



DIOCESE *OF*
VENICE
— IN FLORIDA —

Department of Education

**DIOCESE OF VENICE
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
REOPENING PLAN**

*A Summary Guide for
Students, Parents, and Their Families*

SUMMARY

Over the past four months, we have learned in a deeper way, the value and importance of our Catholic schools. As we prepare to reopen our schools, let us remain focused on Christ who is the reason for our schools, the reason we teach, and the reason why we will gather, prudently and safely in the Fall.

The purpose of this document is to guide our school communities as we move into the academic year of 2020-2021. We intend to safely reopen all of our school buildings to all families in August. Reopening in these challenging times requires careful planning. The Diocese of Venice Department of Education has worked diligently with the administrative staff, principals, teachers and staff at the Catholic schools across the Diocese, as well as health officials at the federal, state and local level to develop a comprehensive reopening plan for the 2020-21 academic year. Each school principal has also produced an individual school plan that covers specific details of his or her respective campus.

The Department of Education will update the *Diocese of Venice School Reopening Plan* using data and recommendations from the federal, state and local public health organizations. School principals will disseminate updates through the appropriate communication channels without delay.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL: MONDAY, AUG. 17

Every Diocese of Venice Catholic School will open Monday, Aug. 17. The following pages outline how every school will maximize the health and safety of persons on campus while mitigating risk and community spread.

THE STUDENT COHORT MODEL

All Diocese of Venice schools will operate under a *Student Cohort* model when campuses reopen on Aug. 17. Under a student cohort model, adapted as appropriate for high school or elementary school settings, students are grouped by homeroom. Students remain in the same homeroom, while teachers move among the homerooms to teach their respective subjects. This strategy minimizes the interaction between student cohorts, and it mitigates the risk of outbreaks that may lead to the temporary suspension of live classes on campus.

Schools should strive to physically separate students in the same cohort as much as possible. Such separation will help mitigate risk. For example, classroom furniture should be arranged to maximize space between students. Each school has the authority and flexibility to integrate the Student Cohort Model to its schedule and resources. For example, student cohorts may need to move to the school gymnasium for physical education or to the cafeteria to eat lunch.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing is an effective way to prevent potential infection. Employees, students, parents, and visitors should keep close or physical contact with others to a minimum. All persons on school property are to wear a mask and keep at least three feet apart. In the event that masks are not being worn, all persons must remain at least six feet apart. ***Schools will define their social distancing protocols and instruct their communities about their developed expectations for their location.***

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

PPE complements social distancing by further mitigating outbreaks and infections. PPE may include the following:

Face Covering: Face coverings (mask or gaiter) are required to be worn by all persons (students, employees, visitors, and volunteers, etc.) on school property over the age of 2 years old. A face covering should safely cover the wearer's mouth and nose at all times.*

** There may be instances where a student is allowed to safely unmask under the direct supervision of school faculty, (for example: outdoor physical education with social distancing of greater than 6 feet). Other considerations include but are not limited to sports, performing arts, and consuming food/beverages. Individuals who have a specific medical condition may consult the school principal for further guidance.*

1. Schools should ask families to purchase masks or gaiters for their child or children.

2. Families that use **masks or gaiters** should purchase at least two sets. Masks and gaiters should be washed by parents after every school day.
 - It is recommended that students with fabric face coverings have at least five sets to permit daily rotation and cleaning. Students are strongly encouraged to have at least two spare face coverings in his or her backpack.
 - Families who use **disposable masks** must discard the mask after every school day. Parents should send students with extra disposable masks in case they are damaged during the day.
3. Face coverings may not contain messages or images that would distract from the educational environment of the school. **Face coverings with school logos are encouraged.**
4. Children in preschool through kindergarten are allowed to wear bucket hat shields as an alternative to wearing a mask or gaiter. Consult the school principal for more details.
5. Masks may be removed during special circumstances. These include:
 - When eating or drinking.
 - When engaged in outdoor activities or instruction.
 - When removing masks, students and employees **must** remain socially distant by at least six feet.
 - When removed, individuals should wash or sanitize their hands before touching their masks.
 - All students and employees must receive training on proper wearing and cleaning of face coverings.

