



# **BACK TO SCHOOL PROCEDURES 2020-2021**

**SEEKING KNOWLEDGE, MODELING CHRIST, SERVING OTHERS**



*Saint Matthew School*

## GOALS FOR THE FALL OF 2020 - RETURNING TO SCHOOL

The administration and faculty of Saint Matthew School have a singular commitment as we approach the fall semester of 2020—we will continue to advance the mission of the school.

Regardless of the circumstances, Saint Matthew School is dedicated to educating the whole person: academically, socially, physically, and spiritually. We will strive to maintain a sense of community. Whether on-campus or through remote learning, the school will foster, nurture, and love these students by partnering with parents in the development of their children.

Therefore, after consultation with local health departments, the American Association of Pediatrics—which advocates for students to be physically present in school—and following the CDC guidelines, Saint Matthew School is confident it will be able to execute the necessary physical modifications, as well as adhere to health and welfare procedures, to support our students' safe return to campus for the 2020-2021 academic school year.

The following document outlines modifications and academic procedures for the health and safety of students, teachers, and staff in preparation for that return.

If the school is unable to make the proper arrangements for safe operations for the community, or if local, state, or federal regulations do not permit on-campus learning, the school will continue to operate remotely.

### **Plans for the Fall of 2020**

There are three possibilities the school is preparing. The scenario we choose will be based on the status of the pandemic in our area and the guidance of the city and the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Nashville.

- **THE FIRST SCENARIO** includes the opening of the school campus and students returning to the classroom. Section one of this document includes the policies and procedures for the opening of school. These procedures include students who may not be able physically to attend class.
- **THE SECOND SCENARIO** for the fall semester is a short-term closing of the campus. This may happen for a number of reasons. A short-term closing is a period of two to 21 calendar days.
- **THE FINAL SCENARIO** means the school has to close the campus and move to remote learning for the remainder of the fall semester.

## Terms and Definitions

**Pods** - A group of students inside one classroom

**Direct Contact** - An individual who has had close contact (less than 6 feet) for longer than 15 minutes with another individual who is positive with the coronavirus. [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

**Indirect Contact** - Someone who has had contact with an individual who has had close contact (less than 6 feet) for longer than 15 minutes with an individual who is positive with the coronavirus. [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

## On-Campus Learning

### General Policies and Procedures

#### *Section A: Class Size, Spacing Requirements, and Movement Operations*

- Desks will be facing the same direction toward the front of the classroom with as much space between them as possible. In grades 4th-8th, teachers have access to desk barriers. Each teacher will have the option to use them while class is in session.
- Students in grades 2nd-8th will wear masks in the hallway and during times of transitions. Each student will be responsible for bringing his/her own mask from home. Mask must have the student's name written on it. Teachers will have access to face shields.
- Students will be able to study and work in groups inside their pods.
- Students need to use hand sanitizer as they enter the classroom.
- If a student removes their facemask while in the classroom, they need to keep it on their person.
- In grades Pre-K through 5th, when possible, the teachers will be moving from classroom to classroom while the students will remain in the classroom. In this way, the school will cohort classes to minimize crossover.
- Faculty who teach specials or the enrichment curriculum will visit the homeroom classes.
- In the classroom, teachers and students will not be required to wear masks. However, if a student or faculty member has underlying health conditions, masks may be required for everyone in the classroom.
- Teachers will be required to wear masks or face shields in the hallway and in meetings.
- Students in grades Pre-K to 1st are not required to wear masks.
- Assemblies, pep rallies, prayer and Mass buddies and other large gatherings of more than one grade will not be permitted.
- Three tables will be set up in the hallways with hand sanitizers.
- Students and teachers need to wash hands/use hand sanitizer as they exit or enter a classroom.
- Shared supplies must be wiped down after each use.
- Students will not change for PE classes as locker rooms will remain closed. On days in which a student has PE, tennis shoes may be worn.
- If school is dismissed for a two-week period all extra-curricular activities will be cancelled during that time.
- Water fountains will not be accessible during the school day. Students will be responsible for bringing their own water bottles. Bottles must have a screw top.

