



## **Health and Safety Return-to-School Plan 2020-2021 School Year**

### **Message to Our School Community**

Our Lady of Perpetual Help School's comprehensive plan has the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff as our main priority. The expectation is that we will need continued planning to meet the ongoing challenges in the upcoming academic year as a result of the pandemic. Through prayer, partnership and ongoing planning we will be united as a school community to mitigate risk for our students, faculty and staff while providing a quality Catholic educational experience for our students.

We will need to work together as a school community to successfully implement this plan. What happens beyond the school day also impacts what happens in the school building, so we ask that families do their best to mitigate risk outside of school. It is vitally important that families adhere to our illness policy and keep children at home if they are sick or exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19. The same is true for the members of our staff. We will enforce our health and safety guidelines out of respect for students and families who follow the requirements and the staff members who are implementing them.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help School's Health and Safety Plan was developed based on recommendations from local health departments, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PDOH) and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The plan was tailored to the unique needs of our school community. It is a fluid plan that will continue to be developed as updated information is provided by local health departments, the CDC, the PDOH and the PDE.

## Arrival Procedures: Staff

Symptom screening will be done by all staff members at home each morning prior to leaving for work. Signs and symptoms may include:

- Fever (100.4 or higher)
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea

Staff members will stay home if ill. If a staff member thinks he/she is sick with the COVID-19 virus, the staff member must stay at home and contact their physician or appropriate healthcare professional for further directions.

Staff will be checked every morning upon entry into school following diocesan protocols (temperature check, wellness questionnaire, and hand sanitizer). All screening information will be kept confidential by administrative staff.

## Arrival Procedures: Students

Symptom screening of all students will be done by parents/guardians at home each morning before the school day. No student with symptoms should be sent on a bus or brought to school. If a student is exhibiting signs or symptoms of illness, the student should stay home and the parent/guardian should contact their physician or appropriate healthcare professional for further directions.

Temperature checks and hand sanitizer are mandatory upon arrival for all students. Hand sanitizer will be available at all entry points. Students should come to school every day with their neck gaiter. Masks will be available at all entry points if needed.

**Morning carline routine will begin at 8:00 am** this year and consist of staff members conducting temperature checks of masked students curbside prior to exiting their vehicle. Asymptomatic students will then proceed to the entry point, apply hand sanitizer (from a free standing dispenser), enter the building keeping appropriate marked social distance and report directly to their appointed classroom.

Morning Bus Line will consist of staff members conducting temperature checks of masked students prior to entering the school building. Asymptomatic students will then apply hand sanitizer (from a free standing dispenser) , enter the school building keeping

appropriate marked social distance and report directly to their appointed classroom. Symptomatic students will be taken to an isolation room and the parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up their child immediately.

Parents/guardians will not be able to enter the school to drop off students after the morning arrival time. If a student is late, he or she will need to be escorted to the vestibule area at the school's front entrance and wait to be admitted by a staff member. A temperature check of the student and the use of hand sanitizer will take place.

### **Prevention Practices: Cleaning, Sanitizing, Disinfecting and Ventilation**

Our maintenance staff headed by Tom Kovacs has conducted a thorough cleaning of our entire facility this summer. The maintenance staff will continue to clean and disinfect the school premises during the school year. Additional items and supplies have been purchased per Northampton County and Commonwealth of PA recommendations. For example an atomizer backpack sprayer will be used daily to disinfect all classrooms and communal spaces. We also have an ample supply of hospital grade disinfectant. Each classroom has their own cleaning supplies that will be used throughout the day. Lehigh Valley Janitorial is the supplier of our cleaning products. All of our products meet OSHA/CDC requirements. Presently, products are stocked to last for several months.

The procedures of cleaning, sanitation, and disinfecting of student desk surfaces will take place throughout the day. High touch points like door knobs and light switches in classrooms will be disinfected several times throughout the day. Maintenance staff, teachers, aides and students will all contribute to keeping the school clean throughout the day. Bathrooms will be cleaned twice a day. In addition to our traditional cleaning supplies, a Portable UV-C Light Sterilizer handheld device that emits a specialized UV-C light that kills 99.99% of bacteria, mold, viruses and germs will be used to sanitize bathrooms, desktops and electronic devices. All areas including classrooms and bathrooms will be cleaned with an atomizer backpack sprayer each day after school.

The school community will be trained on cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting and ventilation protocols.

Other cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting, and ventilation practices include, all air ducts being thoroughly cleaned this past year. Windows will be opened periodically to bring in fresh air and water fountains will be disabled (students will bring their own water bottle daily).

## **Bus Transportation**

Transportation comes under the jurisdiction of sending public school districts.

