

ST. MARY WILLIAMSTON



COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan

ROADMAP FOR REOPENING (PHASE FOUR)



Saint Mary Catholic School is committed to assisting parents in the formation of their children by engaging in a classical education where students unify faith and reason to carry the light of truth to the world. By helping students strive for academic excellence, delight in the gift of learning, and imitate the virtues of Jesus Christ, children will be joyfully compelled to live a life of knowledge, love, and service.

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Dear St. Mary School Parents,

In the midst of severe difficulties, it's good to recall the words of St. Paul in Romans chapter 8: *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."* Even in these uncertain days of trial, our trust remains in the Lord Jesus. Following Him is the ultimate purpose for St. Mary School, and He continues to offer us His love and victory.

In the following pages you will find our plan for the reopening of school this fall so that our students can have the full benefit of an in-person Catholic classical education even in the midst of this global pandemic. I would like to highlight a few points at the outset.

St. Mary School is committed to the protection of your children's well-being in all of its facets, which of course includes their physical well-being, but also their spiritual, emotional, academic, and social as well. It is a top priority for us to provide a healthy and safe environment for all of our students and staff, while at the same time continuing to provide a quality learning environment for the crucial developmental needs of your children in all of these areas. To this end and as much as possible, we have attempted to formulate the precautions and procedures that follow with the aim of protecting that learning environment, and especially the student's experience in the classroom, from undesirable burdens and obstacles. We desire that it is those responsible for the care of our students, namely the staff, teachers, and the parents of our school, and not the children themselves, who bear the brunt of the weight of keeping all of us safe.

The plan for reopening that follows attempts to safeguard our individual classroom groups, in this document called 'cohorts,' through various layers of precautions. Within these cohorts, in which each student spends the vast majority of his or her day, our goal is to preserve as normal and happy of a school life as we possibly can. We are confident that we can do all of this while remaining within the external constraints imposed by the Governor, other legal officials, and the Diocese of Lansing, especially where there is room for prudence and interpretation within. We know that many of you as you read this plan will find various measures with which you will disagree. Some may find elements that seem to them to be too strict or other aspects too permissive. Please know that we have arrived at these measures through many consultations with experts and other's best practices, along with much discussion and debate in our reopening task force meetings. We have tried to keep in mind the well-being of our entire school community in seeking the right path forward. I encourage anyone with concerns to contact Mr. Lomas or me for further open discussion.

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In arriving at St. Mary, I was overjoyed to find that our school has a beautiful Covenant, which seeks to bind together the shared responsibility that the staff and parents have for the formation and education of your children. In these difficult times, I must make a further appeal for your cooperation, because we cannot keep our school safe without you! At the end of this document you will find a health pledge, asking, among other things, that each of us seek to avoid all unnecessary risk of exposure for the benefit of all, especially those who are most vulnerable in our families and school. This is not intended to be a promise of constantly staying at home or anything like that. However, it is a request that in charity and with concern for the well-being of others in our community, that each of us approach our other avenues of life outside of the school as safely as possible.

Finally, please know that we will address any and every related issue that may arise this year with charity, mercy, and cooperation. We also know that we may have to make adjustments or deal with changing circumstances. Let us pray that the overall circumstance will improve and make many of these precautions unnecessary, but we will also be prepared for worsening conditions if they should arise. Thank you for sending your children to St. Mary School. Let's encourage each other to trust in the Lord and rely on His Providence: that this cannot separate us from His love.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. David Fons

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Dear Parents,

In response to the Governor's *Executive Order 2020-142* we recognize that there are many benefits to having a smaller school like St. Mary Williamston. For example, we have big classrooms and small class sizes. The purpose of the following pages is to both fulfil the necessary requirement of the executive order but, more importantly, to help us keep safe and minimize the potential spread of **any** viral flu, common cold, or bacterial infection, especially COVID-19. This is our plan for Phase 4 but we are preparing for a Phase 3 plan subsequently.

The intent of the following pages is to instill confidence in our partnership of providing a safe, healthy, and positive Christian, classical learning environment for all of our St. Mary students and families during this time. We accept that there is a varying degree of opinions on the effectiveness of certain protocols but it will only be successful with a **bona fide conatus** (good faith effort) from all families. This communication is intended for all key constituencies including parents, extended family, full and part-time employees, and any adults who may be visiting by appointment or entering our building during school hours including resource teachers and volunteers.

