



## *St. Bernadette Catholic School*

### *2020-2021 Return to School Plan*

#### **Safety, Presence, and Growth in a Christ-Centered Environment**

In collaboration with  
The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux  
Return to School Task Force

*St. Bernadette Catholic School is a Christ centered faith community, fostering spiritual growth, and academic excellence. We strive to instill in our students a lifelong commitment to learning, to Christian values, and to community service.*

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## MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

*Dear Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Catholic Schools Family,*

*During the spring of our 2019-2020 school year, our Catholic schools, along with the rest of our community, state, and nation, faced an unprecedented national health crisis which put us on a much different path towards completion of our academic year in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux. Moving to distance learning as the result of our state's Stay at Home Order, our school families faced the many challenges before us with prayerful diligence, grace, and the patience necessary to navigate a path untraveled. We missed our students. We missed our Celebrations of the Eucharist as school families. We missed our "normal." This journey was not an easy one, and we know it would not have been possible without the constant presence of our Lord, Jesus Christ walking beside us. Together, our entire diocesan Catholic schools family not only successfully completed the 2019-2020 school year, but did so with the same spirit, love, and enthusiasm that makes our ministry so unique.*

*Now, we find the blessings of the 2020-2021 school year before us. The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux is actively preparing for the safe return to our schools in August. Utilizing a task force comprised of school administrators, teachers, medical health professionals, parents, school board members, community leaders, and diocesan leadership, an intentional Return to School Plan has been constructed. The intent of the plan is to aid in navigating the return to our schools so employees, students, and families feel safe and to reduce the impact of COVID-19 conditions. Our priorities as we return to school are safety, presence, and growth:*

- *SAFETY-* The diocese is committed to utilizing appropriate safety measures in the context of a return to work and schools.
- *PRESENCE-* The diocese is committed to keeping our schools open and do not want to burden parents with challenging schedules that would make it difficult to work.
- *GROWTH-* The diocese wants our children to continue their academic progress in a safe, secure, and Christ-centered environment in our schools as we work in the ministry of Catholic education to form the whole child.

*This Return to School Plan is a living document that will be updated as needed as we respond to additional guidance received from our local, state, and federal officials. Our schools will post their Return to School Plans on their school websites, updating as needed.*

*The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux is grateful for the deep commitment of its school families to the ministry of Catholic education and looks forward to welcoming its students and staff back to school in August. Together with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we are eager and ready to embark on our 2020-2021 school year!*

*Blessings,*

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzanne Delaune Troxclair". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

*Suzanne Delaune Troxclair*

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents,

I hope you are all doing well as we embark upon the opening of our 2020-2021 school year. I have spent the summer collaborating with other members of the Diocesan Task Force working diligently to follow guidelines given to us by the CDC, the Louisiana Department of Education, and the local medical authorities. We are proud to announce that the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux is now in partnership with Thibodaux Regional Medical Center. Thibodaux Regional Medical Center has already sent three nurses to our school to meet with me on medical guidelines. They walked through our facility with tips to secure a healthy and safe environment for our students. They will be present on the first three days when all students attend, including preschool and kindergarten students. During those three days, they will help monitor our process for checking temperatures of all students before entering the building.

Although some of the modifications we will be making seem very clinical, it will all be worth it to be together as a school family once again. We ask for your patience as we walk through some of these procedures for the first time. We also ask that you as parents help us through this process. You can help by always having a positive attitude when discussing the school's procedures in front of your children. Another way you can help is by not mixing your children with others from the bus. If at all possible, please avoid your child riding the bus. Also, please have your children practice wearing a mask. And lastly and most importantly, please keep your children home if they are sick. I have been very impressed by the positive attitude our parents have chosen to get through these uncharted waters. We can get through this but we all need to work together as we have in the past.

