-contamination. Reasonably, the guidelines recognize that this will not always be possible in middle-school and high-school grades where students often get separated in different cohorts for instruction in math, science, AP courses and many electives. We appreciate the common-sense approach the state seems to be taking.

Fifth, all schools are urged to develop capacity to livestream instruction so that any student who is not able to be in school – for health or space reasons – can watch live instruction at home.

If you have any questions about how these guidelines will be implemented in the Catholic school your child attends, please contact your school principal.

If you simply don't like some aspect of the draft guidelines, these are draft guidelines. The final guidelines are expected later in the summer. We can make sure your concerns are heard before final guidelines are issued.

We want to be your partner in figuring out how best to make sure your children remain safe but continue to receive the high-quality education they deserve.

In Christ,

Tom Carroll

**Thomas W. Carroll**

Superintendent of Schools

Archdiocese of Boston

DESE Initial Fall Reopening Guidance vFF.pdf

pdf

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## Archdiocese of Boston Catholic Schools Office

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@CSOBoston

Archdiocese of Boston, Brooks...

617-779-3601

bostoncatholicschools@gmail...

csoboston.org