To form our plan, we have consulted with many people and resources within our immediate community in addition to the resources listed on **page 14**. This includes a pediatrician, medical professionals, knowledgeable families with immunocompromised children, and many conversations with individual parents. In addition, I have also been meeting with a smaller contingent of principals at smaller schools as well as the Diocese of Lansing. We are asking for your support, and prayers, as we navigate through what we know is a temporal challenge from a historical perspective, and yes, especially, let's remember to trust in Jesus! Please pray and ask your children to pray for the safety and health of our school community and families. He will listen, especially to our children, and He will answer our petitions.

Next, and equally important, please know that our decisions were significantly influenced over concern about our children's social and emotional development. Our objective is to create a safe, loving environment that conveys a strong sense of trust and confidence to all participants with **special attention** to the emotional and social needs of our students and that our process does not compromise the integrity of what would be considered their normal human, Christian behavior.

We plan to diligently monitor each child's long-term emotional development and well-being. We want to re-iterate that our goal is safety first and our top priority is the **cura personalis** (Latin phrase that translates as 'care for the entire person'). Love, mercy, understanding, patience will take precedence at St. Mary.

Finally, I want to encourage you to read this entire document, starting with '*What Students Should Be Prepared For*' so that you have a clear understanding of the environment we are trying to create and protect as well as the expectations for this coming school year. I have confidence that, by working together, remaining steadfast, and maintaining a positive attitude, we can ensure that this school year is as positive and productive as any for all of our school community!

Pax Christi,
Mr. Lomas

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WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR:

- Having a positive attitude even when some things are different.
- Temperature checks before coming to school.
- Learning safe, healthy habits in school.
- Wearing facial coverings for activities between cohorts and in common areas(K-8).
- Cohorting and normal interactions with classmates, while keeping space from other cohorts/classrooms.
- Enthusiasm, fun, love of learning, mercy, patience, and growth in virtue, centered in Christ!

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WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW:



GENERAL

- **PROTECT** - We need all of your help to have a safe environment for students and staff so we ask that all families refrain from unnecessary risks of exposure.

- **EDUCATE**
 - **Hand hygiene** – Parents can teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Staff will establish a regular handwashing schedule. Staff and older children can use hand sanitizer containing 60% alcohol or higher when water is not available.
 - **Coughing and Sneezing** – Parents can help teach children to cover coughs and sneezes with their elbow or tissue. This should be followed by tissue disposal and hand washing.

- **MITIGATE** - *Parents should not send their child(ren) to school when:*
 - **A student travels** internationally or on cruise ship. They will be expected to self-quarantine for 14 days upon return, based on federal and state executive orders.
 - A child's temperature is **100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater**.
 - **A child is sick** with excessive sneezing and/or coughing.
 - **Even without a fever, a daily morning screen** reveals two or more of the following COVID-like **SYMPTOMS: Chills, Headache, Cough, Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, Fatigue, Muscle or body aches, New loss of taste or smell, Sore throat, Congestion or runny nose, Nausea or vomiting, Diarrhea.**
 - **A family member has** serious COVID-like symptoms or a positive diagnosis.
 - **RESPONSE FOR ALL OF THE ABOVE**
 - **PLEASE contact Mr. Lomas** or the school office for any of the above situations so that we can provide support.
 - For any sickness that has the potential of being COVID-19 we require a test and doctor's note before students may return to school.
 - For any fever that is known not have been caused by COVID-19, students should be fever free for 24 hours **without** taking medication before returning to school.
 - With any sickness that causes diarrhea and/or vomiting, students should stay home from school for **at least 48 hours** after the last time they vomit or have diarrhea.
 - We need to be informed of any positively confirmed cases of COVID-19. (Please see INGHAM COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, p.13)
 - In some cases of positively confirmed COVID-19, in addition to being symptom free, a note from a doctor is required before a child returns to school.
 - Potential larger responses could include a temporary 2-5 day building dismissal of cohort groups or the entire school for cleaning and disinfecting. In extreme cases a 14-day building dismissal may be required.
 - **When a student is required by these rules to self-quarantine**, the teacher will provide a brief summary of the day's lessons, reminding the student of the assignments, and providing a capsule summary of the main points conveyed. It will not be possible to provide a full parallel on-line education for individual students in quarantine, but we will work hard to keep them connected to their class and current in their studies.

