

Central Catholic School

2021-2022 Return to School Plan



Safety, Presence, and Growth

in a

Christ-Centered Environment

**THE DIOCESE OF HOUMA-THIBODAUX
RETURN TO SCHOOL TASK FORCE**

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MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP

My dear people of God in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux,

The month of August always brings about excitement and new school year jitters for many as our schools begin to open their doors and welcome thousands of our children back into the classrooms.

When I was in elementary school I attended Catholic of Pointe Coupee, and the excitement I would have the days and nights before our school opened was always nerve-racking. I knew I would meet new teachers, make new friends and learn new things in the upcoming days. My mom and dad would be sure our uniforms were ready, school bags were packed and we knew which bus to get on each day. As we enter this new school year, I will be praying for all of the families, students, administrators, faculty and staff of our schools as they return to routines, or enter upon new routines, and deal with excitement and expectations.

I want to state that I am incredibly proud of our teachers, administrators and our parish youth formation leaders and volunteers who have gone above and beyond this past year during such challenging times. Even throughout this summer, our teachers and parish coordinators of youth formation were busy training and learning new strategies for the classrooms ensuring our children receive their best.

This past summer our Office of Parish Support hosted our diocesan Youth Summit where our parish coordinators of youth formation gathered for three days to pray together and learn best strategies for our youth as we enter a new catechetical year in our parish schools of religion.

In addition, behind the scenes, the teachers and staff of our Catholic schools attended a multitude of professional development sessions, learning about new technology advancements and strategies to best educate our children. I greatly appreciate their willingness and desire to ensure the best for the children in our parish schools of religion and Catholic schools.

We look forward to opening our classrooms again this school year, as well as reengaging in our parishes' schools of religion. The mission of the church is to form disciples, and our Catholic schools and parish schools of religion are the most impactful way for us to live out our mission. In fact, our Catholic schools are by far one of the largest ministries in our diocese, serving almost 5,000 students across our 11 Catholic schools. The faith formation of our youth is at the top of our priorities here in our diocese. I want to personally wish our administrators, staff, volunteers, families and children a wonderful, fruitful school year. I pray that Christ will be in your hearts and your minds today and always. May God bless the 2021 – 2022 school year!

Please know of my continued prayers for you.

Yours in Christ,

+ Shelton J. Fabre

+ Most Rev. Shelton J. Fabre

Bishop of the Diocese Houma-Thibodaux

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



Dear Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Catholic Schools Family,

The 2020-2021 school year in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Catholic schools was, indeed, one like no other. The impact of COVID-19 was definitely evident, as our communities, state, country, and world felt the impact of a global pandemic like most have never experienced. Our Catholic school family was not exempt from the direct and indirect effects of the virus. However, the beauty of the deep faith and commitment to our Lord and Savior was just as evident. Through it all- the triumphs, the tragedies, the disappointments, and the celebrations- one thing remained true. God was, and IS, with us!

Through the diligent efforts of our dedicated Catholic schools community, the students we serve continued to thrive and grow spiritually, emotionally, and academically, despite the challenges before them! Students, parents, teacher-ministers, school leaders, staffs, clergy, and all who make up our Catholic schools community committed themselves to doing all they could to make our 2020-2021 school year all that it could be! Through the careful and intentional work of so many, our schools completed a full year of in-person instruction, affording the students we serve an outstanding academic education in a Christ-centered environment, culminating in beautiful graduations and end-of-year Eucharistic celebrations and closing programs.

The commitment of our students, teacher-ministers, parents, staffs, clergy, school and diocesan leaders, and all who worked tirelessly to provide safe and successful school environments is what allowed the 2020-2021 school year to be the success

that it was. Through creativity and commitment, our students flourished! Their resiliency, through all the many challenges that could have caused some to waiver, allowed the year to be one of formation, learning, growth, and wonderful memories that will always be with them.

Our school families did not allow the adjustments to physical school environments to pause their efforts to live the Church's social teaching. The beauty of the ongoing formation of our students and larger school communities was evident in so many actions and activities. Whether it was welcoming and assisting students and their families who had been displaced due to Hurricane Laura into our school communities, collecting and delivering gifts of thanks and prayer for the COVID-19 front line workers in area hospitals, donating money to the Missionary Childhood Association that is used to build schools, hospitals, provide medical care, food, and clothing in mission countries, volunteering at the Louis Children's Home for abused and neglected children, or walking alongside a fellow student, co-worker, or parent who experienced the illness or loss of a loved one, our school families continued to make the Mission possible through their call to action- through examples seen and, many times, unseen.

Our students have also continued to thrive in their many curricular and extracurricular school experiences, including winning the South Louisiana Quiz Bowl Championship, several state championships in Varsity athletics, hosting Right to Life school-wide assemblies, and earning more than \$10 million in college scholarships in addition to their TOPS academic awards by our graduating classes! Congratulations to our students and all those who make up their support systems, allowing them to set their goals and give it their all!

