

2020-2021

Return to School Plan

Owensboro Catholic Middle School

Please note: Information contained in this document is evolving and may be updated as additional guidance is released at the Diocesan, national, state, or local level for returning to school.

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Updated as of 8/12/2020

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The purpose of this reopening plan is to provide information and guidance to Owensboro Catholic Middle School families, employees, and the greater community so we may safely open, in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, for the 2020-2021 school year. It is the intention of the Owensboro Catholic Schools to open in such a way that is safe, maximizes in person instruction to all students, and guarantees to our families the excellence they've come to expect from OCS.

It is also our goal to reduce the impact of the current pandemic as it affects students, families, personnel, and communities in our care. The guidelines referenced in this plan are based on the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Kentucky Department of Health, and the Green River Area Health Department, in consultation with the Diocese of Owensboro. Regular updates will be made to this plan based on information provided by the above entities, applicable federal and state laws, and local agencies.

All references to bussing in this document are applicable when bussing is available.

1. Screening at Home

- Families are encouraged to take their child's temperature and screen their children for COVID-19 symptoms each morning before sending the children to school. OCMS students (and all OCS siblings under roof) should stay home or be sent home if any of the following occur:

Symptoms

- ◆ Temperature \geq 100.4
- ◆ Sore throat
- ◆ New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline)
- ◆ Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain
- ◆ New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever

Close Contact/Potential Exposure

- ◆ Had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) with a person with confirmed COVID-19
- ◆ Traveled to or lived in an area where the local or state health department is reporting large numbers of COVID-19 cases.
- ◆ Live in areas of high community transmission while the school remains open.

2. Morning Arrival & Temperature Checks

- Upon arrival to the middle school, masks must be worn by everyone entering the building.
- All middle school staff will have their temperature checked upon entering the building, and complete a daily health self-assessment form.
- Temperature checks will occur outside as students arrive. Staff members will use touchless thermometers to take the temperature of each student.

- If a student has a temperature ≥ 100.4 , a second reading will be taken. If the second reading is still ≥ 100.4 , car riders will not be permitted to enter the school and will be required to go home. A student who has arrived at school by bus with a fever or other symptoms will be isolated until a parent or guardian can come get the student.
- Students may begin arriving at the middle school at 7:30 a.m.
- Students will wait in the cafeteria until dismissed to go to homeroom.
- Masks are to be worn while maintaining as much social distancing as possible.
- The school day will begin at 8:20 a.m.
- A “grab and go” breakfast will be available until 8 a.m. Cafeteria trays will not be used. Students will tell the cafeteria staff their name in lieu of typing their PIN# in the keypad.
- Students arriving after 8:20 a.m. will be marked as tardy. Any student arriving after 8:10 a.m. must enter through front entrance and have their temperature taken upon entry.

3. Masks/Face Coverings

- Masks must be worn by all students and staff.
 - ◆ Cover the nose and mouth and be secured to the head with ties or straps or simply wrapped around the lower face.
 - ◆ Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.
 - ◆ If cloth masks, masks should be washed regularly.
 - ◆ Include multiple layers of fabric.
 - ◆ Allow for breathing without restrictions.
 - ◆ Plastic face shields alone are NOT acceptable per Health Department guidelines.
- Students should be wearing their face coverings when they exit their vehicles and during the morning drop-off.
- Students who ride the bus will be required to wear a face mask at all times while on the bus.
- Masks will be worn in the hallways. If you are moving, you are masking.
- OCS has purchased clear desktop barriers to enhance student and staff safety. These barriers are CDC and local health department approved.
- All adults in the building are required to wear masks.
- Though we anticipate there being short breaks throughout the day when students can remove their masks, doing so is not required. Parents may request that their students wear their mask at all times.
- Families are expected to provide their own face coverings for students; however, we will have extra disposable masks on hand if a student forgets theirs or theirs gets soiled.

- We are not requiring a specific uniform mask for students. We encourage students' creative designs and patterns provided they do not promote any bias related apparel, sign or symbol which reasonably appears to offend, victimize or intimidate others based on race, age, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability and/or which disrupts or interferes with the educational setting and/or process. This includes the wearing of gang clothing or paraphernalia and the use of gang signs and signals. Students also cannot promote any political agenda or make any political statement via their apparel, signs or symbols.