## On-Campus Learning

### General Policies and Procedures

#### *Section B: Screening of Students and Volunteers*

- Parents are responsible for making sure their children are free of coronavirus symptoms before dropping them off for the school day.
- Parents will not be permitted to visit the lunchroom or participate in holiday parties.
- All adults entering the building will need to have their temperature checked.

## On-Campus Learning

### General Policies and Procedures

#### *Section C: Cleaning of Desks, Classrooms, and Bathrooms*

- In the evening, each classroom will be cleaned and disinfected. Saint Matthew School utilizes the services of School Facility Management. A copy of SFM's evening cleaning protocols can be found on their web site.
- In grades 6th-8th, students will be dismissed from the classroom, using both front and back doors. This will minimize the number of students in the hallways. When they leave, the teacher will spray each desk with the anti-viral product, H2Orange2. As students enter the classroom, they will be responsible for using hand sanitizer and picking up a paper towel. The students will then wipe down their chairs and desks.
- In grades K-5th, teachers will use H2Orange2 to spray the desks when students are not present. Using a microfiberless towel, the teacher will wipe down the desks and chairs.
- Bathrooms will be disinfected twice a day. When this occurs, students will need to use one of the other bathrooms in the building.
- Handwashing will be a part of the daily routine. Not including lunch times and after restroom breaks, students will be expected to **wash their hands two to three times a day**.

## **On-Campus Learning Protocols for Positive Cases**

### *Section A: Protocols for Positive Cases (Students)*

- The school will contact local health officials and follow recommended guidelines.
- Students will be sent home if they exhibit symptoms of COVID-19. These symptoms include the following:
  - Fever, cough, muscle/body aches, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting
  - Emergency warning signs include shortness of breath, confusion, shortness of breath.
- While waiting to be picked up from school, a student will be isolated in a designated area. While in the isolated area
  - The student will remove their cloth mask and the school will provide a surgical mask.
  - The student will be supervised at all times.
- Per the Tennessee Health Department and the CDC guidelines, students who have been in direct contact with the coronavirus will be expected to follow current isolation guidelines.
- If a student tests positive for COVID-19, the course of action will depend upon the positive student's direct contact with members of the school. Saint Matthew School may choose one of the following options:
  - Class may continue with the ill student transitioning to remote learning.
  - Close that specific classroom and the class moves to remote learning until it is determined it is safe to reopen. Saint Matthew School will partner with the TN Department of Health to determine when the classroom will be back open.
  - The school may move all instruction to remote learning for a period as short as two days or as long as 21 days to create a safe environment for students.
  - Students will be moved to a specific location while the classroom is disinfected and then brought back to the classroom when ready.
- Saint Matthew School parents, the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Nashville, and local health officials will be notified if a student tests positive for the coronavirus. In all cases, the school will maintain the student's anonymity.
- If a sibling tests positive for COVID-19, assuming there is direct contact, family members will not be permitted to return to Saint Matthew School for a period of 14 days.

## **On-Campus Learning Protocols for Positive Cases**

### *Section B: Protocols for Returning to School*

Students who leave school because of COVID-19 symptoms may return to school after

- receiving a negative test and
- isolating for the period of time recommended by the CDC and local government health officials.

## **On-Campus Learning Protocols for Positive Cases**

### *Protocols for Positive Cases (Faculty, Staff, Administrators)*

- Teachers exhibiting symptoms of coronavirus should stay home.
- Teachers exhibiting symptoms of coronavirus during the school day will be sent home.
- If a teacher tests positive for the coronavirus, he/she must follow CDC quarantine guidelines. Saint Matthew School will partner with the TN Dept of Health and follow the appropriate protocol.
- If an employee is positive for coronavirus, a determination will be made if the school needs to move to remote instruction for two to 21 days.
- Parents whose children were instructed by a teacher who tests positive for coronavirus will be notified.
- If employees or students are in direct contact with a teacher who tests positive for the coronavirus, they will be expected to follow the CDC isolation guidelines.
- Learning will continue via a substitute teacher. If a substitute teacher is needed for more than two continuous days, a specials/enrichment teacher will be responsible for delivery of instruction.