Teachers are busy setting up their classrooms by rearranging seating and removing unnecessary furniture to provide ultimate space. As plans unfold we will send more information through our Administrator's Plus Notify system, in the form of an email or text. One thing we do know is that for safety and health related reasons, students will not be changing classes. If the students have more than one teacher, the teachers will be changing classes.

My top priority will be protecting the health and safety of our students with a return to normalcy with curriculum driven instruction permeated with a strong Catholic identity.

May God bless each of you and keep you safe and healthy.

*Lydia Landry*  
Principal

# **HOSPITAL PARTNERSHIP**

## **THIBODAUX REGIONAL HEALTH SYSTEM**

### **DIOCESAN PARTNERSHIP**

#### **Level one services provided to each school:**

- On-site assessment with safe return to school/work recommendations and guidelines
- In-person training of workplace staff
- In-person training and support for on-site screenings
- Nurse call line for initial assessment of questionable symptoms at screening
- Expedited virtual or in-person appointment scheduling
- Workplace signage (hand hygiene, social distancing, etc.)
- Online access to education resources
- Monthly follow-up and re-evaluation

## **CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION/CATHOLIC IDENTITY**

### **Curriculum/Instruction**

Our goal is to secure curriculum driven instruction while protecting the students' educational opportunities within a Christ-centered environment. Because of the pandemic, we could possibly operate in the traditional school setting, in a hybrid school setting, or in a non- traditional school setting, depending on the limitation of occupancy directed by the state.

- As a Catholic school, in all three school settings religion continues to be a focus subject.
- Formative assessments will be given at the beginning of the school year for grades K-7 to determine where reinforcement may be needed from the end of last school year.
- Teachers will adhere to curriculum and state standards by following their curriculum mapping.
- If we ever have to return to distance learning, all new learning will begin with explicit instruction.
- Programs used for distance learning (example: Google Classroom), will also be used in the traditional classroom setting, as well.
- Due to distance learning in the last nine weeks of school, teachers will collaborate with the next level teachers informing them of standards and concepts not mastered. This will also happen between the elementary and high schools for seventh grade students going to high school.

## **Catholic Identity**

Catholic schools have a two-fold purpose: providing an education that is academically excellent and one that is deeply rooted in Catholic identity.

- We will have masses on Tuesdays and Thursdays to allow more students to attend mass.
- Religion will be taught daily.
- We will start every day and end every day in prayer.
- Teachers will start class with prayer.
- Each class will adopt a saint for their class.
- A decade of the rosary will be said in the months of October and May.
- Our curriculum will provide our students with knowledge and skills about racism so they can begin to work toward building a more equitable society for all. Our Catholic social teachings will include racism.

## **MONITORING/SCREENING**

Conducting regular screening for symptoms and ongoing self-monitoring throughout the school day can help reduce exposure. Staff and students will be encouraged to self-monitor for symptoms (fever, cough, or shortness of breath). If a student develops symptoms throughout the day, they must notify an adult immediately. The faculty and staff will also get training from TRMC with this matter.

### **Recommendations for schools:**

- Enforce the staff and students to stay at home if they have tested positive for or are showing symptoms of COVID-19 or they have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 until they meet criteria for return.
- Conduct daily symptom screenings of any person entering the building (students, staff, family members, and other visitors). Screenings will be conducted before entering the building.
- Fever is determined by a measured temperature of 100.4 Fahrenheit or greater with an oral thermometer. With a touchless thermometer, it is 99.4. We will not take temperatures orally due to the risk of spreading COVID-19.

### **Handling suspected, presumptive or confirmed positive cases of COVID-19:**

- We have dedicated a space for symptomatic individuals that will not be used for other purposes.
- Immediately we will isolate symptomatic individuals to the designated area at the school, and send them home to isolate. These students will remain under visual supervision of a staff member who is at least 6 feet away. The



supervising adult will wear a cloth mask or face covering. The symptomatic person will wear a cloth face covering while waiting to leave the facility.