4. Visitors

- All visitors must wear masks upon entering the school, have their temperatures taken, and complete and sign the daily health self-assessment form before interacting with the OCMS staff.
- Dropping off items to students throughout the day is highly discouraged.
- Non-essential personnel must be pre-approved by the Principal.

5. Safety Precautions

- OCMS will follow disinfection and sanitization recommendations by the Green River District Health Department and KY Dept. of Public Health for classrooms, restrooms, outdoors spaces, and cafeterias.
- Students and staff will be encouraged to wash their hands frequently throughout the school day.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in all classrooms and accessed liberally.
- Signs will be posted in highly visible locations that promote healthy hygiene practices.
- Regular announcements will be made reminding staff and students to employ healthy hygiene practices.
- Gloves will be worn for cleaning, sanitization and food service.
- High touch areas (doorknobs, desks, etc.) will be disinfected and sanitized routinely throughout the day. Custodial staff will also use a fogger as part of the cleaning at the end of each day.
- All restrooms will be disinfected regularly.
- OCMS is encouraging students to bring their own Chromebook from home if one is available. A Chromebook is the only device allowed. A Chromebook will be provided by the school for students who do not have a Chromebook. A one-time \$50 deposit is required. Students will not be sharing devices throughout the day.
- Water fountains will be made inaccessible. Students are asked to bring a clear, reusable water bottle from home to drink from throughout the day. Water bottle filling stations will be located throughout the middle school.
- Hallway traffic, movement and passing periods will be staggered. All teachers will monitor foot traffic during passing periods.
- Any student showing signs of illness will have their temperature taken by the Health Assistants, and students with a temperature ≥ 100.4 degrees OR showing any COVID-19 symptoms will be isolated and sent home.
- The hours of the Health Assistants at OCMS have been adjusted.
- Additional backup staff for Health Assistants have been trained.

6. During the School Day

- Classrooms will be arranged to allow as much social distancing as possible for the room.
- When possible, all student desks will be arranged to face the same direction.
- Traffic Flow – Taped markings on the floor throughout the campus will help maintain the social distancing requirements.
- Students should remain seated until their time to move to maintain social distance.
- Students will have access to books from the library. Returned library books will be isolated for 72 hours before being available for circulation.
- On Wednesdays when the Daviess County Public School buses will not be available, parents are expected to make other arrangements to transport their children to school.
- No off-campus trips or school-wide assemblies are planned at this time. Students may still participate in virtual field trips in their classrooms!
- Students will have the opportunity for power snack breaks. Students may bring a healthy snack from home or purchase a snack from the cafeteria. Snacks are permitted in the classrooms, but students are expected to clean up after themselves.
- Emergency drills (fire, earthquake, tornado, lockdown) will continue to be conducted regularly in a modified format to allow for social distancing.
- Parents are asked to call or email Secretary, Lily McDivitt, lily.mcdivitt@owensborocatholic.org, when a student will be late, has an appointment or will be absent.

7. Lunch

- Students will be directed to wash/sanitize hands immediately preceding and following eating at school.
- Limited menu offerings.
- Offer vs. Serve will be eliminated, which means students will have to take all items on the menu.
- Disposable containers will be used along with prepackaged, disposable utensils.
- Students will utilize both the cafeteria and the gym for seating during lunch.
- Students will be spaced six feet apart during lunch.
- Students will wear a face covering unless seated and eating.
- An additional sink will be installed in the cafeteria for student/staff use.
- Sharing food will not be permitted between students at school.

8. Gym

- Physical activity is very important and healthy activity will be encouraged.
- Balls and other PE equipment will be sanitized by the teacher after each use.
- Students will use hand sanitizer before and after PE.

9. Transportation

Morning Transportation

BUS

- OCMS will follow all DCPS guidelines for bus transportation. Please see additional Bus Expectations Policy for OCMS. This policy will be strictly enforced.
- Student temperature will be checked when unloading at OCMS
- If the student's temperature is ≥ 100.4 , the student is to report directly to the Health Assistants and follow quarantine protocol.
- We highly recommend that parents avoid using public school transportation if at all possible.

CAR

- Student temperature will be checked before students exit the vehicle.
- If temperature is ≥ 100.4 , the student will not be allowed to attend school.