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- **PLAN – Establish a back-up plan for pick up!**
 - **We are strongly encouraging** families to prepare a backup plan with other family or trusted friends so that an option is available in the case that your child needs to be sent home if symptoms arise during the school day.
 - **Emergency Contacts** - It is imperative that you or one of your contacts can be reached **within 15 minutes** if we have to get in touch with you. Please take the time to clear your cell phone mailbox. *A child needs to get picked up within **an hour** of being contacted.*

BEFORE COMING TO SCHOOL

- **Daily home screening** - Parents will check temperatures and assess symptoms each day. If a child has a fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, or symptoms as discussed above (See Mitigate) please **do not** bring your child to school. Contact your medical provider for testing, an appointment, and, when required, a note from a medical provider for school re-entry.
- **Facial coverings** - Please send your K-8 child to school with a clean facial covering each day. Facial coverings may be homemade or disposable. **We recommend considering a gaiter type covering, if feasible for your child.** They are worn on the neck and easy to use/remove. **Please see During School section on facial coverings.**
- **Water** - Please send a full, clean water bottle to start the day. (Water fountains are closed except for the water bottle refill station.)

ENTERING THE BUILDING

- **AM DROP OFF**
 - **Prekindergarten** parents should park and enter through the main entrance (Cedar Street). One parent only please. Temperatures for PK are required to be taken daily, per (LARA) State of Michigan Licensing and Regulatory Affairs.
 - **Kindergarten through eighth grade** must be dropped off in the car line at the north parking lot entrance, then head directly to class. Parents are to remain in their cars. If you need to speak to a teacher please make an appointment, park and enter through the school office.
 - Students in K through 8th grade should wear facial coverings in common areas (hallway, front office, restrooms) until reporting to their classroom.

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DURING SCHOOL

- **CLASSROOM SCREENING** -When symptoms arise, classroom teachers will have a thermometer to check temperatures.
- **FREQUENT HAND HYGIENE** – Teachers will implement a regular schedule. (before snack, lunch, restroom break, etc.).
- **FACIAL COVERINGS**
 - **Transitions and Indoor Common Areas (Hallways, restrooms, library, office, etc.)**
 - **Prekindergarten** – Facial coverings will not be required at any time during the day.
 - **Kindergarten through second grade** students will wear facial coverings in hallways and indoor common areas unless facial coverings cannot be medically tolerated with a written/signed parental consent. Per executive order, these students more closely fall into the category of those *unable to remove the facial covering without assistance, must not wear one*. Teachers will assess this and maintaining effectiveness and cleanliness. These cohorts will be emphasizing healthy hygiene habits.
 - **Third through eighth grade** students will wear facial coverings in transitions and common areas unless facial coverings cannot be medically tolerated with a written/signed parental consent.
 - **Daily Mass** – Students in K through 8th grades will transition to Mass with a facial covering on. After arriving at their designated cohort pew, students may remove their facial covering for the entirety of the Mass until departing, transitioning to return to class.
 - **Classroom cohorts**
 - PK through 5th/6th grade will not be required to wear facial coverings within their cohort.
 - 7th & 8th grade, per executive order, facial coverings must be worn unless facial coverings cannot be medically tolerated with a written/signed parental consent.
 - **Lunchroom** – PK through 8th grade will no be required to where facial coverings while seated in the lunchroom.
- **CLASSROOM PROTOCOLS**
 - **Cohorts** - A self-contained classroom where students will interact as normally as possible. Each cohort will be distanced from other cohorts.
 - Within Cohorts seating/desks will be spaced with more distance and all **desks** will face the **same direction** as much as feasible.
 - In the rare instances where students, individuals or cohorts, need to mix then students will wear facial coverings and be socially distanced.
 - **Snacks**-Students will be allowed to have snacks in the classroom. There will be no sharing of snacks between students. *A reminder that we are peanut free classrooms.*
 - Staff will spend time to educate the students on new expectations for hygiene, etiquette, and charitable treatment of others.
 - Each child’s supplies will be kept in individually labeled containers, cubbies, etc.
 - Supplies and equipment will be used by one cohort at a time and will be disinfected between use.
 - Students will be allowed to keep only necessary school materials in their desks, lockers, and backpacks.