With a new school year upon us, we are excited to embrace all that is to come for our Catholic schools family with great hope for a new faith-filled and successful school year! In a time when many dioceses throughout the country are experiencing a decline in Catholic school enrollment, we are blessed to report an increase in our total enrollment for the 2021-2022 school year! What a blessing it

is to have some many of our families entrust their children into our care and to afford us the opportunity to minister to them!

Today, the joy, wonder, and blessings of the 2021-2022 school year is at our doorstep. The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, once again, is diligently preparing for the safe return of our students and employees to our schools. Utilizing our Task Force comprised of school administrators, teachers, medical health professionals, parents, school board members, community leaders, and diocesan leadership, a carefully reviewed and revised Return to School Plan has been promulgated. The intent of the guidelines is to aid our schools in their individual plans for their safe operation so our employees, students, and families feel secure and confident as our new year commences. We remain committed to our priorities of safety, presence, and growth as we return to school:

- *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.*

Indeed, the impacts of COVID-19 remain a serious challenge to our schools and larger communities. Understanding the fluidity of the situation, the Return to School Plan is a living document that will be updated as needed as we respond to additional guidance received from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), and our local medical partners and leaders. 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

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welcoming its students and staff back to school. With Jesus Christ at our side, we are full of hope and ready to embark on our 2021-2022 school year!

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzanne Delaune Troxclair". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Suzanne Delaune Troxclair

MESSAGE FROM CENTRAL CATHOLIC ADMINISTRATION

Dear Parents and Students:

The administration, faculty, and staff of Central Catholic have been working in conjunction with the Diocese of Houma Thibodaux to create this year's School Operational Guidelines for the 2021-22 school year. Our school plan prioritizes student safety while continuing to deliver quality educational activities. With prayer, faith and hard work we are confident students will be able to experience spiritual, academic and personal growth this school year.

The return to school plan in this document is based upon the conditions and information available at this moment in time. Throughout the school year the plan will be adjusted when necessary to accommodate any changes which may occur.

We thank you for continuing to support Central Catholic and are looking forward to having our students on campus.

Yours in Christ,

Amanda Talbot
Peter Boudreaux

MEDICAL PARTNERSHIP

SERVICES PROVIDED BY THIBODAUX REGIONAL HEALTH SYSTEM:

- Training of new workplace staff
- 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 educational resources
- Parent-focused communication
- 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. The curriculum is based on the religious and educational mission of the school.

Traditional/Non-Traditional School Setting

Our students will be returning to a “brick and mortar” school environment with in-class instruction. If governmental and/or diocesan authorities deem in-person instruction inadvisable, schools will continue with a comprehensive distance learning program. In that case, the logistics and planning considerations to be made include technology support, developing and delivering high-quality online instruction, supporting Catholic Identity, and maintaining community. Our faculty is prepared to implement the distance learning program.

Instruction Design

- As a Catholic school, religion continues to be the core of the curriculum.
- Teachers will maintain data on standards taught.
- Administrators will monitor adherence to curriculum standards through the ongoing review of lesson plans.
- Teachers will utilize curriculum maps to ensure instructional delivery of standards.
- Programs that may later be used for distance learning (example: Google Classroom) will also be used in the traditional classroom settings to assure a better understanding of the program in the event we must revert to distance learning.
- Intentional planning for increased student engagement is necessary in order to encourage the development of social skills.
- Differentiated instruction will be incorporated into lessons to better meet the needs of all students.
- Formative assessment techniques will be utilized to monitor student understanding.
- Assessments include, but are not limited to, tests, projects, journal entries, essays, etc.

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. The spiritual mission of Jesus Christ is the intention of Catholic Schools. Spiritual and academic experiences in Catholic Schools enable students to strengthen their relationship with Jesus and apply their faith to daily life as Missionary Disciples.

Liturgy and Prayer

- Maintain the emphasis on school liturgy by scheduling as many students as possible to participate in the liturgy weekly following the required mitigation practices.
- Provide opportunities for daily prayer.
- Begin all classes and meetings with prayer, including soliciting prayer intentions from students.
- Support the faith life of faculty and staff through community prayer.

Catholic Identity

- Teach religion daily.
- Reinforce morning and afternoon prayer.
- Incorporate the rosary, adoration, Reconciliation, Liturgy of the Hours, Divine Mercy, and Stations of the Cross into the religion curriculum as age-appropriate.
- Encourage student-led prayer services when possible.
- Incorporate Catholic Social Teaching into daily instruction.
- Work collaboratively to ensure a strong relationship between the church and the school.
- Incorporate service projects as appropriate.