WALKERS AND BIKE RIDERS

- Walkers and bike riders will follow handbook guidelines and enter the building where car riders and bus riders are dropped off.
- Student temperature will be checked before entering into the building.
- If the temperature is ≥ 100.4 , the student will report directly to the Health Assistants and follow quarantine protocol.

Afternoon Dismissal

- Due to the late August school start, the school day will be extended.
- Dismissal will be staggered.
- All students will be required to wear a mask during dismissal.

BUS

- Bus riders will be dismissed first. Students will be expected to follow ALL instructions from the bus driver and bus monitor (see public school transportation policy). Once bus riders have left, car riders will begin to be dismissed. Students who ride the bus will be required to wear a face mask at all times while on the bus.

CAR

- Car riders will be dismissed once bus riders have cleared the building and are loaded. Once the buses depart, cars will be allowed to flow.

WALKERS AND BIKE RIDERS

- Walkers and bike riders will be dismissed after the first group of car riders has departed.
- For safety reasons, all walkers and bike riders are to exit the parking lot in the same direction as the flow of traffic.

10. Social Emotional Learning

- The middle school is committed in assisting students with their social and emotional needs, especially during this challenging time. We will continue to monitor our students' transition back to school. We will work closely with families regarding awareness of how students are feeling and access their individual needs to provide the support they need during this transition.

11. Student Support Services

- Some students may be experiencing more significant emotional challenges, including fears or anxieties, sadness, difficulty concentrating, or trauma.
- Student support services include counselor, school nurse, principal, and homeroom teachers.

12. Mass

- All students enrolled (including non-Catholic students) will attend weekly Mass and are expected to participate in the daily Theology classroom lessons.
- Due to social distancing limitations we hope to live-stream Mass in the classrooms for classes that are unable to attend in person.
- Students will wear masks in church and remain socially distanced.

13. Contact Tracing & COVID-19 Response

- If a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19, the school will cooperate with the contract tracing provided by the Green River District Health Department.
- Any student with infectious symptoms will be sent to the school isolation room and a parent/guardian will be contacted. The student will wear a mask while awaiting transport and will remain isolated from other students and staff members.
- If an OCMS student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, it does not necessarily mean that the school will shut down. OCMS will follow guidance from the Green River District Health Department in the event of a confirmed case of a student or staff member with COVID-19.
 - ◆ “Exposure” alone does not require quarantine. The Health Department will conduct contact tracing to determine if any students had “close contact” with the person who tested positive, and will assess whether they are at low, medium, or high risk of contracting the coronavirus.

14. Continuing Education in Quarantine

- There may be times during the school year when your child will be quarantined and unable to attend school for a designated time period. If a person in a student's household has a confirmed case of COVID-19, the entire household (including the student) may be forced to quarantine for 14 days as directed by the health department.
- Live streaming in classrooms will not occur due to student confidentiality.

15. Distance Learning

- Distance learning will be provided only for students who have a specialist's note saying they have an underlying condition that would not allow the student to return to in-person classes at this time.
- Quarantined students due to exposure (themselves or a family member).

16. Returning to School After an Illness

- If a student has tested positive for COVID-19, the following conditions must be met before he/she can return to school:
 - ◆ At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared, and
 - ◆ At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication, and
 - ◆ Symptoms have improved
 - ◆ Written release from the Green River District Health Department.
- We realize that the symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to those of many other illnesses. Your student must be fever free and symptom free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication before returning to school as per OCS Return to School Policy. However, if you:
 - ◆ Had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) with a person with confirmed COVID-19
 - ◆ Traveled to or lived in an area where the local or state health department is reporting large numbers of COVID-19 cases
 - ◆ Live in areas of high community transmission while the school remains open

then you must visit your health care provider and receive a note before returning to school.

17. Whole School Closure - NTI

- In the event that all schools in Kentucky are mandated to close, we may be forced to implement non-traditional instruction (NTI). Based on parent feedback, we have strengthened our NTI to be more robust than that which was experienced during the spring.
- Parents can expect a weekly calendar of assignments in each grade level. Assignments will include tasks from students' textbooks and digital learning platforms.
- New learning will continue. Academic skills will be introduced through instructional videos made available by the teachers and live Zoom sessions with the teachers (whole class or small group).