

2020-2021

Return to School Plan

Owensboro Catholic K-3 Campus

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 Schools 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 the children, 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. 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

- All K-3 staff and students will have their temperatures checked daily upon entering the building and all K-3 staff will complete a daily health self-assessment form.
- Temperature checks will occur as students unload from the school bus or exit their vehicles during the morning car drop-off line. Staff members will use touchless thermometers to take the temperature of each child.

- ◆ 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 child.
- ◆ If your child has a temperature ≥ 100.4 F, we will ask you to park and wait a few minutes. Someone will come to your car within a few minutes. If the second reading is still ≥ 100.4 , students transported by car will not be permitted to enter the school and will be required to go home.
- As in previous years, car riders may enter through the cafeteria or lobby doors after their temperatures have been checked. Bus riders will enter the building through the Annunciation Center breezeway doors.
- Students may not be dropped off at the K-3 Campus before 7:00 a.m.
- Students who are dropped off between 7:00-7:15 a.m. will wait in the cafeteria while maintaining as much social distancing as possible. All K-3 students must wear masks during this time.
- Students who arrive after 7:15 a.m. will go directly to their classrooms.
- A “grab and go” breakfast will be available for purchase from 7:15-7:40 a.m. Students may pick up their breakfast in the cafeteria and take it to their classrooms to eat. 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 7:45 a.m. will be marked as tardy and must enter through the lobby doors to have their temperatures taken upon entry.

3. Masks/Face Coverings

- Masks must be worn by all Kindergarten through 3rd grade 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.
- Just as students wear their backpacks, students should also be wearing their face coverings as they exit their vehicles during morning drop-off.
- All K-3 students who ride the DCPS buses will be required to wear a mask on the bus.
- Masks will be worn by all K-3 students in the hallways and going to and from recess.
- 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 children; however, we will have extra disposable masks on hand if children do not have one. Parents may want to keep an extra mask in their child's backpack in case a spare is needed throughout the day.
- Washable masks should be laundered regularly.
- We are not requiring a specific uniform mask for students. We encourage 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 act 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. Riding the DCPS Bus (per DCPS guidelines)

- All K-3 students who ride the bus will be required to wear face coverings/masks at all times while on the bus. If a student does not have a mask when he/she boards the bus, one will be provided.
- The bus driver/monitor will dispense hand sanitizer for each student boarding the bus.
- Students will have an assigned seat. Siblings will be seated together. To the extent possible, students will be loaded from back to front when boarding. However, Kindergarten students will not be seated in the back section of the bus.
- We highly recommend that parents avoid using public school transportation if at all possible.

5. Visitors

- We love our parent volunteers and have been blessed with remarkable parent support! However, due to the safety of our students, no visitors, parents/guardians, or volunteers will be permitted beyond the school lobby at this time until restrictions are eased. Visitors may not eat lunch with students.
- All individuals must wear masks while interacting with K-3 office staff through the entry window.
- If parents need to drop off their child's lunchbox or other items during the school day, parents need to leave those items in the office for school staff to deliver to the child. Parents may not take items to the classrooms.
- Parents will be permitted to walk their children to the classroom door during the first three mornings of school ONLY, but parents will not be permitted inside the classrooms. We cannot fit many parents and children inside the classroom at one time. Any parents who enter the building during these first three mornings MUST wear a mask and have their temperature taken prior to entry.
- After the first three days of school, parents will not be permitted to walk their children inside the building. The car drop-off line should be used.
- Teachers will share pictures and videos of your children during the school day through the Seesaw app. You will receive information for accessing your child's Seesaw journal at the Meet Your Teacher event.

6. Safety Precautions

- The K-3 Campus will follow disinfection recommendations by the Green River District Health Department and KY Department of Public Health for classrooms, restrooms, outdoors spaces, and playgrounds.
- Students and staff will be encouraged to wash their hands frequently throughout the school day, including before and after eating.
 - ◆ Signs depicting proper handwashing are located in all school restrooms.
 - ◆ At the beginning of the school year, teachers will remind students of the proper technique for handwashing.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in all classrooms.
- High touch areas (doorknobs, desks, etc.) will be disinfected and sanitized routinely throughout the day. Custodial staff will also use a disinfectant fogger in each classroom and every area of the school as part of the cleaning at the end of each day.
- Students will have their own supplies (scissors, crayons, glue, pencils, etc.) to eliminate the sharing of supplies as much as possible. Items will be disinfected between uses if sharing is unavoidable.
- We hope to have enough iPads and Chromebooks so that students do not have to share technology devices throughout the day. The computer lab will be unavailable this year.
- Water fountains will also be unavailable. Students are asked to bring a reusable water bottle from home to drink from throughout the day. Water bottle filling stations will be located throughout the K-3 Campus.
 - ◆ Only water may be brought to school. No other beverages may be brought from home in the child's water bottle.