MONITORING/SCREENING

Ongoing monitoring/self-monitoring throughout the school day can help reduce exposure. Staff and students should be encouraged to regularly self-monitor for symptoms (fever, cough, or shortness of breath). If a student develops symptoms throughout the day, they must notify an adult immediately.

Recommendations for schools:

- Staff and students are 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.
- Parents are asked to keep children at home when they are sick.

- Parents are to conduct daily symptom screenings and to monitor the following symptoms:
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - New cough
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Muscle pain
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - Rash

- Signs will be posted in the drop off/pick-up lines and entrances that include the self-screening questions below:
 - Have you (or your child) been in close contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) in the last 14 days with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, or has any health department or health care provider been in contact with you and advised you to quarantine?
 - Since you (or your child) were last at school, have you had any of these symptoms?
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - New cough
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Muscle pain
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - Rash

3. Since you (or your child) were last at school, have you been diagnosed with COVID-19?

- It is recommended that we limit any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as much as possible. [Inside school facilities, masks are mandated for all employees and students age 5 and above, and all children enrolled in a kindergarten program. Any child between the ages of 2 and 5 who are not enrolled in a kindergarten program is strongly encouraged to wear a face covering. (Aug. 3)] Maintain a physical distance of 6 feet from others.
 - Signs will be posted at the main entrance requesting that people who have had symptomatic fever and/or cough not enter.
 - Staff, students, and their families will be educated about the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, when they should stay home and when they can return to school.

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

- A dedicated space for symptomatic individuals that will not be used for other purposes has been established.
- Symptomatic individuals will be immediately isolated to the designated area at the school and then sent home to isolate.

- Symptomatic students will remain under visual supervision of a staff member who is at least 6 feet away.
- The staff member providing patient care will wear appropriate protective equipment and perform hand hygiene after removing the protective equipment.
- We will adhere to cleaning and disinfecting protocols.
- We will adhere to the current guidelines for allowing a student or staff member to return to school:
 - Close contact of a case is a person who was within six feet of someone who has tested positive for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, regardless of whether or not either party was wearing a mask. All individuals meeting the close contact definition should be encouraged to seek testing immediately following notification and five to seven days following last contact if the initial test was negative.
 - Close contacts will be asked to stay home and monitor symptoms for 14 days.
 - Not every student/faculty member in a school will need to **stay home for 14 days, just those who are identified as close contact to a case.**
 - Options to shorten the duration of quarantine if contacts remain asymptomatic include:
 - If no symptoms develop during quarantining and they have a negative antigen or PCR/molecular test collected no earlier than day 5 after their last exposure; they may quarantine for 7 days from last contact with a COVID-19 case.
 - If no symptoms develop during quarantine and no testing is done: they may quarantine for 10 days from last contact with a COVID-19 case.
 - If quarantine is shortened, daily symptom monitoring and strict adherence to prevention measures including social distancing, hand washing, and especially wearing masks/face coverings should continue until the full 14 days from last contact with a COVID-19 case.
 - Because there is an increased risk of post-quarantine transmission associated with options to shorten quarantining, the 14-day quarantine period should be used in school settings where physical distancing among children is not maintained.
 - Close contacts who were previously diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 90 days and remain asymptomatic do not need to quarantine. Proof of a positive molecular/PCR or antigen test is required indicating the above.
 - Close contacts who are fully vaccinated (i.e., greater than or equal to 2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or greater than or equal to two weeks following receipt of one dose in a single-dose vaccine) at the time of exposure and remain

asymptomatic do not need to quarantine. In these cases, proof of full vaccination is required.

- All COVID-19 cases will be reported to the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) via LDH's electronic reporting system, in accordance with the School Reporting and Data Sharing Order #2020-COVID19-001.

Resources:

- <https://files.nc.gov/covid/documents/guidance/Strong-Schools-NC-Public-Health-Toolkit.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>
- https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/ready-to-achieve/ready-to-achieve!-2021-2022-school-operational-guidelines.pdf?sfvrsn=737f6718_10

SUPPLIES AND WATER SYSTEMS

Water Systems

- To minimize the risk of Legionnaires disease and other diseases associated with water, steps have been taken to ensure that all water systems and features (e.g., sink faucets, drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use.
- Water fountains will not be available for student use due to the possibility of cross-contamination while refilling bottles. Students in 6th through 12th grades will need to bring their own filled, clear water bottle. Elementary students will need to bring their own filled water bottle labeled with their name. Hydration stations will be available.
- Sharing of water bottles is prohibited.

Secure adequate cleaning/sanitizing/monitoring supplies

- The school will support healthy hygiene behaviors by providing adequate supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, cloth/disposable face coverings (for use if needed, required, or recommended), disposable gloves, and no-touch/foot-pedal trash cans.

COMMUNICATIONS

One of the best ways to ensure calm and rational behavior during a time of crisis, such as a school interruption, is to effectively communicate information to stakeholders. For this reason, it

is vital that the Return to School Plan is aligned with emergency policies to help maintain consistent, factual, and appropriate messaging.