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- **SECURE BUILDING: PARENTS, VISITORS, VOLUNTEERS.**
 - Essential staff and students will be the only people in the school building unless special permission is granted in advance by the principal.
 - Non-essential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations will be limited.
 - The school building will be locked down from 8:00am-3:10pm.
 - Without prior notice, parents may not stop into the school building. Please call or email to confirm an appointment for any reason. Enter through the Main Office.
 - Parents coming in will:
 - ✓ Complete a simple screening questionnaire.
 - ✓ Wear a mask.
 - ✓ Have their temperature taken.
 - Sick students and early dismissal students will be escorted to the car as necessary.
 - Delivery personnel will only enter the Parish Offices.
 - Individuals will not be permitted to join students for lunch.
 - Any items delivered by parents will be picked up by staff at the school entrance doors.
 - Volunteers will sign up in advance and upon arrival will:
 - ✓ Complete a screening questionnaire.
 - ✓ Wear a mask.
 - ✓ Have their temperature taken.
- **HOT LUNCH: PREPAID ONLINE THROUGH FACTS**
 - Students will continue to have the option for hot lunch as it is plated before serving. Lunch will be in the gym and students will be seated in cohorts at assigned and distanced tables.
 - Lunch/ Recess Schedule PK-8:

GRADES	LUNCH	RECESS
PK-2	12:00-12:25	11:30-11:55
3-8	11:35-11:55	11:55-12:20

- **EARLY DISMISSAL - Parents who will be picking up a child for early dismissal** will be expected to call the front office when they arrive at the school and remain in their vehicle in front of the main office. A staff member will bring the child to the vehicle, check your identification, and assist you in signing out the student. **As is always our policy**, only parents, guardians, or other individuals identified on the student's contact list, with appropriate identification, will be allowed to leave with the student.

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END OF SCHOOL

PM PICK UP

- Please help us keep things flowing by **picking up on time**.
- At the end of the day each teacher will dismiss students at the north parking lot door. Cohorts will be dismissed in descending order. Oldest siblings will collect younger siblings as they pass their sibling's home room. For SMART after school care, see below.
- Preschool students get picked up by parents through the main entrance at 3:00pm.
- No re-entry in the building after dismissal.
- **ONE WAY EXIT PLEASE** – To maintain safety and keep traffic flowing. Please enter from **Cedar Street** and exit on to **High Street**.

SMART: AFTER SCHOOL CARE

- SMART Care students in PK through second grades will remain in the classroom until other students are dismissed and each homeroom. Teachers will escort remaining PK-2 students to the library. *We are no longer accepting siblings who attend another school into our afterschool care.*
- SMART CARE will run similar to last year. Since it is an indoor common area, students will be required to wear facial coverings inside unless facial coverings cannot be medically tolerated with a written/signed parental consent. During this time, students must bring their own snacks. Weather permitting, most of the time, children will be outdoors. Online pre-payment option offered through FACTS.

GATHERINGS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- **Morning assembly** (Monday only) -We will continue with morning assembly and use proper social distancing measures and facial coverings in the gymnasium.
- **Mass** - Children will attend daily Mass. See During the Day section above. Mass will be available for students and parents.
 - A single restroom located just inside the St. Joan of Arc Room has been designated for St. Mary school students only.
 - Daily communicants(participants) will have a different entrance to Church, use separate restrooms, and sit in another section.
- Spectators attending extracurricular events (athletic competitions, concerts, plays, etc.) may be expected to wear facial coverings and practice social distancing.

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TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

- **Commitment** - St. Mary School Staff will keep all aspects of your child(ren)'s well-being our top priority as we navigate through these adjustments. We intend to handle each instance with love and mercy as we merge our mission of helping students ***strive for academic excellence, delight in the gift of learning, and imitate the virtues of Jesus Christ*** with some additional expectations and vigilance for the safety of our students, staff and families during the challenge of COVID-19.
- All staff will wear facial coverings when indoors, except (1) during meals and (2) unless face coverings cannot be medically tolerated as documented through written and signed verification by a physician.
- Staff will conduct daily self-examinations, including temperature check, prior to coming to work. If they exhibit any new or unusual symptoms as noted in the Mitigate section of this document, they will stay home. Staff member will contact the school administrator in this case.
- Staff will successfully complete COVID-19 safety training and teach, reinforce essential protocols.