7. During the School Day

- Classrooms will be arranged to allow as much social distancing as is feasible for the room. We will do the best we can! When the full social distancing of 6-ft. cannot be achieved, we will try to space student desks apart as much as possible. In all cases, masks must be worn. Students will be provided with mask breaks several times throughout the day.
- Plexiglass dividers will be placed around students' workspaces and individual desks. Plexiglass is not a substitute for social distancing or mask wearing, but simply an added layer of protection for our students. The plexiglass dividers will be securely fastened to students' desks and cleaned regularly.
- The music, art, and library teachers will be going into the classrooms to teach their lessons until health restrictions are eased.
 - ◆ Students will still be permitted to check out library books from a selection provided by the librarian. Library books will remain in the classroom for students to read throughout the week instead of being sent home. Returned library books will be isolated for 72 hours before being available for circulation.
 - ◆ Each teacher has classroom library books as well. Students will still be permitted to read these books, but the books will be isolated for 72 hours upon return before being recirculated.

- 2nd and 3rd grade students may bring e-readers from home for independent reading during the school day. These devices are to be used at the discretion of the teacher for independent reading only. All books must be downloaded onto the child’s device prior to arriving at school. Students will NOT have access to the school’s WiFi network. A waiver must be signed by the parents before students may be permitted to use their reading device at school. For additional information or to request a copy of this waiver agreement for your child, please call the school office.
- The Minds-in-Motion maze will still be set up in the gym and utilized by classes throughout the day. For the health and safety of all, we will be incorporating movements that do not require students to touch shared items.
- To limit the exposure of students, 2nd and 3rd graders will not be ability-grouped for math and reading within their grade levels as in prior years. Teachers will still provide small group instruction and differentiation in the classrooms to ensure that all students receive the remediation or challenge needed to reach their potential.
- On Wednesdays, if the Daviess County Public School buses will not be available, parents are expected to make other arrangements to transport their children to school. If you have concerns about transporting your children to school on Wednesdays, please contact the school office.
- No field trips or school-wide assemblies are planned at this time. Teachers will be exploring opportunities for free “virtual” field trips to educational locations around the world.
- All students in grades K-3 will still have the opportunity for a mid-morning snack. Students may bring a healthy snack from home or purchase a snack from the cafeteria. A list of snack options available for purchase will be released in late August.
- Emergency drills (fire, earthquake, tornado, lockdown) will continue to be conducted regularly in a modified format to allow for social distancing.
- If a child becomes ill during the school day, the parent/guardian will be contacted by the school and asked to pick up the child as soon as possible. If the child is displaying COVID-19 symptoms, he/she will be isolated from other students and supervised by school staff until the child’s parent/guardian arrives.

8. Lunch

- Due to a limited social distancing capacity, not all students will be able to eat in the cafeteria every day. If all students were to eat lunch in the cafeteria every day while maintaining social distancing, the lunch hours would be significantly extended beyond reasonable times for our young students.
 - ◆ Outdoor picnics will be encouraged during nice weather, and students may also eat in their classrooms a few days per week.
 - ◆ If students eat in the cafeteria, students will be assigned a particular seat for documentation in the event that contact tracing is needed.
- The cafeteria staff will deliver lunch to students who are eating in the classrooms or outside. Students will not go through the lunch line to pick up their meals.

- Cheese pizza will not be offered as a daily lunch option at the beginning of the year. Peanut butter and grilled cheese will still be daily options in addition to the main lunch choice. Extra precautions will be taken when lunch is served in the classrooms to ensure the safety of students with peanut allergies.
- No share tables will be permitted in the cafeteria or in the classrooms.

9. Recess – Playground & Gym

- Physical activity is very important and healthy activity will be incorporated each day.
- The fenced-in area around the playground will be limited to one class at a time to allow for social distancing. The grassy areas around the K-3 building may also be used for play or outdoor learning during the day.
- The gym will be limited to two classes at a time, with each class remaining in separate sections of the gym. Classes will not be permitted to intermingle on the playground or in the gym.
- Balls, individual jump ropes, chalk, etc. will be designated for each class to prevent the use of communal school-wide items. These classroom items will be sanitized by the teacher after each use.
- Masks do not need to be worn at outdoor recess when students are socially distanced, but students do need to wear masks as they walk in the halls to and from recess.
- Students will use hand sanitizer before entering the playground/gym and will wash hands after recess.

10. Dismissal

- Due to the late August school start, the school day will be extended.
- K-3 students will be required to wear a mask during dismissal since students will be moving throughout the hallways.
- Bus riders will be dismissed at 2:15. If your child is a usual bus rider, please let Mrs. Scott in the K-3 office know if your child will be a car rider or go to the After School Program on Wednesdays.
- We highly recommend that parents avoid using public school transportation if at all possible.
- Car rider dismissal in the afternoons will look different, but plans have not been finalized. To ensure social distancing, parents must remain in their vehicles. A car pick-up line will likely be utilized to load a few cars at a time. We will provide additional details on that process in the coming weeks!