Central Catholic will:

- Continually reinforce the mission of Catholic schools and the total formation of the student.
- Regularly update parents through email, video, phone calls, text, social media, etc.
- Check in regularly with individual families as needed, particularly families who previously indicated needs.
- Post signs or posters in highly visible locations, such as school entrances, hallways, common areas, or restrooms to promote everyday protective measures.
- Ensure guidance on proper hygiene and other measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 is included in regular announcements via PA systems, in email communications, school website, and social media postings.
- Notify staff, families, and the public of school closures and any restrictions in place to limit COVID-19 exposure (e.g., limited hours of operation).

COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL

- The school has an *internal* communications plans – a process for reaching staff through our established communication methods [website, PlusPortals, Notify (text and or e-mail), social media, etc.]
- The school has an *external* communications plans – a process for reaching families, the community, and the media through our established communication methods [website, PlusPortals, Notify (text and or e-mail), social media, etc.]

SHARE INFORMATION AND RESPONSE PLANS

- The school will send emails with information about updates and our response plan located on our website.
- The school will use social media platforms to share links found on our website, response plan, and other timely, important information.

STREAMLINE COMMUNICATIONS

- School interruption updates, including messages from the superintendent, press releases, waivers, memos, guidance, and contact information can be accessed from the landing page on the website and our school communications system.
- Press releases will reference the most up-to-date news releases from the Department of Education and the Office of the Governor.
- The school will utilize the FAQs provided by the department's K-12 and Early Childhood for guidance.

SEND FREQUENT UPDATES

- The school will utilize multiple avenues of communication, identifying and meeting the needs of those who do not have internet access.
- Include information on continuous learning for all students. Examples can be found on the department's COVID-19 page.

- The school will communicate news, such as the following examples, in a timely manner:
 - Access to technology
 - Canceled and postponed events
 - Meal services
 - Guidance from local, state, and national authorities and experts

TRANSPORTATION

We will be working closely with the representatives of local school systems, private bus services, and/or other transport vehicles to minimize the risk for the contracting or spread of COVID-19:

- Our school relies on the service of our Local Education Authority (LEA) and must defer to the authority and regulations established by them.
- Transportation staff, especially those who work for those who contract with public school systems, are required to follow all safety and hygiene protocols established by the LEA.
- If transport vehicles are used by the school, drivers are to practice all safety actions and protocols as indicated for other staff (e.g., hand hygiene).

Group Transportation Vehicles Public and Private:

- Clean and disinfect school buses or other transport vehicles regularly when no students are present. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (e.g., driver's cockpit, hard seats, armrests, door handles, seat belt buckles, controls, doors and windows and grab handles) prior to each morning route and prior to each afternoon route.
- Keep doors and windows open when cleaning the vehicle. Maximize use of open windows when the vehicle is in motion to help increase air circulation.
- Buses are allowed to operate at 100% capacity and as required by Presidential Executive Order No. 13998 on Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel, ALL passengers on the school bus MUST wear a facial covering while using transportation, regardless of capacity. Windows should be kept open when it does not create a safety or health hazard. Seating charts should be created and consistently enforced. The order applies to ALL bus transportation of students.
- If a school system provides transportation for medically fragile children, consider reserving specific seats for these children. These seats would not be used for other students during the day, with special precautions for disinfecting. Alternately, arrange for separate transportation for that student.
- All passengers should engage in hand hygiene (using hand sanitizer) upon entering and exiting group transportation vehicles.
- Allow for social distancing between passengers on group transportation vehicles and when staging for loading and after unloading. Practices to consider include:
 - Parents and students are encouraged to maintain social distancing practices at bus stops and to avoid congregating in groups while waiting for pick-up.
 - Passengers are to maintain social distancing practices when waiting in line to enter the vehicle.

- Passengers should enter and exit the vehicle one at a time and remain socially distanced when doing so.
- Assigned seating and/or use sequential seating (seat children one rider per seat in every other row marking off seats, members of the same household may sit in the same seat or adjacent seats with one empty seat between households) is recommended.
- While waiting to exit the vehicle, passengers should stay seated and not congregate in the aisle.
- Upon exiting the vehicle, passengers seated in the front should exit first, one at a time.
- If an individual becomes sick during the day and for some reason has not been picked up by the parent, they must not use group transportation to return home.

Private Vehicles:

The use of private vehicles to transport students to and from school is encouraged to reduce additional exposure to health risks of COVID-19.

- *Social Distancing for Drop-off and/or Drivers:*
Signage may be used to aid in safe spacing while walking into school buildings from carlines or parking lots.