- Once the symptomatic student has left we will implement cleaning and disinfecting procedures.
- To ensure the faculty, staff, and students are safe we will document any COVID-19 cases to inform those who may have been exposed in cases where there is justification of being quarantined.
- We will adhere to the state's guidelines for allowing a student or staff member to return to school.

### **Responding to Positive Cases**

- Once we are aware of a positive or presumptive positive case, we will contact our Regional Medical Director. The Regional Medical Director will advise us on communication, quarantining practices, enhanced cleaning and the disinfection process. The Office of Catholic Schools will also be contacted. If the positive case is a faculty or staff member, we will also contact the diocesan human resources office.
- Teachers will keep class seating charts as well as cafeteria seating charts for cases where we are contacted by LDH contact tracers.
- Students who may have been exposed to the individual that tested positive (who were less than 6 feet apart for more than 15 minutes) need to be isolated at home for two weeks. This will be determined by the contact tracer or the Regional Medical Director.

## **SUPPLIES AND WATER SYSTEMS**

### **Water Systems**

- Water fountains will be completely shut off from the water supply.
- Students will bring their own water bottles to school. These bottles should be labeled and brought to school in a lunch box. Students will not be carrying water bottles in book bags to prevent textbook damage if there is any leakage.
- Sharing of water bottles is prohibited.

### **Secure adequate cleaning/sanitizing/monitoring supplies**

- We will support healthy hygiene behaviors by providing adequate supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, and disposable gloves.

- We will also purchase an adequate number of no-contact infrared thermometers.

## **COMMUNICATION**

One of the best ways to ensure calm and rational behavior during a time of crisis, like a school interruption, is to effectively communicate information to stakeholders. That’s why it is vital that the task force plan is aligned with emergency policies to help maintain consistent, factual, and appropriate messaging.

- We will regularly update parents through our weekly newsletter, email, video, phone calls, text, social media, etc.
- To promote everyday protective measures, we will be posting signs or posters in highly visible locations, such as school entrances, hallways, common areas, and restrooms to ensure guidance on proper hygiene and other measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- We will be notifying faculty, staff, and school families of school closures or any restrictions mandated by the state.

### **Communications Protocol**

- Our communication to stakeholders will be through Administrator’s Plus, emails, text messages, and Facebook posts.
- We will send emails with information about the landing page for our Return to School Plan.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **Bus transportation:**

- In order to stop or slow the spread of COVID-19 we will keep groups together when possible. For this reason, we highly recommend that if at all possible students not use the buses as they will be mixing with students from other schools.
- Be cognizant of occupancy restrictions such as the maximum number of passengers not to exceed a set percentage of total rider capacity (students and adults) on group transportation vehicles. Phase I (25%), Phase II (50%), Phase III (75%).
- All passengers should engage in hand hygiene (using hand sanitizer) upon entering and exiting group transportation vehicles.
- Passengers in third grade and up should wear face coverings on group transportation vehicles at all times.

- There should be 6 feet of social distancing between passengers on group transportation vehicles and when staging for loading and after unloading.

**Private Vehicles:**

- We encourage the use of private vehicles to transport students to and from school to reduce additional exposure to health risks of COVID-19.
- Social Distancing for Drop-off:  
We will establish drop off and pick up areas to ensure social distancing practices will be implemented to the best of our ability.

## **COUNSELING SERVICES/HOLISTIC SUPPORT**

Mrs. Jill Talbot, our new school counselor also served on a diocesan task force committee making recommendations for counseling services and holistic support.

