



# ST. JOSEPH REGIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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40 Main Street, Salem, NH 03079 • 603-893-6811 • [www.stjosepheagles.org](http://www.stjosepheagles.org)

*Inspired by faith and guided by wisdom, our children soar!*

August 5, 2020

Dear St. Joseph Regional Catholic School Community,

We are looking forward to being back in the building for the 2020-2021 school year. In order to do this safely, a great deal of time and effort has been put into developing a plan for the reopening of St. Joseph Regional Catholic School. Over the past several months research and data from multiple sources (*see source list on page seven*) confirm that our children need to be in school to benefit from social interaction and from in-person instruction.

To make this happen, a re-opening committee was formed at the diocesan level for all Catholic schools in New Hampshire. The result of that committee's work produced guidelines entitled the *Catholic Schools Frameworks* for reopening this fall. Using those guidelines, and other resources, our own *School Reopening Task Force* developed a plan specifically for our school community.

Information regarding the goal of the committee, committee members, and procedures are included in the following pages. As the situation evolves the task force will continue to meet weekly and review the plan, making changes as necessary. Students, staff, and faculty safety is and always will be at the forefront of our decision-making process.

It is important that we continue to work together as a community. Our priority is a safe and welcoming environment for all of our students, faculty and staff. Children are perceptive and will react according to the cues they receive from trusted adults. Please keep this in mind when discussing the return to school with your loved ones.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*Mrs. Croteau*

Mrs. Mary Croteau  
Principal  
St. Joseph Regional Catholic School  
Salem, NH



## **St. Joseph Regional Catholic School 2020/2021 Back-to-School Plan**

### **Back-to-School Goals**

Deliver classroom instruction on a regular basis in a healthy and safe environment for teachers, staff, volunteers, and students while maintaining flexibility to implement contingency plans or re-consider health and safety protocols as circumstances change.

### **School Reopening Task Force**

These committee members are individual stakeholders in the St. Joseph Regional Catholic School community. They come from diverse backgrounds to provide professional expertise during discourse and planning.

Mr. Daniel Bolster, Jr. High Teacher  
Mrs. Mariela DiTullio, Spanish Teacher PS-8  
Mrs. Jamie Gabriel, School Advisory Board Chair\*  
Dr. Christine Lavoie  
Mrs. Nancy Peters, Office Manager  
Mr. David Timmons, Esq.\*

Mrs. Mary Croteau, Principal  
Mrs. Dominica Dragani, Nurse\*  
Mrs. Cecile Joyner\*  
Mrs. Stephanie Olverson, First Aid\*  
Dr. Drew Taft\*

\*Parents of enrolled students

### **Regular Meetings and Communication**

Our task force will continue to meet weekly, as needed, to reevaluate the plan and communicate any changes/updates to the greater school community through email and/or the parent alert system via our FACTS Family Portal.

### **Health and Safety Protocols**

COVID-19 underscores the importance of good health and hygiene in our St. Joe's school environment. As a school community it is imperative that we all work together to keep each other healthy and prevent the spread of COVID-19 within our St. Joe's community and the larger community. The health and safety protocols are designed to support this.

**\* \* \* The most critical element of this plan is the following...\* \* \***

**Teachers, staff, and students must stay home if sick or not feeling well, including a fever of greater than 100.4 degrees. Please report absences to the main office by phone (603-893-6811 x 10). Teachers, staff, and students who get sick or are not feeling well during the school day, will be expected to leave the building immediately (teachers and staff) or within 30 minutes of parental notification (students). Students will be isolated in a designated area.**



Important precautions that will be taken include the following protocols:

- Maintain physical distance of three to six feet at all times to allow for safe socializing.
- Frequent handwashing and hand sanitizing will be facilitated.
- Cleaning and disinfection practices will be consistent with Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance.
- Daily cleaning will be provided by an outside professional service and safe disinfecting practices in public use areas will be performed throughout the day by school staff.
- Staff and teachers will wear masks or other face coverings while moving throughout the building, in the main office and other public areas, but will not need to wear masks if it inhibits instruction in their classroom as long as safe distance is being practiced, and/or other measures are implemented such as sneeze guard shields.
- Student use of face coverings, by grade (*please note face coverings are one of the best methods of preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus and recommended for older children*):
  - Preschool and kindergarten: not required in classrooms or for moving through the school building.
  - Grades one to three: not required in classrooms; are strongly encouraged for moving through the school building.
  - Grades four and five: not required in classrooms; are required for moving through the school building.
  - Grades six, seven, and eight: strongly encouraged, but not required in classrooms unless requested by specific, at-risk, teacher(s); are required for moving through the school building.
- Safe spacing will be practiced within the classrooms.
- Our bus transportation service for Salem residents has been suspended for this school year.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for the transportation to/from school.
- Public access will be limited for vendors, visitors, volunteers and parents.
- Those entering will continue to be health screened and be required to sanitize and wear a mask.
- Daily Health Screenings will be conducted for teachers, staff and students.
- Additional details on the above precautions are noted below.

