



Flowing from the mission of the St. Mary-St. Paul parish, all St. Mary students will learn to know, love and serve God through spiritual development, academic excellence, and community service.

August 17, 2020

Dear Parents of St. Mary Students,

Welcome back to the 2020-2021 school year. We all know the last five months have been ever-changing and I anticipate that to continue throughout this coming school year. To help with the start of the school year, I want to share with you some key points that all families will need to be aware of for the first day of school. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to call or email so I can clarify any concerns. You may also contact Mrs. Brejcha or your teacher for information. There will be information posted on our website as well.

Masks and who must wear them

Most questions this summer have revolved around masks. We are currently in Phase 4 of economic reopening. Under the Michigan Return to School Roadmap, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students MUST wear masks while inside unless there is a medical reason. PK-5th must wear the masks in the hallway and common areas. Students in PK through 5th grade may remove their mask if they are seated at their desk. If any student in grades PK-5 would like to wear a mask during class, they may choose to do so. We want to respect everyone and their preference.

We will be providing every student and staff member at St. Mary Catholic School a navy mask. We expect them to arrive by September. Students may also use their own masks. The only requirement is that all masks must be a solid color. No designs, please.

What is new

We have made many changes and additions to our school this summer to make sure that all our students and teachers are safe. Many of our changes are backordered, but they are coming. Here are some of the changes and additions:

- New classroom for 5th grade
- Water bottle filling stations at drinking fountains
- Mini-split heat and AC for 4th, 5th and computer lab
- Fresh air handler being installed in the basement to remove air and bring in fresh air (will arrive in two weeks)
- Fresh air handler upstairs will be on full time
- Chromebooks for all K-8 students (coming in October)
- New phone system which includes 4 wireless phones for pickup and after school care
- Upgraded Internet speed to fiber from Casair (will be completed before school starts)
- New Promethean boards for Middle School
- New Promethean boards for Elementary (ordered, but no date yet)



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- Swivl robot for K-8 classrooms – robot follows the teacher in the classroom so students at home can watch (will arrive mid-September)
- Canvas LMS for K-8th students - this means that there is one place to log in for all your child's classwork and communication
- New laptops for teachers so they can work remotely, if needed
- Teachers' lounge transformed into quarantine area, if needed
- App for health screening

There are a couple of important changes because of COVID that affect the parents.

1. Parents are not allowed in the building. This is for your safety and the safety of the children. Parents can come into the building by appointment only.
2. There will be parent drop off and pick up in the back of school for K-8 and the front of school for PK. If you have both you may use the front of the school. Car tags are coming next week to identify proper pickup.
3. No recess duty for parents, since you cannot have contact with children.
4. Parents should do a wellness check before getting into the car. Check temperatures and fill out the app with all the information. The app has a comment section if the child has seasonal allergies that should be noted. Michigan Return to School Roadmap does not suggest we check temperature of each child.
5. If a child becomes sick during the day, they will go to the quarantine area monitored by Mrs. Brejcha. Mrs. Brejcha will check temperatures at that time. Parents will be called to pick up the child. When parents arrive at school, they should call the school and Mrs. Brejcha will escort the child outside to meet the parents. Parents are not allowed inside the school. It is the parent's decision to pick up siblings as well.

There are a couple of important changes because of COVID that affect the students.

1. No prayer services. Students go directly to their classrooms. We will do google meet for prayer and pledge.
2. We will have our all school mass, but it will look quite different. Because of the numbers we need to split up our Sunday All School Mass into all 3 masses. Families with last names from A-E will be on Saturday at 5 p.m. Families with last names from F-M will be 9 a.m. Sunday mass. Families with last names from N-Z will be at 11 a.m. Sunday mass. Students will sit with their families and not with the school.
3. Tuesday Mass will be split into 2 masses. Grades 3, 4, 5, and K (after the first couple of weeks) will go on Monday at 9 a.m. Grades 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8 will go on Tuesday at 9 a.m. (new time).
4. Students will have recess with their class. The students cannot mingle with other classes.
5. Students will eat cold lunch in their classroom.
6. Students will eat hot lunch in the Parish Center (Cafeteria) with social distancing.
7. Specials will be in the classroom.



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8. Students will not move to another teacher; the teacher will move to the students. The only exception is for PE. Mr. Pieratt will take students outside weather permitting and in the gym with social distancing. Students will not change clothes since they cannot socially distance in the locker room.
9. Students remain in the class for dismissal until their name is called to come outside.

After School Care

- There will be after school care for those who need it.
- Prekindergarten will stay in their same classroom with the same students.
- K-8 students will go to the 3rd grade classroom.
- After school care falls under LARA rules and so classes can be mixed. There is no way to keep students in their cohorts.

Virtual/Online School

If a child is at home or the Governor pushes us back to Phase 3 and we are required to learn online, St. Mary School is prepared. To ensure proper learning, below is an outline as to what will be required of the student:

- Students must attend/view the lecture parts of the class.
- If any student is at home, the teacher will follow the regular schedule and record lectures.
- Since lectures are recorded, the student can view them at any time. A student would not have to be logged into the classroom for the entire school day.
 - For example, a teacher would be online/record the 15-20-minute lecture and then the student would work on assignments until completed.
 - If there are additional questions from the student regarding the new material, the student will need to reach out to teacher for additional help through email or schedule a Google meeting.

We are excited for the start of the school year and to have our students back in the classroom. But with the start of any new school year, and especially this one, there will be changes and new norms that we all need to follow. Please be patient with us as we work through the ever-changing guidelines to ensure that our students, teachers and staff stay safe and healthy.

I will continue to provide updates when necessary, but again, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,



Mr. Watters