## **On-Campus Learning Protocols for Lunchroom, Liturgies and Specials/Enrichment**

### *Section A: Protocols for Lunch*

- Following CDC guidelines and guidelines from the Diocese of Nashville, the school will not be able to utilize the cafeteria. Students will eat lunch in the classroom or outside.
- Students will be required to bring lunch to school every day.
- Lion Lunch will be offered for students who do not have a lunch.
- Milk and bottled water will be offered for sale.
- Classrooms will have plasticware, napkins, and straws in the classroom.
- School Facility Management is helping to devise a plan to remove trash safely from the classrooms.

## **On-Campus Learning Protocols for Lunchroom, Liturgies and Specials/Enrichment**

### *Section C: Protocols for Library*

- With the exception of 3rd grade, the librarian will visit the classrooms.
- Before handling books, students need to wash/sanitize their hands.
- Third grade will have the opportunity to visit the library once per week.

## **On-Campus Learning Protocols for Extra and Co-curricular Activities and Athletics**

### *Section A: Extracurricular and Co-curricular Activities*

- Co-curricular activities will still be offered. However, social distancing must be practiced while participating in co-curricular or extracurricular activities.
- Field trips will not be permitted during this time.
- Gatherings cannot exceed 50 people.

## **On-Campus Learning Protocols for Extra and Co-curricular Activities and Athletics**

### *Section B: Extended Care*

- Extended care will continue to be provided.
- Students will stay in pods, based on grade level, while in extended care.
- If a student tests positive and is participating in extended care, the school may discontinue extended care for a period of time or may close school for a period of time.

## **On-Campus Learning Protocols for Lunchroom, Liturgies and Specials/Enrichment**

### *Section B: Protocols for Liturgies*

- During all school liturgies, only 50% of the student population will attend. On Tuesdays, A classes will attend Mass. On Thursdays, B classes will attend Mass.
  - After board discussion, the maximum attendance at Mass may be reduced to 25% of the students on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with the Mass livestreamed for the remaining students.
- Only students, teachers, and staff will be able to attend these Masses.
- Traveling from the classrooms to the church, all attendants must wear a mask. Students in K-1st will not be required to wear a mask.
- Classes will sit in every other row.
- Mass buddies will not be utilized during this time.

## **On-Campus Learning Protocols for Lunchroom, Liturgies and Specials/Enrichment**

### *Section D: Protocols for Band*

- We are looking at best practices for conducting Band activities and will update you on our plans once they are finalized.

## **On-Campus Learning Protocols for Extra and Co-curricular Activities and Athletics**

### *Section C: Athletic Activities*

- We are developing athletic policies in consultation with the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Nashville to enable our students to participate this fall. On-campus conditioning for all athletes will begin the third week of July.

## **On-Campus Learning** **Protocols for Drop-Off and Dismissal**

### *Section A: Drop-Off*

*It is at the parent's discretion to carpool with another family.*

- Students will not need their temperature checked when entering the school building in the morning.
- Students will need to wear masks as they exit the car, enter the school building, and walk to class. The mask may not be removed until a student enters his/her homeroom.
- Students may not stop and "visit" other classes during the 7:20-7:50 Drop-off time. Once in homeroom, students need to stay in their classroom.
- As students enter the building, they will be expected to use the hand sanitizing station at the entrance of the building.
- Teachers and staff will enter the building in two areas: the main entrance and the Cohan Hansom building. They will have their temperature checked.
- Water fountains will not be accessible during the school day. Students will be responsible for bringing their own water bottles. Bottles must have a screw top.

## **On-Campus Learning** **Procedures applicable only to Pre K**

- Communication with families will include not only class dojo, but also the monthly newsletter, Cubs' Corner. Finally, the Pre K will send out weekly emails with health and safety updates.
- Parents should talk to children about covering their face when coughing/sneezing.
- While at home, children should practice washing their hands for at least 20 seconds.
- Adults need to wear masks during arrival and dismissal.
- Parents of children in the 3-year-old program may walk their child to the front door. Parents must wear a mask when walking them to the door.