**Students and Families**

- Curriculum and instruction are enhanced by the social-emotional well-being of students. School counseling services and other supports will be provided to enhance the overall mental health and well being of our students.
- It is an important tool for parents to set the positive tone at home for the return to school.
- We will be prepared to encounter a wide range of social-emotional needs of students when school reopens, including establishing a sense of physical and psychological safety.
- Our school counselor will communicate identified needs to school administrators, secure feedback, and gain support for service delivery.
- We will attend to general and individual student needs. In early childhood programs, students could benefit from simple strategies for exploring, discussing, and regulating emotions. At the elementary level, students could also benefit from programs on relationship-building and conflict-resolutions skills.
- Students will be provided brief, solution-focused school counseling services or, when appropriate, referral to community resources to address social and emotional learning and mental and behavioral health needs beyond the scope of what can be provided at school.
- Our school counselor may video lessons such as coping skills, meditation, mindfulness, grounding techniques, etc. and make them available to classroom teachers.
- Special attention will be given to students entering our school for the first time, taking care of their transitional needs.

- Social and emotional learning curriculum will be intentionally embedded into core academic subjects. For example, self-regulation of the nervous system (breathing, sensory input, staying grounded) and ways of taking care of physical health (quality sleep, avoiding substance use, well-balanced diet, relaxation techniques) could be part of health and physical education.
- All services previously provided by the counseling staff to students should be maintained during blended and distance learning as is feasible.
- Our counselor will advocate for the students when necessary and appropriate.

### **Faculty and Staff**

- We must recognize that all faculty and staff members have experienced COVID-19 and are not immune to the complex social-emotional turmoil that has resulted from this pandemic experience including the many unknowns and perceived obstacles with the return to school. Faculty and staff members must feel that their physical and mental health needs are supported in our school.
- In-service opportunities will be available to faculty and staff on mental health first aid, trauma support, as well as connection and relationship building so they are able to support student social-emotional learning as well as their own well-being.
- Faculty and staff will have an opportunity to reconnect, process emotions and experiences, and evaluate lessons learned before the students return to school.
- Continuing education will be provided to faculty and staff to support the students upon their return.

## **SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES**

Social distancing, or physical distancing, is measures taken to maintain space between yourself and others outside of your home to help prevent the spread of contagious diseases. To practice social distancing, remain 6 feet from others and reduce the number of times you come in contact with one another.

### **Social Distancing Recommendations:**

Face Coverings

- Adults are to wear face coverings. Adults and students (3rd - 7th grades) must wear a face covering. Any student over the age of two **may** wear a face covering.
- Face coverings must be worn in all areas of the school to the maximum extent possible including classrooms when students are transitioning within the facility.
- Cloth face coverings are recommended by the CDC.
- Face shields are not allowed as a replacement for a face covering. The CDC does not recommend face shields for normal activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings.

#### School Facility

- Floors and seating in the cafeteria will be marked for social distancing.
- PK and kindergarten will have partitions of plexiglass at their tables. Gather rugs will be removed from these classrooms as well.
- We will limit/restrict nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities from off campus groups or organizations. Adults entering the school campus will sanitize before entering. Visitors will be screened as well.
- In our hallways will be visuals to illustrate spacing and movement throughout the school facility, such as directional reminders and designated areas.
- Students and staff will frequently be reminded to stay 6 feet apart.
- We have reviewed and evaluated classroom capacity to create as much space as possible between students. During instructional time, it may not always be feasible to have 6 feet of social distancing.
- We will be having two masses for the time being to help with social distancing.

#### School Transitions

- Additional time for transitions will be allowed.
- Posted are directional reminders and designate areas to allow students to move through hallways/school facilities while maintaining social distancing.
- Classes will create cohort groups of students and staff who stay together as much as possible throughout the day and from day to day. We will limit mixing of cohort groups as much as possible during lunch, restroom breaks, arrival, dismissal, recess, etc.
- The staff will monitor students during arrival as they move from vehicles to the classroom.
  - We will provide hand sanitizer stations at the entrance of the facility to use before entering.

- Students should enter and exit in single-file lines to enable physical distance.

#### Large Gatherings and Extracurricular Activities

- We will not conduct activities that bring large groups of people together or activities that do not allow for social distancing.
- Gatherings will be limited to maximum group sizes with appropriate physical distancing.
- All those in attendance should wear a face covering.
- After-school programs are to adhere to maximum group sizes and physical distance guidelines. We will utilize more rooms for after school care.