COUNSELING SERVICES/HOLISTIC SUPPORT

Students and Families

- Curriculum and instruction are enhanced by the social-emotional well being of students and, as such, school counseling services and other supports are provided to enhance the overall mental health and well-being of students.
- Students may be provided brief, solution focused school counseling services 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. School counselors will continue to provide academic and career planning services normally provided to students by the school counselors.
- School counselors may pre-record lessons such as coping skills, meditation, mindfulness, grounding techniques, etc. and make them available to classroom teachers. This is particularly of importance in service delivery with the high ratio of student to counselor in the elementary school.
- Students will have an opportunity for daily physical activity to burn off adrenaline and release endorphins to help the healing process. A mindfulness element is also be beneficial.
- Social and emotional learning curriculum may 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, physical education, conditioning, psychology and science courses. Learning opportunities may also be available outside of instructional time.

- All services previously provided by the counseling staff to students should be maintained during blended and distance learning as is feasible.

Resources:

<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Publications-Research/Publications/Free-ASCA-Resources/COVID-19-Resources><https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Publications-Research/Publications/Free-ASCA-Resources/COVID-19-Resources>

SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES

Social distancing, or physical distancing, is defined as 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.

Implement Social Distancing Measures

School Facility Use Considerations

- Remove unused desks and furniture in classrooms to maximize physical distance and minimize objects that must be cleaned.
- Establish distance between the teacher's desk/board and students' desks.
- Identify and utilize large spaces (gymnasiums, auditoriums, outside spaces, etc.) to enable physical distancing.
- Teachers maintain social distancing guidelines and teach from one location in the classroom if possible.
- If groups convene outdoors, a physical barrier is not required, but each group should remain separated.

School Transition Considerations

- Provide additional time for transitions.
- Designate areas of the hallway as flow paths to keep students separated and to minimize congregation of students.
- Plan staggered class changes to decrease the number of students in hallways at one time.

Change Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up Processes to Limit Contact

- Have students enter/exit in single file lines to enable physical distance
- Establish one or two entry/exit points that enable students to move in a single direction.
- Limit nonessential visitors. Adults entering the building should wash or sanitize hands prior to entering and wear a mask as recommended and locally determined in consultation with LDH and local community context.
- Inside school facilities, masks are mandated for all employees and students age 5 and above, and all children enrolled in a kindergarten program. Any child between the ages of

2 and 5 who are not enrolled in a kindergarten program is strongly encouraged to wear a face covering. (Aug. 3, 2021 update)

- Establish hand hygiene stations at the entrance to the facility so students can clean their hands before they enter. If a sink with soap and water is not available, provide hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol. Supervise the use of the sanitizer.
- Encourage families to drive their children to school if possible. This will reduce student numbers on buses.

Large Gatherings and Extracurricular Activities

- Assemblies are limited to maximum group sizes with appropriate physical distancing in place. For younger students unable to maintain physical distance, maintain static groups.
- All attendees should wear a face covering.
- Students and teachers should wash hands before and after events.
- Field trips can occur if strictly following masking, cohorting, and transportation requirements. Outdoor field trip opportunities should be prioritized, if possible.
- After school programs may continue but should adhere to mask wearing and physical distance protocols. For younger students unable to maintain physical distance, maintain static groups.

Athletics, Band, and Vocal Music

- Athletic activities are allowed to resume with the recommendations put forth in the [Louisiana High School Athletic Association's Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities](#) and of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux.
- Outdoor and indoor spectator capacity for LHSAA-sanctioned athletics shall be set in accordance with the Louisiana State Fire Marshal's guidelines developed in conjunction with the Office of the Governor and the Louisiana Department of Health at opensafely.la.gov.
- Vocal music should follow the updated outlined guidance below.

Ensure Healthy Access to Outdoor Activity

- Fully vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals do not need to mask outdoors if they adhere to physical distancing requirements.
- Students should maintain physical distancing of 6 feet while outdoors.
- A maximum of 4 cohorts can mix outdoors.

CLEANING/DISINFECTING EFFORTS

High-touch surfaces will be cleaned at least twice per day, including bathrooms.

Working closely with staff, additional cleaning/disinfecting protocols and a routine cleaning schedule have been established, in order to ensure a safe environment. This will require that those tasked with cleaning/disinfecting the schools' classrooms in particular, become very familiar with the CDC's directive entitled, [CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#) and the State of Louisiana Department of Education's document entitled, [READY TO ACHIEVE! 2021-2022 SCHOOL OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES](#).