### **Spacing**

- During rest time, mats will be spaced 6 feet apart and placed head to toe.
- Per the TN Department of Education, children have the required 50 feet of space per student of outdoor space. While inside, the students have over 30 feet of space per child, exceeding the department's guidelines.
- Classes will go on the playground separately.
- School Facilities Management will be responsible for cleaning the Pre K classrooms.
- During storytime and morning meetings, students will be divided into pods to promote social distancing.
- Classes will have separate pathways to the classrooms. The school will utilize directional cones for transitions.

## **On-Campus Learning** **Protocols for Drop-Off and Dismissal**

### *Section B: Pick-Up*

- Parents are to remain in the car during dismissal.
- Dismissal may stagger by ten to fifteen minutes.
- Cars will not be permitted to leave until all students are dismissed.
- Students must wear a mask as they leave the classroom.

### **Arrival**

- At orientation, the Pre K director will share the drop-off and pick-up traffic pattern.
- The Pre K 4 classes will Drop-off between 7:45 a.m. and 7:55 a.m.
- The Pre K 3 classes will Drop-off between 7:55 a.m. and 8:05 a.m.
- Children should wash their hands prior to arrival.
- Parents should not send their children to school if they are exhibiting any signs of illness.
- Staff will greet children at carpool/drop-off/pick-up.
- Multiple entrances will be used for the different age groups.
- As with all spaces at Saint Matthew School, if an adult needs to enter the building, their temperature will be taken.
- Students will not be required to wear a mask, but teachers may wear a mask or face shield, if necessary.

## **On-Campus Learning**

### **Investments for the Safety of Students**

- The school is adding an additional water bottle dispenser near the library.
- Saint Matthew School has increased the number of hours for School Facility Management. Classrooms will be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- Saint Matthew School has updated the digital infrastructure to include fiber, in order to increase download and upload time.
- Saint Matthew School has procured cleaning and sanitation supplies to continue to operate, if supply shortages occur. The school also has a healthy supply of disinfectant and hand sanitizer.
- The school has a dedicated space where a student who presents COVID-19 symptoms can rest, be isolated, and be monitored.
- The school will also participate in a nationally normed test in the first weeks of school. Teachers will use the data to determine gaps in learning from the spring of 2020.

### **Students with Underlying Conditions**

When we return to campus, the school recognizes that due to certain circumstances, not all students will be able to participate in campus life. These circumstances include but are not limited to: an underlying health concern for the student, an underlying health concern for a person living in the house with a student, or a student who needs to isolate because of direct contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19. If circumstances prevent a student from being on campus, the school will make reasonable accommodations to meet the academic needs of the student.

With the exception of isolation or recovery from COVID-19, once a family has made the decision not to send their child to campus, that decision will stand for the quarter. Students may not move from remote learning to classroom instruction until the end of the quarter. At the conclusion of Fall Break, Christmas Break, and possibly Spring Break, families may reevaluate their decision and send their student to campus.

If school opens on August 6 and a student cannot participate, the accommodations the school can provide include:

1. Participating in class lessons including lectures and direct instruction via teleconferencing.
2. Students who are participating in remote learning, may receive a pass/fail grade for the quarter.
3. Students participating in remote learning are excused from specials/enrichment classes.

A letter of intention not to participate in campus activities, including on-site classroom learning, must be submitted to the school prior to August 1. The school has the right to ask for a physician's note or clarification from the family

**Daily Participation:** Students may not opt out of activities or programs. If a student is participating in On-Campus Learning, that student is expected to participate fully in our daily class and activity schedule.

## **Remote Learning**

For the safety of the students, staff, faculty, and the community, a determination may be made to move all learning to remote instruction. This determination could be school-initiated or determined by the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Nashville or local or state health officials. The period of remote learning may be as short as two days, but may last an entire semester. If learning moves to a remote platform, there are several ways in which the school will communicate with families and students.