VISITOR RESTRICTIONS

Schools will not allow normal visitation to our campuses until further notice. All guests on our campus will check-in at the main office. Visitors will undergo a wellness check identical to those administered to students and will be escorted with a face mask around the campus.

FIELD TRIPS

All field trips are cancelled for at least through the first quarter of the school year.

MEDICAL CARE FOR STUDENTS

Schools may provide for the ongoing medical needs of students. This includes the administration of approved medications and basic first aid. Staff will wear proper PPE when providing medical care that involves physical contact with students.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

To mitigate congestion and limit cross contamination, student cohorts will enter and exit through only their assigned doorway(s). **All students and employees must wear face coverings upon arrival.**

Students will undergo daily wellness checks prior to proceeding through their respective entryway. Wellness checks consist of four individual "checks":

1. **Temperature Checks:** Every student will have his or her temperature taken by a school employee. Any student with a temperature more than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit will be sent home.
2. **Hand Washing or Sanitizer Check:** Students will either wash their hands or receive hand sanitizer from a stationary dispenser or an adult posted at the entryway. At least one staff member will monitor the hand washing/hand sanitizing station.
3. **Face Covering Check:** A check of each student to ensure that face coverings are present and properly worn.
4. **Symptoms Check:** Students should be asked the following questions every day: "Do you feel sick in any way?" and "Do you have a cough or fever?" Any student who answers, "yes," to either question will be sent home.

HEALTH PROTOCOL FOR STUDENTS

If a student becomes ill at school or another person exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, he or she will be asked to leave school.

If a student has COVID-19 symptoms, he or she may return to campus if he or she meets **one** of the following criteria:

1. A negative COVID-19 test result within or after the 14 day quarantine.
2. A doctor's note allowing the student to return to school
3. If a student has tested positive, the student cannot return until the student has tested negative for COVID-19 within or after the 14 days of quarantine.

Any case of a student testing positive for COVID-19 must be reported to the Diocese of Venice Department of Education.

Parents and guardians should **not** enter the building to escort students to or from classrooms at arrival and dismissal.

COMMUNITY SPREAD

An entire school may be quarantined in cases of widespread infections. Principals will work with their school pastor and leadership team. Consultation with the Diocese of Venice Department of Education is required in determining a school closure. Students will be allowed to complete and submit academic work while quarantined.

STUDENT TRAVEL

Students must remain home for 14 days after traveling to another country, or to states experiencing significant COVID-19 outbreaks (as determined by the CDC). Students must inform their school immediately if they display COVID-19 symptoms during the 14 day quarantine period.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students must remain at home for at least 14 days following travel to their country of origin. Students will be permitted to continue their studies virtually while at home. Students must inform their school immediately if they display COVID-19 symptoms.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS

School counselors will develop resources for parents and teachers to access. The counselors will work with students individually or in small groups to address their needs.

COVID-19 EXPOSURE OF FAMILY MEMBERS

In cases where students, employees, or volunteers are exposed to individuals (such as an immediate family member) who are COVID-19–positive in their home, they should immediately follow this protocol:

- The individual should be asked to remain at home for at least 14 days from last exposure to their family member.
- Once the family member has tested negative and the individual has no symptoms, the individual can return to school.

Schools should be particularly mindful of this approach for families that have multiple siblings in a school. For example, if a child or parent in the family is diagnosed with COVID-19, the entire family should remain at home until the conditions above have been met. Students should be allowed to complete and submit academic work while at home.

INTERNAL TRAFFIC FLOW

Traffic flow will be adjusted and monitored to help keep student cohorts socially distant from one another. School staff may direct student cohorts with specific routes to and from their classrooms. School staff will also adjust how students travel through high-traffic areas such as the gym, bathrooms, and cafeterias. Student lockers will not be shared. Student lockers should be spread among student cohorts.