Routine Cleaning Schedule

- Frequently touched surfaces will undergo cleaning with a commercially available cleaning solution, including [EPA-approved disinfectants](#) or a dilute bleach solution, at least twice per day. This includes:
 - Light switches, doors, benches, banisters and bathroom fixtures
 - Surfaces and objects in libraries, labs and other settings where “hands-on” materials and equipment are used
 - Student desks, which should be cleaned before and after each student's use
 - The sharing of materials between students will be minimized.
 - Playground equipment and athletic equipment will be cleaned as necessary, depending on the frequency of use.
 - To protect their skin, cleaning staff should wear gloves when performing cleaning activities.
 - Note: In a high school and junior high school setting, student desks, tables and chairs will be sanitized/disinfected before and after each student's use.
 - In the school's common areas, frequently touched surfaces will be sanitized/disinfected periodically throughout each school day. This includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - Push plates and pull handles, on doors
 - Benches
 - Banisters
 - Drinking fountains (communal drinking fountains for the 2021-2022 school year will not be used; staff and students are encouraged to bring their own water or provide water.)
 - Toilets
 - Urinals
 - Faucets and sinks
 - Restroom countertops
 - Shared objects (e.g., gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, toys, games) should be limited, when possible, or cleaned between each use.
- Note:** According to the CDC's directive [CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#), schools' playground equipment, made of plastic or metal, require normal routine cleaning, but do not require disinfection.
- At the end of each school day, all classrooms will be disinfected/sanitized. Common areas will also be disinfected/sanitized periodically throughout each school day.
 - Cleaning staff should wear disposable gloves and masks when performing disinfecting/sanitizing activities.
 - When a school space has been occupied by someone who was sick with COVID-19, exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, or possibly exposed to someone who had/has COVID-19, the affected space shall be disinfected/sanitized per the protocol found in the CDC directive entitled, [CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#).

General Building Considerations:

The school will help ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors. Windows and doors will not be open if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms) to children using the facility.

Supplies:

- The school will provide adequate supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer, with at least 60% alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, cloth face coverings (as feasible) and no-touch/foot pedal trash cans.

Physical Spaces and Student Supplies:

- Students are discouraged to share items that are difficult to clean and disinfect.
- Each student's belongings should be separate from others and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
- Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of highly touched materials, to the extent possible (e.g., assigning each student their own art supplies, computers, equipment) or limit the use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between use.
- Avoid sharing electronic devices (iPads, Chromebooks, computer terminals), toys, books, and other games or learning aids.
- Turn desks to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other), or have students sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart to the greatest extent practical.
- Create distance between children on school buses (e.g., seat children one child per row, skip rows) when possible.
- Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on walls, to ensure that staff and children remain at least six feet apart in lines and at other times (e.g., guides for creating "one-way routes in hallways).
- Close common-used shared spaces, such as dining halls and playgrounds, with shared playground equipment. If possible, stagger use and clean/disinfect between use.
- Post signs 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. Please consider the following practices:

ENSURE HEALTHY FOOD PREPARATION AND MEAL SERVICE

- Students, teachers and cafeteria staff will wash hands before and after every meal.
- While eating, maintain social distance between students to the maximum extent possible.

- Classrooms may be utilized for eating.
- Students may bring a packed lunch from home.
- Disposable utensils may be used.
- Designated entrances/exits for single-file lines for food lines and disposal.
- Outdoor seating may be utilized as practical and appropriate.

Food and Nutrition staff:

- Clean frequently touched surfaces such as kitchen countertops, cafeteria and service tables, door handles, carts and trays at least twice a day. Follow the directions on the cleaning product's label and clean hands afterwards.
- Practice proper hand hygiene. This is an important infection control measure. With appropriate hand hygiene, gloves are not necessary for workers who are not involved in food preparation. Wash hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. An alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol can be used, but not as a substitute for cleaning hands with soap and water.
- If food is delivered to classrooms, the person delivering the food must be masked and gloved.
- Distribution of utensils will be done in a sanitary manner. Ex. Students should not be touching utensils other than their own.
- Meals may be distributed by "to-go" boxes if needed.
- Food service personnel or individuals serving/preparing meals should wear a face mask/protective face covering and disposable gloves when handling food.
- Individuals are to wash their hands after removing gloves or after directly handling used food service items.
- Avoid the sharing of food and utensils and ensure the safety of children with food allergies.

Lunch Payments

- Parents are encouraged to sign up for the automated payment system to reduce the requirement of physically handling meal payments. Money should not be collected while food is being served.

BACK-UP STAFFING PLAN

Houma-Thibodaux Diocese school administrators should monitor and plan for teacher and student absenteeism.

The school will:

- review attendance policy with students and parents.
- review sick leave policy with staff.
- provide a plan for distance learning for students who must quarantine or isolate for a period of time. Work may be provided to students via live streaming from the classroom or through an alternate and appropriate educational plan.
- collaborate in a Diocesan substitute list that will be maintained to aid in planning for extended teacher absences.
- designate non-teaching staff as potential classroom supervisors if a significant number of teachers are on leave (ex. school counselors, media specialists, administrative assistants, etc.).