BUILDING, CLEANING, SECURITY

- **All building facilities and work spaces will be cleaned nightly.** Additional cleaning of common areas and frequently touched surfaces will occur throughout the day, *as feasible*.
- Use of shared objects will be limited when possible, or cleaned between use.
- Drinking fountains are closed. Students will use a water bottle that goes home daily to be cleaned.
- Pending or completed adjustments for the coming school year:
 - Installation of no-touch soap dispensers (no-touch paper towel dispensers already installed).
 - Purchase of infrared thermometers.
 - Safe, non-hazardous biodegradable, botanical surface cleaners.
 - Purchase of ultraviolet light for disinfecting high touch surfaces.
 - **WISH LIST:** Purchase of room air purifiers (Carbon, Hepa, and UV) for each classroom. NOTE: These are expensive so if you are able to assist by sponsoring a room, etc. to offset costs please contact us!!!!

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INGHAM COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND CDC SCREENING, TESTING PROTOCOLS FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF RESPONDING TO POSITIVE CASES

- St. Mary School will cooperate with the local public health department regarding implementing protocols for screening students and staff and if a confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified. We must collect the contact information for any close contacts of the affected individual from two days before he or she showed symptoms to the time when he or she was last present at the school.
- St. Mary School will notify local health officials, staff, and students immediately of any possible case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws.
- Students and staff who develop a fever or become ill with COVID-19 symptoms at school will be quarantined, wear a mask and be transported for off-site testing. An adult in PPE will be with the student at all times.
- Symptomatic students and staff sent home from school should be kept home until they have **tested negative** for COVID-19, or have been released from isolation according to CDC guidelines.
- Families will be notified of the presence of any laboratory positive or clinically diagnosed cases of COVID-19 in the classroom and/or school to encourage closer observation for any symptoms at home. In the event of a lab or clinically diagnosed case of COVID-19, immediate efforts should be made to contact any close contacts so that they can be quarantined for 14 days at home. Students and staff should be closely monitored for any symptoms of COVID-19. Only those that develop symptoms require testing for COVID-19.
- Students and staff with confirmed case of COVID-19 will only return to the workplace after they are no longer infectious which will be determined by the Ingham County Health Department Guidelines.

COMMUNICATION METHODS

- To stay informed of the most up-to-date information:
 - ✓ Parents need to check their email often (at least once a day) or Flocknote
 - ✓ Visit School website or follow our social media platform, Facebook
 - ✓ Rumors spread faster than facts. Avoid spreading rumors; if you have a question ask Mr. Lomas or Fr. Fons.



IMPORTANT RESOURCES & INFORMATION REFERENCED:

MI Safe Schools- Return to School Roadmap

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/whitmer/MI_Safe_Schools_Roadmap_FINAL_695392_7.pdf

CDC – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html>

CDC – Considerations for Wearing Cloth Face Coverings

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

American Academy of Pediatrics

<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/>

Ingham County Health Department

<http://hd.ingham.org/>

517-887-4311

Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

<https://policylab.chop.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/publications/Policy-Review-School-Reopenings-PolicyLab-2020.pdf>

COVID SAFETY TRAINING SAFETY TRAINING

All staff of St. Mary Parish and School and lunchroom volunteers will complete a COVID Safety Training Course.

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FAMILY HEALTH PLEDGE



**TO CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR ST. MARY SCHOOL
AS A PARENT OR GUARDIAN, I PLEDGE TO DO THE FOLLOWING:**

- **For the well-being of all** students, staff, and other families, my family will avoid unnecessary risks for potential exposure from people and places we visit.
- **Teach and reinforce handwashing** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and teach my child(ren) to cover coughs and sneezes with an elbow or tissue.
- **In the event that my child develops symptoms** I will work closely with St. Mary School and, where applicable, cooperate with the public health department, by following the outlined protocols in this Roadmap for Reopening document.
- **I will establish** an emergency contact and pick-up back-up plan for my family.

I agree and support the protocols outlined in this Roadmap for Reopening plan.

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

**Please return to office by August 24, 2020*