## CLEANING/DISINFECTING EFFORTS

Working closely with the facilities' staff, we will develop additional cleaning/disinfecting protocols, in order to ensure a safe environment.

- At the end of each school day, each classroom will be sanitized/disinfected. This includes, but is not limited to desks, tables, chairs, countertops, doorknobs, and light switches.
- Restrooms should be cleaned periodically throughout the day.
- According to the CDC's directive (Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility), schools' playground equipment made of plastic or metal require normal routine cleaning but do not require disinfection.
- Cleaning staff should wear disposable gloves and masks when performing disinfecting/sanitizing activities.

#### Physical Spaces and Student Supplies:

- We will discourage sharing of items that are difficult to clean and disinfect.
- Students should keep their belongings separate from others and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
- To ensure safety we will minimize sharing of highly touched materials, to the extent possible (e.g., assigning each student their own art supplies, computers, equipment) or limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between use.
- Avoid sharing electronic devices. When all of our orders arrive we will have one-to-one Chromebooks for grades 4-7. Grades 2 & 3 will each share a grade-level mobile cart and disinfect after each use. All computers are numbered, so the students will use the same computer daily.

- All desks will be arranged to face the same direction. In the cafeteria, the students will only sit on one side of the table while social distancing to avoid face-to-face contact.
- Floor stickers will provide physical guides to ensure that staff and children remain at least six feet apart in lines and at other times.
- The cafeteria schedule will stagger to include time for use and to clean/disinfect between use.
- The hospital will provide us with signs to post in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs (such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a cloth face covering).

## **FOOD SERVICES**

We will work closely with the food services staff and develop additional cleaning protocols and practices.

- Students in PreK3, PreK4, and kindergarten will be served individually plated lunches that will be delivered to the classrooms instead of the cafeteria while ensuring the safety of children with food allergies. Seating will be limited in the cafeteria.
- Some students may have to eat in the classroom. If food is delivered to classrooms, the person delivering the food must be masked and gloved.
- Students will put leftover food/trash in the hall trash containers. Food will not be disposed of within the classroom area. Custodians will promptly empty garbage in that hall area after they have finished lunch.
- Tables and seats will be sanitized after students leave the area. Lunch times will be staggered to accommodate this process.
- Seating in the cafeteria will be arranged within the guidelines of social distancing with a minimum of 6 ft. between each student. Students will sit on one side of the table.
- Distribution of utensils will be done in a sanitary manner. Students will not be touching utensils other than their own.
- We will use disposable food service items (e.g., utensils, dishes).
- Food service personnel or individuals serving/preparing meals will wear a face mask/protective face covering and disposable gloves when handling food.
- We encourage parents to sign up for the automated payment system to reduce the requirement of physically handling meal payments.

## **BACK-UP STAFFING PLAN**

We are planning for teacher and student absenteeism. This year we will **not** recognize perfect attendance.

- We will review our attendance policy with students and parents.
- We will review our sick leave policy with our faculty and staff.
- We have hired Mrs. Faith Kraemer to be an in-house substitute when needed. When not needed, she will be doing small group instruction.
- When students are asymptomatic and advised by a medical professional to quarantine for a prolonged period of time, we will have in place a program to provide distance learning.
- When employees are asymptomatic and advised by a medical professional to quarantine for a period of time, the school will have a plan in place of how to provide classroom instruction to students. This will be done through alternative coverage by cross-training staff, a substitute teacher, or the teacher providing classroom instruction from home via zoom, Google classroom, etc.
- The teacher will not be charged sick leave time if he/she is teaching via livestream or recording from home.
- A diocesan substitute list and volunteer list by geographic location will be created to aid in planning for extended teacher absence.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

- All employees should be trained in all areas of the Return-to-School Plan.
- Employees should sign an acknowledgement of receipt and understanding of the plan. The signed acknowledgement should be kept in the employee's personnel file.