AFTER CARE Pre-K3-5th

- After care students will report to the designated area at dismissal.
- Students are recommended to wear face coverings.
- Students will remain with their static grade level to the maximum extent possible.
- Students will maintain social distancing as they participate in indoor and outdoor activities.
- Parents will call the designated after-care phone number to pick up their child at the front entrance gate.

ATHLETICS

The Louisiana Department of Education 7/19/2021 guidelines defer to the Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA) for guidelines governing the return to athletic practice and competition for the 2021-2022 school year. Since the State of Louisiana is not currently in “Phases” of restrictions in regard to addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, the LHSAA has determined that high schools will return to pre-pandemic procedures.

In addition to the LHSAA guidelines, the following is required:

Screening:

- Athletes, coaches and trainers should self-screen daily and be encouraged to isolate themselves and seek medical testing if any COVID-19 symptoms present.
- Athletes, coaches and trainers exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms should be isolated according to the individual school procedures.
- Athletes, coaches and trainers should assist medical or school personnel in determining if other team members had close contact with team members that test positive for COVID-

19. Standard diocesan isolation or quarantining guidelines and vaccination status will determine when the team member could return to practice/competition.

Personal Hygiene:

- Athletes should maintain proper hygiene, washing hands before and after practices and athletic competitions.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Ensure personal practice and competition clothing and gear are clean and sanitized prior to use at practice or during competition.

Hydration:

- All students shall bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration stations (water cows, water troughs, water fountains, etc.) should not be utilized. Students should be encouraged to bring adequate water to last the duration of practice/competition and transportation to and from the event.

Equipment/Facility Cleaning:

- Athletic equipment and facilities such as locker rooms should be cleaned and sanitized daily and at least twice daily for high-touch surfaces.
- Athletic equipment should be cleaned and sanitized before and after each practice or competition prior to further use.
- Hand sanitizing stations should be plentiful and visible. Hand sanitizing should be encouraged frequently.

Gatherings/Competition Attendance:

- Outdoor and indoor spectator capacity for LHSAA-sanctioned athletics shall be set in accordance with the Louisiana State Fire Marshal's guidelines developed in conjunction with the Office of the Governor and the Louisiana Department of Health at opensafely.la.gov.
- While outdoors, all fully vaccinated and unvaccinated adults and students do not need to mask if they adhere to physical distancing requirements.
 - It is recommended that people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated.
- Visitors should be asked to sanitize their hands prior to entry.
- Food sales or concessions should follow food service sanitation guidelines addressed in this document.
- **COVID-19 at the event.**

Transportation:

- Buses may be filled to capacity.

- All bus passengers on the school bus must wear a facial covering while using transportation, regardless of capacity. This must be consistently enforced.
- Buses should be cleaned and sanitized prior to use.
- Windows should be kept open when it does not create a safety or health hazard.
- Seating charts will be used and maintained with consistent enforcement.

Other Considerations:

- Wipe down balls and equipment frequently.
- Refrain from pre-game post-game handshakes/high-fives/fist bumps.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Performing Groups
 - Groups will follow guidelines put forth by the LHSAA in order to maintain consistency.
 - Outdoor and indoor spectator capacity for LHSAA-sanctioned athletics shall be set in accordance with the Louisiana State Fire Marshal’s guidelines developed in conjunction with the Office of the Governor and the LA Department of Health at opensafely.la.gov.
- Clubs and Organizations
 - The number and length of meetings should be kept to a minimum.
 - Meetings should be conducted virtually when feasible.

BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT

As students across the Diocese return to campuses for the 2021-2022 school year, 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.

Administering Benchmark Assessments

Benchmark or diagnostic assessments will be administered to students at the start of the academic year as a means of identifying where a child may need additional support in core subject areas.

Providing Interventions for Students K-5th

- Strategic instruction and interventions will be based on student needs during a classroom small group setting or through Title I services.
- Teachers/interventionists will use research-based intervention strategies that can be delivered individually or in small group instruction to those students in need of additional support.
- Available adaptive technology curriculum resources will be utilized (*i.e.*, *Lexia*, *AR*, *etc.*).
- If learning is virtual, teachers can utilize video conferencing platforms to provide interventions to small groups based on the specific needs of the students.

Providing Intervention for Students 6th – 12th

- Strategic instruction and interventions will be based on student needs during instruction or through Title I services for students in grades 6th -12th.
- After school tutoring will be available for students in grades 6th -12th.

REVISIONS

Revisions to the guidance outlined 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.

