

St. Joseph's Catholic School COVID Operations Plan 2021-2022

Our mission to foster academic excellence rooted in our Catholic Faith and Christian values is best fulfilled when teachers and students come together on campus and in classrooms. As we enter into the 2021-2022 school year, the COVID-19 pandemic is still affecting our daily school routines - we will open our school with the least restrictive environment while maintaining mitigation strategies for the health and wellbeing of our St. Joseph's Catholic School community. Prudence calls for prayerful, thoughtful, and coordinated planning as we respond to this challenge.

Please understand this is a fluid situation and things are subject to change as we progress through the school year.

In coordination with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Boise, "The diocesan position on masks in Idaho Catholic schools this fall is to follow the guidance of your school's local health department. This is a fluid situation, and each school needs to continue to monitor illness in their own school community".

We will begin school on Monday, August 16, 2021. Thank you for your patience and your prayers as we persevere through this ongoing challenge.

Coordination with State and County Agencies

The agency primarily responsible for overseeing the opening of schools is the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's health districts. We fall under the Central District Health (CDH) district. At this time, Central District Health has issued recommendations for opening with each district having local control and local decision making. This is the guidance from CDH - In keeping with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, CDH recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.

St. Joseph's is aware and will follow this local guidance and even more importantly, will focus on the health of our own school community.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Boise has the goal of fully serving students in an in-person capacity beginning in August. "Anyone who wants to wear a mask may wear a mask and should be supported in their decision. Parents of children of any age and any vaccination status are entitled to request that their own children wear masks. Enforcement of this request is between the parent and child, and teachers are not required to be the enforcer of such parental requests."

In Person Learning - Normal Daily Operations

Mitigation Strategies

- In keeping with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, CDH recommends universal indoor masking* for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.
- Face coverings will be optional outside
- Strict illness policy (same as last year) to start the school year – especially since we are seeing an increase in positivity numbers and Ada County is in the Red category.. If a student comes to the nurse’s office with any COVID-19 symptoms, they will be sent home immediately. Siblings will be sent home as well. Contact Tracing will take place if a positive test result
 - See the [Illness Decision Tree](#) for Schools
- Physical distancing to the greatest extent possible (3 ft. or more)
- Maintain hand hygiene stations at key locations in the building
- Students and staff use handwashing and sanitation stations located around the building
- Nursing staff will follow Illness Decision Tree for Schools
- Isolation/screening room in the school

Classroom

- Staff and students trained in the areas of physical distancing, handwashing, respiratory etiquette
- Disinfect surface areas regularly and frequently
 - Custodial staff routinely clean highly touched surfaces in evenings
- Integrate good hygiene practices into instruction and classroom expectations
- Avoid sharing classroom materials
- Google Classroom will be available for most grade levels

Visitors

- Post current school guidance at entry points to school and in highly visible areas
- Resume pre-pandemic visitor protocols - masks recommended

Communication Strategies to students, staff, and parents

- Educate staff and families about good hygiene, physical distancing, symptoms of Covid-19 and when to stay home
- Regular communication with parents, students, and staff

St. Joseph's Community Transmission

In determining which of the following mitigation strategies will be followed if school community transmission increases, our school will follow the Diocese of Boise guidance and local CDH guidance, Governor Little's recommendations/mandates and closely monitor school illness data.

Mitigation Strategies -- consider the following:

- In keeping with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, CDH recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.
 - **School mask policy will be adjusted quickly if COVID transmission in our school community increases - masks will be required**
- Strict illness policy (same as last year) to start the school year – especially since we are seeing an increase in positivity numbers. If a student comes to the nurse's office with any COVID-19 symptoms, they will be sent home immediately. Siblings will be sent home as well. Contact Tracing will take place
 - See the [Illness Decision Tree](#) for Schools
- Face covering optional outside
- Maintain hand hygiene stations at key locations in the building
- Students and staff use handwashing and sanitation stations located around the building
- Nursing staff will follow [Illness Decision Tree](#) for Schools
- Isolation/screening room in the school

Classroom -- consider the following:

- Staff and students trained in the areas of physical distancing, handwashing, and respiratory etiquette
- Seating charts enforced
- Disinfect surface areas regularly and frequently
- Disinfect desks, keyboards, and screens
 - Schedule desk sanitation during school day at appropriate transitions
 - Custodial staff routinely clean highly touched surfaces
- Arrange desks to account for physical distancing
- Integrate good hygiene practices into instruction and classroom expectations
- Limit the use of shared materials and spaces:
 - Keep student belongings separate
 - Avoid sharing supplies
 - Avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids
 - Avoid sharing of music instruments
- Avoid outside food in the classroom

- Students and staff use personal water bottles and water bottle filling stations vs. hallway/classroom drinking fountains
- Every teacher will have Google Classroom set up for their classroom or course sections
- **Cafeteria**
 - Meal services offered in cafeteria
 - Stagger lunch times
 - Contactless point of sale when possible; otherwise sanitizing multiple touch points
 - Have a plan for when a student, staff member, or visitor becomes sick

Visitors -- consider the following:

- Post current health guidance at entry points to school and in highly visible areas
- No irregular/unscheduled visitors
- Limit visitors to parents, by appointment, and critically important visitors on campus
- Develop parent pick-up & drop-off procedure

Gatherings -- consider the following:

- Implement strategies that discourage gathering for areas such as the drop off lane, restrooms, recess, hallways, lunch, before & after school
- Cancel field trips, assemblies, and other large gatherings if physical distancing cannot be achieved
- Restrict mixing groups
- Avoid personal contact such as touching, hugs, high fives, etc.

Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricular Events

- Follow established Roman Catholic Diocese of Boise school guidelines

Communication Strategies to students, staff, parents

- Educate staff and families about good hygiene, physical distancing, symptoms of Covid-19, and when to stay home due to illness
- Regular communication with parents, students, and staff

Considerations

- Coordinate with local health officials
- Consider accommodations for those at risk of serious illness from COVID-19
- Consider hybrid learning model

School Confirmed Case, Regardless of Community Transmission

- St. Joseph's Catholic School will report confirmed COVID-19 cases to our school community as needed, assist with contact tracing, and coordinate with local public health, following guidance for developing a course of action.

- Anyone who has been identified as a close contact needs to quarantine regardless of symptoms or other illnesses. Anyone who is fully vaccinated does NOT need to quarantine, unless experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. See [Illness Decision Tree for Schools](#)
- If it is determined there will be larger group quarantine, St. Joseph's Catholic School will consider cancelling extracurricular group activities, school-based afterschool programs, and large events during the dismissal.
- If it is determined there will be school dismissals/larger group quarantine, school facilities will be disinfected according to CDC and local public health guidance during the dismissal.