- The administration will be responsible for daily announcements on the PlusPortal.
- For policy changes and announcements, the administration will use the PlusPortal and email.
- Teachers will have the ability to communicate with students via email, the PlusPortal, and Google Classroom.

*If we decide to move to Remote Learning, tuition will remain the same. However, we have additional financial assistance available to help families who might need it during this period. Please contact the office to explore this option.*



## Remote Learning Expectations of our Faculty

First, faculty are expected to pray for their students, the school, and their families. During times of uncertainty and anxiety, prayer has the power to nurture and sustain the community.

Teachers are no longer distributors of knowledge; rather, they create content, design experiences, and coach and facilitate learning with thoughtful and clear feedback. In the spring of 2020, teachers continued to become designers of experience and facilitated learning. If the school moves to remote learning, teachers at Saint Matthew School will continue to utilize these best practices.

Depending upon the health of the faculty and the facility, the school will move to synchronous and asynchronous learning. If the school moves to remote learning, teachers will be expected to use their classroom for remote instruction. If synchronous learning can occur, the teacher will be responsible for videoing the lesson. Therefore, students who cannot participate in a video call can watch the video later in the day. To miss a synchronous lesson, a student must be sick or request an excused absence.

While on video calls, the expectation is the teacher will be introducing or covering the content and curriculum of their class. However, maintaining relationships and community while remote learning is critical as well. Teachers may spend part of the lesson checking on the health of their students.

If synchronous learning cannot occur, teachers will be expected to video asynchronous lessons. These asynchronous video lessons should not be longer than 20 minutes.

Teachers will be expected to use the following digital platforms:

- The PlusPortal, for student information including grades and assignments.
- Google Classroom, for assignment details, videos, and discussion.
- YouTube, where teachers may embed videos into their lessons. If a teacher uploads video to YouTube, it will be done on the Saint Matthew School channel.
- Class Dojo application, for Pre Kindergarten.

## Remote Learning Expectations of our Students

The school recognizes the challenges to families and students if the decision is made to go to remote learning. Below are the expectations the school has for students:

1. Along with the teachers, students will be expected to participate in praying for the community. Every morning before 7:00 a.m., announcements and prayer will be posted on the PlusPortal login page.
2. Students will be expected to participate in the video classes. The same expectations that exist in the classroom also exist during remote learning.
3. Before 8:00 a.m., students will be expected to check their online platforms: PlusPortal and Google Classroom.

Students in grades K-3rd will participate in an abbreviated school day schedule, with direct instruction provided through ZOOM or email.

*We at Saint Matthew School remain dedicated to meeting the individual needs of all student learners. During these unique and extraordinary times, the safety and health of every child and teacher is of the utmost importance. While our school protocol will be requiring children to wear masks in the hallways, there may be some students who will wear their masks more continuously for reasons such as pre-existing health conditions and/or personal self-care management. You will be made aware of any student who will be required to wear their mask outside of the typical protocol, as it is written.*

Thank you to all the administration and faculty, as well as the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Nashville, for your ideas, your help and your prayers in preparing these plans for the opening of Saint Matthew School during this pandemic.

We all remain committed to providing the distinctive educational experience and environment that characterize Saint Matthew School. We look forward to seeing everyone soon to start another memorable school year.



*Resources Used:*  
Center for Disease Control: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019)  
School Facility Management: [sfmservice.com/covid-19](https://sfmservice.com/covid-19)  
American Association of Pediatrics: [aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus](https://aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus)  
Tennessee Department of Health: [tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html](https://tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html)  
Williamson County Health Department: [williamsoncounty-tn.gov/120/health-department](https://williamsoncounty-tn.gov/120/health-department)  
Diocese of Nashville: [dioceseofnashville.com/catholic-schools](https://dioceseofnashville.com/catholic-schools)  
Diocese of Knoxville: [dioknox.org/diocese-of-knoxville-catholic-schools/](https://dioknox.org/diocese-of-knoxville-catholic-schools/)