11. Social/Emotional Wellness

- The K-3 Campus is committed to supporting students' social and emotional wellness, especially during this transition back to school.
- Building relationships with students will be a priority for teachers during the first few weeks of school.
- Monthly guidance lessons will focus on social-emotional learning which includes identifying and coping with emotions, conflict resolution, and growth mindset.

- Please communicate with us if your child is expressing anxiousness toward the start of the school year. If parents/guardians have questions or concerns about their child's emotional well-being, our guidance counselor, Mrs. Kim Bennett (kim.bennett@owensborocatholic.org), may be able to provide resources or support for families.

12. After School Program

- The K-3 After School Program will be available from 2:45 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. each day that school is in session.
- The After School Program (ASP) will operate under the same guidelines and procedures to ensure safety as have been outlined for the regular school day.
- All students staying for the After School Program will have their temperatures checked each day between 2:45 – 3:00 p.m. If a child has a temperature ≥ 100.4 F, parents will be contacted to pick up the child as soon as possible.
- Since all ASP staff will be needed to monitor students, supervised homework time will not be available for the 3rd grade students this school year. However, 3rd graders are free to work on any written homework during their center time while in the After School Program. Studying for tests with the assistance of an ASP staff member will not be possible.
- Adults will not be permitted beyond the K-3 lobby when picking up children from the After School Program. The After School Program receptionist will radio for the child, and the child will be brought to the lobby with his/her backpack.
 - ◆ Adults must wear a mask while inside the K-3 lobby and interacting with the receptionist through the entry window.
 - ◆ Anyone picking up a child from the After School Program will be required to show identification (a driver's license is acceptable).

13. Mass and Priest Visits

- All children enrolled at the K-3 Campus (including non-Catholic students) will attend weekly Mass and are expected to participate fully in the Religion lessons and all religious aspects of the day (prayers, devotions, Rosary, etc.).
- Due to social distancing limitations in the church, it is likely that only one grade level will be permitted to attend Mass in the church each week. We are exploring possibilities of live-streaming Mass in the classrooms for those grade levels that are unable to attend in person.
- When participating in Mass in the church, we will follow all health directives set forth by the Diocese. All K-3 students must wear masks throughout the duration of the Mass.
- Priest visits are an important part of our week in grades 1-3. We are hoping that our priests will still be able to interact with our students through virtual visits or record video messages for our students.
- Due to limited social distancing capacity in the church, parents and visitors will not be permitted to attend school Masses at this time. We hope to be able to share the livestream with you, as well as lots of pictures and videos through the Seesaw app.

14. Contact Tracing & COVID-19 Response

- If a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19, contract tracing will be provided by the Green River District Health Department.
- If a K-3 student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, it does not necessarily mean that the school will shut down. OCS 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. The Health Department will make the decision about whether or not an individual is required to be quarantined due to low, medium, or high risk of contracting the coronavirus based on their exposure.
- Any student or staff member who tests positive for the virus will be required to self-isolate for a period of time determined by healthcare professionals (possibly up to 14 days or longer if symptoms persist). Clearance must be received from a health care provider before the student or staff member may return to school.
- At the K-3 Campus, students will spend most of the school day interacting only with students in their class. By limiting students’ exposure to a small number of peers, we hopefully can minimize the spread of illness.
- If a student in your child’s classroom tests positive for COVID-19, the health department will advise if a notice needs to be sent to the parents of all children in that class, depending upon the risk of exposure.

15. Continuing Education in Quarantine

- There could be times during the school year when your child may be quarantined and unable to attend school for a designated period of time even though your child is not displaying any symptoms. Some instances may include:
 - ◆ If a person in a student’s household has a confirmed case of COVID-19, the entire household (including the student) would be forced to quarantine for 14 days.
 - ◆ If the Health Department determined that your child was at high risk of exposure due to a positive case confirmed at school, the Health Department may ask that your child be quarantined for 14 days.
- During this time, students will complete their assignments through “distance learning.” Distance learning is not the same as NTI. Distance learning may be implemented differently depending on the grade level of the child and the circumstances surrounding the illness/quarantine.
- Parents/guardians may call the school office to arrange to pick up your child’s workbooks and any learning resources that he/she may need during the quarantine period.
- OCS has an Educational Resource Team in place to assist families with distance learning and ensure that your child’s learning continues during a quarantine.
- Teachers may post instructional videos for your child to watch in order to complete each day’s lessons. Live streaming of the classroom throughout the school day will not occur.
- If a teacher is required to be quarantined during the school year, we plan for our teachers to continue

to teach from home while students are in the classroom supervised by school personnel. We have the technological capabilities to display a live stream of our teachers from their homes into the classroom so that the teachers can share videos and educational resources and interact with students in small groups.

16. Distance Learning

- Distance learning for an extended period of time 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. For questions about distance learning, please contact the OCS Central Office.

17. Returning to School After an Illness

- If a child 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.

18. 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' workbooks 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).