### **Daily Health Screening Teachers and Staff Members**

St. Joseph Regional Catholic School is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment. All teachers and staff will complete a daily health screening including a temperature check. To enter the school building, the teacher or staff member must have a temperature under 100.4 degrees and answer no to the following questions:

1. Within the last two weeks have you been in close contact with an individual who has a confirmed case of COVID-19? Close contact is defined to be someone with whom you have had prolonged direct contact.
2. Have you had a fever or felt feverish in the last 72 hours, including chills and/or shaking?
3. Outside of seasonal allergies or chronic illness are you experiencing any respiratory symptoms including a runny nose, sore throat, cough, or shortness of breath?
4. Are you experiencing any new muscle aches, pains, headache, nausea, severe fatigue without apparent cause, or diarrhea?
5. Have you experienced any new change in your sense of taste or smell?
6. Are you exhibiting any unusual marks or discoloration about the feet or toes?



## Daily Health Screening Students

Students and families will also complete a weekly health attestation that will be verified daily. Each student's temperature will be checked daily to ensure it is 100.4 degrees or less. Families are to fill out the form before departing for school in the morning and have it ready at drop-off. The health attestation will be a written form that will be verified by the on duty staff member at drop off at which time a temperature check will also be performed prior to the students exiting their vehicle. Should there be any changes to the questions and/or the temperature is higher than 100.4, the student(s) will not be allowed to exit the vehicle. The forms will be turned in on the last day of school each week. Questions will include the following:

1. Within the last two weeks have you been in close contact with an individual who has a confirmed case of COVID-19? Close contact is defined to be someone with whom you have had prolonged direct contact.
2. Have you had a fever or felt feverish in the last 72 hours, including chills and/or shaking?
3. Outside of seasonal allergies or chronic illness are you experiencing any respiratory symptoms including a runny nose, sore throat, cough, or shortness of breath?
4. Are you experiencing any new muscle aches, pains, headache, nausea, severe fatigue without apparent cause, or diarrhea?
5. Have you experienced any new change in your sense of taste or smell?
6. Are you exhibiting any unusual marks or discoloration about the feet or toes?

**Other Precautions** (*will be in place for the until circumstances change and will be re-evaluated as official federal, state or diocesan guidelines change*)

- Classroom sizes will be capped as follows to allow recommended safe distances between students and between students and their teacher. Some classes may be capped at a lower number due to physical spacing limitations:

Preschool 3s: 16

Preschool 4s: 18

Kindergarten: 18

Grades One to Eight: 20

- During any services held in the Church, Diocesan guidelines will be followed.
- Field trips and other school related travel events will be postponed until later in the year and will be re-evaluated at that time.
- Public School bus transportation will not be available. Parents and guardians are requested to please bring students to/from school.
- Large school gatherings will be postponed or will be moved to a virtual format.
- For families traveling outside of New England (Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut or Rhode Island), please notify the school office to determine if other learning accommodations may need to be made to satisfy a NH or MA state mandated 14-day quarantine period.
- The COVID contact person(s) will be trained in procedures prior to school opening.
- School windows will remain open as much as possible and rooftop ventilation fans will be run to pull fresh air from the outside.
- Plexiglas shields (table sneeze guards) or similar products will be available for small group instruction, the technology lab and in the cafeteria.



- Restrooms and frequently used doors will be disinfected according to a regular schedule throughout the school day. Schedule will be dependent on the restroom break schedule.
- Classroom items with frequently touched surfaces will be disinfected daily (at a minimum) with a professional sprayer or other disinfectant according to CDC guidelines.
- Teachers, staff, and students will not share personal belongings including cell phones, electronic devices, mugs/cups/water bottles, pens/pencils/markers/crayons, and books.
- Extracurricular activities that allow for physical distancing will be allowed and each will be considered and implemented on a case-by-case basis.
- Signage will be placed throughout the campus regarding safe practices, entry procedures, and traffic flow in hallways and stairwells.
- Gymnasium use will be closely monitored when in use by outside individuals or groups. Included in all agreements with renters is that they are expected to follow our protocols and disinfect the premises before leaving. Tracking of screening and notification of any COVID- 19 positive cases will also be required to ensure that deep cleaning is performed at the renter’s expense.