RESOURCES

Curriculum/Instruction

- https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf7i7XoMW5CjBmI3j4qfRimN4mqPTzNOAxnhRcLpRDtoTgHg/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&usp=mail_form_link

Monitoring/Screening

- <https://files.nc.gov/covid/documents/guidance/Strong-Schools-NC-Public-Health-Toolkit.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>
- <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/strong-start-2020>
- https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/strong-start-2020/school-reopening-guidelines-and-resources.pdf?sfvrsn=c10e981f_36
- https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-sourcw/ready-to-achieve/ready-to-achieve!-2021-2022-school-operational-guidelines.pdf?sfvrsn=737f6718_10
- <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/537>

Counseling Services/Holistic Support

- <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Publications-Research/Publications/Free-ASCA-Resources/COVID-19-Resources>
- <https://sde.ok.gov/sites/default/files/CounselingStudentNeedsAssessment.pdf>

Social Distancing Measures

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>
- <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/k12planguide.pdf>
- https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/ready-to-achieve/ready-to-achieve!-2021-2022-school-operational-guidelines.pdf?sfvrsn=737f6718_2

Human Resources

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>
- <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/strong-start-2020/school-reopening-guidelines-and-resources.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/public-health-recommendations.html>

Athletics

- [LHSAA COVID-19 HIGH SCHOOL GUIDELINES UPDATED COMPLETED.pdf](#)

How to Select, Wear and Clean your Mask

https://m.emailupdates.cdc.gov/rest/head/mirrorPage/@b4tnQj1xrhhFjxau1Xq-7itBVCID_BLLuuKqy9x6Ne9OnvOEcDZA0WntowdoeUrMkAgiQ47dcPC4ZdR8aR2GkMqpajgGMTFgHSn8WUt2UcOegfCt.html

Contact Tracing in Schools

https://ldh.la.gov/assets/oph/Coronavirus/resources/ContactTracing/LDH_COVID-Contact-Tracing-in-Schools.pdf

**DIOCESE OF HOUMA-THIBODAU
PARENTAL/GUARDIAN COVID-19
CONSENT FORM AND LIABILITY WAIVER**

Participant's name: _____

Birth date: _____ Sex: _____

Parent/Guardian's name: _____

Home address: _____

Home phone: _____ Business phone: _____

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is extremely contagious and as a result, social distancing is recommended. _____ Parish/School will follow state and local standards of conduct and has put in place reasonable preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 at its Parish/School activity (including but not limited to summer camp). However, even though such standards will be followed and reasonable measures put into place, Parish/School cannot guarantee that you or your child(ren) will not become infected with COVID-19. Further, attending the Parish/School activity could increase your risk and your child(ren)'s risk of contracting COVID-19.

By signing this agreement, I acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and that my child(ren) and I may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19 by participating in the parish/school activity and that such exposure or infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, and death. I understand that the risk of becoming exposed to or infected by COVID-19 at _____ Parish/School may result from the actions, omissions, or negligence of myself and others, including, but not limited to, Parish/School employees, volunteers, and program participants and their families.

Considering the foregoing, however, I, _____, grant permission for my child, _____, to participate in this parish activity that may require transportation to a location away from the parish site, notwithstanding the risks associated with the COVID-19 virus and group activities. I confirm that there are no necessary changes to the Medical Information Consent form for my child that I previously submitted. If there are any necessary changes, I will complete another Medical Information Consent form.

I further agree on behalf of myself, my child named herein, and my spouse, our heirs, successors, and assigns, to release, indemnify, hold harmless, and defend _____ Parish/School and The Roman Catholic Church of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, their members, directors, officers, employees, agents and representatives ("indemnitees") associated with the event arising from or in connection with the negligent acts or omissions of the indemnitees' in relation to prevention of the spread of the COVID-19 virus. I SPECIFICALLY ACKNOWLEDGE AND AGREE THAT I AM AGREEING TO DEFEND, INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS THE INDEMNITEES' FROM THEIR OWN NEGLIGENCE IN REGARD TO THE INDEMNITEES' NEGLIGENCE ACTION AND/OR INACTION IN REGARD TO PROTECTION AGAINST THE COVID-19 VIRUS.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Name _____
Date of Return _____

Day 8

Please check off any of the following symptoms that you are experiencing:

- Shortness of breath
- Fever >100.4°F
- Chest pain
- Cough
- Body Aches
- Fatigue
- Nausea or Diarrhea
- Loss of taste or smell
- Other Flu or Cold like symptoms-
sore throat, headache or
congestion

Student Signature

Day 9

Please check off any of the following symptoms that you are experiencing:

- Shortness of breath
- Fever >100.4°F
- Chest pain
- Cough
- Body Aches
- Fatigue
- Nausea or Diarrhea
- Loss of taste or smell
- Other Flu or Cold like symptoms-
sore throat, headache or
congestion

Student Signature

Day 10

Please check off any of the following symptoms that you are experiencing:

- Shortness of breath
- Fever >100.4°F
- Chest pain
- Cough
- Body Aches
- Fatigue
- Nausea or Diarrhea
- Loss of taste or smell
- Other Flu or Cold like symptoms-
sore throat, headache or
congestion

Student Signature