GENERAL FACILITY CLEANING, HYGIENE, & SHARED SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Schools will open August 17 completely cleaned and disinfected, and will continue to adhere to necessary safety precautions.

Sharing of school supplies such as pencils, markers, and art supplies will be prohibited. All students should keep their school supplies in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or desks. Shared equipment, such as

one-to-one devices, will be used by as few students as possible and must be cleaned and disinfected before use by another student.

All rooms will have access to either a sink for frequent handwashing or hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Spray bottles of cleaning disinfectant will be readily available in each classroom and shared space for use throughout the day. Common surfaces in shared spaces (e.g. office, bathrooms, stair handrails, etc.) should be cleaned multiple times per day. Food and drink will not be shared (including student snacks, lunches, etc.). Food and drink should be covered when not being consumed.

Drinking fountains will be used only to fill reusable water bottles or disposable cups provided by the school. No person may directly drink from a water fountain until further notice. Drinking fountains will be cleaned regularly. Signs should be placed on water fountains indicating their sole use for refilling water bottles.

When practical, increase the circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g. risk of falling, triggering of asthma symptoms) to children using the facility.

When possible, interior doors will be kept open to eliminate the need to use door handles. Be mindful of fire code and student safety when determining whether to keep internal doors open.

CAFETERIA AND MEAL PERIODS

Cafeteria and food preparation rooms will be regularly sanitized and disinfected. Cafeteria employees and volunteers should follow the prescribed protocol for PPE while preparing and distributing food. Students and staff should avoid touching surfaces touched by others to the extent feasible. Tables, trays, and other common items will be disinfected between each lunch period. Sharing food between students and/or staff is not allowed.

School staff will establish the maximum capacity for the cafeteria that allows for social distancing to the extent possible. Consideration should be made to staggering lunch periods if it becomes necessary to limit the number of people in the cafeteria at any one time. Students should refrain from unnecessary contact with others such as hugs, handshakes, and high fives.

SPECIAL AREA CLASSES

When feasible, special area classes will be held in each student cohort's classroom. This is particularly emphasized for classes such as art, music, foreign language, STREAM, and health. Special area teachers must maintain distancing from students in the cohort and wear a mask.

If a shared classroom is used for special area classes, such as a gym or computer lab, the room will be thoroughly cleaned before it is used again.

MASS, ASSEMBLIES, LARGE GATHERING ARRANGEMENTS

Mass protocols will follow the policy established by the Diocese of 50% capacity or less while following social distancing protocols. Assemblies and large gatherings are not recommended at this time.

Updates to these arrangements will be communicated to the principals and directors. When assemblies and large gatherings become feasible, school staff will ensure that rooms are regularly sanitized and disinfected. They will establish necessary social distancing protocols at that time.

RECESS

Strong physical exertion during recess will be regulated with the understanding that children, particularly young children, need physical recreation. Recess must be scheduled so that student cohorts do not intermingle with other student cohorts. When recess is held outside, under the supervision of a teacher, masks may be removed if social distancing is maintained.

ALTERNATIVE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The Diocese of Venice in partnership with all of our schools, can offer an alternative learning opportunity for students in high risk populations. Parents wishing for an at-home learning alternative need to communicate with the school principal. There are two learning options from which students can choose:



2020-2021 Learning Options

1

**Traditional
Face-to-Face Learning***

At School



*In the event that a student needs to quarantine at home, synchronous at-home learning will be available to that student until he or she can safely return back to school

2

**Synchronous
At-Home Learning**

With intent to return to face-to-face



**Alternative Option for Families
who prefer not to return to
school In-person.**

- Contact principal for more Information
- Handled at the school level
- Use of School LMS (Google Classroom, Schoology, Canvas, FACTS)
- Student's follow the same schedule and curriculum with his or her class

Families must communicate with the school principal about the learning option they have chosen. Those who have chosen synchronous at-home learning, do have the freedom to switch to traditional face-to-face learning during the school year. Those decisions should be made with the school principal.