### **Sick Leave Policy**

- An employee should **NOT** report to work if they are ill.
- If an employee is approved to work from a remote location, leave time will not be used.
- If an employee becomes ill and/or exhibits any symptoms during the day, the employee should immediately notify the principal.



- An employee who tests positive for COVID-19, was exposed to someone with COVID-19, or is presumptively positive must follow policies of our Human Resource Office before returning.

## AFTER CARE

### General Guidance

- We will ensure staff members are trained in health and safety protocols for our site, including how to screen for symptoms, maintaining physical distance, wearing appropriate PPE, frequent cleaning and handwashing, and what to do if someone develops signs of COVID-19.
- We will communicate regularly with families and staff and emphasize the importance of staying home when sick, physical distancing of six feet, and hand hygiene.
- We will utilize our camera, doorbell, and intercom system to allow parents limited entrance when picking up their children.
- Hand hygiene stations will be set up at the entrance of the facility, so that children can clean their hands before they enter.
- We will check for signs of illness for all staff and students at entry each day. Staff and students with any illness must stay home.
- We will keep sick children and staff separate from well children and staff until they can be sent home.
- Sick staff members should not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- If someone develops signs of COVID-19, we will follow the above procedures we will be using throughout the school day.
- All children, staff, and volunteers will engage in hand hygiene.

### Social Distancing

- When possible, after school care classes will include the same group each day, and if possible, the same child-care providers should remain with the same group each day.

### Snacks

- When snacks are served, proper social distancing must be maintained within the location where the children eat the snack.
- Seating in the cafeteria will be arranged within the guidelines of social distancing with a minimum of 6 feet between each student. The students should not be seated across from one another at the same table.

- Caregivers will ensure children wash hands prior to and immediately after eating.

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedures**

- All areas used will be disinfected before and following after care .
- Wear disposable gloves to clean and disinfect.
- Clean surfaces using soap and water, then use disinfectant.
- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used.
- We will be mindful to not share toys with other groups of infants or toddlers unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved from one group to the other.
- Children’s books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.
- Outdoor areas, like playgrounds in schools and parks, generally require normal routine cleaning but do not require disinfection.

## **SPORTS**

Sports will not be a consideration until we are in phase III. Once we are in phase III, sports will be considered depending on governmental limitations especially on occupancy.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Extracurricular activities include all activities with students outside of the classroom with the exception of athletics.

### **Recommended Guidelines for ALL groups**

- The maximum group size when gathering:
  - Phase 1 - 10, including adults
  - Phase 2 - 25, including adults
  - Phase 3 - 50, including adults
- Students and adults should maintain a distance of 6 feet wherever possible.
- Groups should meet outdoors whenever possible.
- All safety guidelines set forth by the diocese and school must be followed.

### **Additional Guidelines**

#### **Band / Choir**

- The band room will be sanitized after each rehearsal.
- Band classes will be conducted by Vanderbilt Catholic High School.

- St. Bernadette Catholic School will not have choir practices until further notice.

#### Clubs and Organizations

- The number and length of meetings should be kept to a minimum.

## **BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT**

As students across the diocese transition back to school following the mandated COVID 19 Stay at Home Order, schools must be ready to assess students, identify the gaps in learning, and plan strategic instruction and/or intervention to re-teach and fill any learning gaps. Benchmark assessments will assist teachers in determining if students are prepared for grade-level content or whether they need additional support to be successful.

- Assessments will be conducted at the beginning of the school year for grades K-7.
- As stated above in the plan, due to distance learning in the last nine weeks of school, teachers will collaborate with the next level teachers informing them of standards and concepts not mastered. This will also happen between the elementary and high schools for seventh grade students going to high school.
- The data acquired will indicate where adjustments need to be made in the curriculum.

## **REVISIONS**

*Revisions to the guidance set forth in this document will be made as deemed necessary by changes in local, state, and federal guidelines and recommendations. Revisions will be communicated by schools to necessary parties.*