### **Flow of the Students’ School Day**

1. Students will arrive at school and have their temperature taken before exiting the vehicle. If temperature and daily confirmation of weekly attestation is confirmed, the student will proceed to be dropped off and join their classmates in their designated section of the school yard or gymnasium before proceeding to their classroom.
2. Students will sanitize their hands on the way into the school building.
3. All adults will wear masks or other face coverings while moving throughout the building, in the main office and other public areas. Teachers will not need to wear masks only when it might inhibit instruction in their classroom as long as safe distancing is being practiced, and/or other measures are implemented such as table top sneeze guard shields and face shields that cover the face extending below the chin.
4. Teachers will be the only individuals to open and close doors for students throughout the day.
5. Students backpacks, lunch boxes, and outerwear stored (spaced apart). Grades 6-8 will carry belongings to classes in their backpacks. Locker use will be suspended until further notice.
6. Morning prayer and announcements will be delivered over the public address system outside (weather permitting) or to students in their classrooms.
7. Students in Grade 1 to Grade 3 will not be required - though are strongly encouraged - to wear masks during the school day. Teachers will determine safe socializing guidelines within the classroom.
8. Instructional videos will be shared with the school community in advance of the school year starting on how to create each child’s personal space, implementation of new protocols and virtual meetings with question and answer sessions are scheduled for after the release of the plan. **A virtual *School Reopening Town Hall* is scheduled for Thursday, August 13, 2020 at 4:00 pm to review this plan and answer questions.**
9. Students in Preschool-K will attend “specials”, except PE, in their classrooms. Classroom teachers will incorporate “safe” roaming within their classrooms to allow students to stretch their legs during the day.
10. In grades 6-8 all books and personal items will remain in the classroom with the student; lockers will not be used. Students will be asked to disinfect their desk after each use before transitioning to the next class.
11. Lunch and recess will be handled safely using floor spacing reminders on the cafeteria line area. There will also be Plexiglas sneeze guards on the cafeteria tables. Specific cohorts (classes) will be maintained



and assigned to designated areas with physical distancing to allow safe socializing during recess.

12. Teachers will be using our outdoor classroom and other outdoor spaces as often as they wish while the weather cooperates.
13. Students will be required to wash and/or sanitize hands when entering all rooms in our school including the gymnasium and main office.
14. Student dismissal:
  - Students will exit the building with their class, at staggered times. First floor classrooms (preschool to grade three) will exit through the rear/SOAR doors. Second floor classrooms will exit through the student arrival/dismissal doors on the first floor.
  - As vehicles arrive for afternoon pick-up, families with students in preschool to grade three should park closer to the school building. Families with students in grades four to eight should park closer to the playground. For families with multiple children, park on the side based on your youngest student.
  - Drivers are asked to stand next to their driver's door to watch for their child(ren).

### **Contingency Plans**

As noted earlier it is important for us all to work together to continue classroom instruction and we encourage our teachers, staff, students and their families to be diligent with all prescribed CDC and state precautions both in school and during our daily lives to limit the spread of COVID-19.

### **Failure to Pass the Daily Temperature and/or Health Screening**

If a teacher, staff or student is unable to pass the daily temperature and/or health screening, she/he will be unable to enter the building. The designated contact person (Mrs. Olverson, or other office personnel) will contact the teacher, staff or the parents for further discussion. If, based on the screening and discussion, the teacher, staff, or student is not allowed to return to the building, options will be discussed and recommended actions will be taken and documented to include:

1. Quarantining at home until cleared by a medical professional
2. Seeing a doctor
3. Any person must be cleared by a medical professional before returning to the school

If teaching faculty or students are isolated (due to illness) or quarantined (due to possible exposure), accommodations will be made for remote instruction and learning if they are well enough to work/learn at home.

### **Positive COVID-19 Test**

If a teacher, staff or student tests positive for COVID-19, she/he should notify the Main Office, First Aid Coordinator, or Mrs. Croteau, School Principal as soon as possible. Teachers, staff or students who test positive will not be allowed back into the building until cleared by their medical professional. The school will then work with the NH Department of Health on contact tracing and notification. The school community will be notified by the Department of Health, though names will not be provided in accordance with HIPPA and other privacy laws.



The school will be deep cleaned as soon as notification is received and will resume the next day per recommendations noted below.

- According to recently released state guidelines, if an employee or older student tests positive for Covid -19, the employee or student who sits in close proximity to them or anyone who had close contact should quarantine for 14 days and/or obtain a Covid -19 test.
- According to recently released state guidelines, if a younger student (preschool - kindergarten) tests positive for Covid -19, the entire classroom or anyone who had close contact should quarantine for 14 days or length of time determined by prescribing medical professional and/or obtain a Covid-19 test.
- Parents who wish for their child to stay home may have the option for remote instruction for up to three consecutive school days.
- The First Aid Coordinator will report all suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases (both student and staff) to appropriate local and state health authorities.

### **Individual School Closing**

Please note that should the administration deem it necessary to shut down the entire school and pivot to remote learning, it does have the capability to do so.

### **State Ordered Closures and Transition to Remote Instruction**

If there is a spike in local cases of COVID-19, health or government officials may close schools for in-classroom instruction for a period of time. If schools are closed for more than two days, we will transition to remote instruction.

### **Resource Section**

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html)

<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/show-me-the-science-hand-sanitizer.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/hand-hygiene.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/hand-sanitizer-use.html>

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html)

[www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/covid19/documents/covid-19-faq.pdf](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/covid19/documents/covid-19-faq.pdf)

<https://nhcatholicschool.com/files/2020/07/Reopening-Guidelines-Draft-4.pdf>

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>