## **Physical Distancing, Social Distancing, Supplies and PPE**

The students will be spaced 6 feet apart where possible to get the maximum number of students acceptable per space. Classes whose numbers exceed the aforementioned, will be split and classrooms assigned in close proximity. Other large classes will move to a larger area to accommodate safe distancing.

In every classroom, desks will all be facing the same direction and UltraBoard Micro Barriers (clear-front sanitizable privacy shields) will be used on every student desk. Students will only need to bring a drawstring bag to school rather than a backpack. Drawstring bags can be folded and put in seat sacks daily. This will eliminate the need for students to congregate in a common area to hang up backpacks.

We are also asking students to have one reusable shopping bag to keep at school. Again this will be folded and kept in their seat sack. This will be used if we are dismissed from school for a period of time and students need to carry several of their books home.

Movement in the hallways will be limited as students will no longer take correspondence to the office, middle school teachers will be the switching rooms not students, and specialist teachers will travel from class to class. Students will be encouraged not to touch walls and fixtures when travelling in hallways and stairways.

Social distancing floor decals and safety protocol signs will be used throughout the building to assist students with keeping at a safe social distance when outside of the classroom. Face coverings will be worn by all individuals when in the hallways and communal spaces. Hand sanitizer will be applied upon leaving and returning to the classroom space.

Students will need to have their own school supplies. Students will not be sharing materials with classmates. At their desk, each student will have their own box of tissues, ziplock bag to dispose of tissues, and a small tube of hand sanitizer (provided by the school). This will cut down on movement throughout the classroom.

Face coverings are required for everyone when entering/exiting the school building or classroom and when in common areas. Students may remove face coverings when seated at a safe social distance at their desk with their UltraBoard Micro Barrier. The school will purchase each student a neck-gaiter style mask. Wearers of neck gaiter style masks can quickly and easily slide the gaiter down around their neck and back up to their face as needed without the risk of it falling on the ground. Clear plastic face shields

if covering from forehead to chin or another type of acceptable face mask (in a solid color) are permitted in addition to having the neck gaiter. Disposable masks (provided by the school) may also be worn if a student forgets their neck gaiter.

Staff may remove face covering only when stationary in the classroom at a safe social distance. If the teacher is moving within the classroom, a face covering must be worn. Face coverings include mask and/or face shields.

Students at higher risk will be given preferential seating in the classroom. Additionally, students and staff at higher risk for severe illness will be offered additional PPE.

Weather permitting, recess, physical education, and some classroom instruction will take place outside. Gym and recess will continue but classes will be playing in designated areas only and not allowed to mix with other classes. The focus of gym classes should be on physical fitness rather than group sport activities when possible. The school maintains many large outdoor grassy spaces and sufficient space on the blacktopped area for social distancing between classes.

## **Health and Hygiene Practices, Reminders and Training**

The school community will focus on teaching and reinforcing proper hygiene practices including covering coughs and sneezes, and proper hand washing. Hand washing will take place during the day including before eating lunch (portable sinks have been added to each classroom so handwashing can occur throughout the day). Hand Sanitizer will be used whenever students enter or exit a room or when soap and water are not available.

Restrooms will be occupied by a limited number of students at a time and a tag system will be used to monitor. Social distancing floor decals will be used to assist students with keeping at a safe social distance when outside of the classroom.

Signs reinforcing proper hygiene will be placed in highly visible locations. The staff will be trained on social distancing and other health and safety protocols. Training will be provided to the staff prior to the start of the school year. Training for students will be on an individual class basis during the first two weeks of school. Faculty and staff will instruct students on proper protocols and reinforce good habits in the classroom. Announcements will be made daily to reinforce social distancing and other safety protocols.

## **Delivery of Academic Programs**

The students will be spaced 6 feet apart where possible so as to get the maximum number of students acceptable per space. Classes whose numbers exceed the

aforementioned, will be split and classrooms assigned in close proximity. The teacher will utilize a combination of face-to-face instruction and Zoom on-site instruction alternating those services (distance learning within the building - [see diagram](#)). Other large classes will move to a larger area to accommodate safe distancing. Teachers will hold Back to School Zoom meetings with their families prior to the start of school to share information about the set-up of their individual classroom.

Weather permitting physical education classes will take place outside. The focus will be on physical fitness rather than group sport activities when possible. Other special classes will take place in the students' regular classroom with specialist teachers traveling from class to class.

In response to parent surveys requesting an easier, more organized way to access student work and communicate with teachers, a new Learning Management System (LMS), Schoology will be in place for the start of the school year. Students, staff and parents will be provided training on Schoology.

We believe in-person teaching is the ideal mode of instruction for the start of a school year. However, we do recognize students who have underlying health concerns, family members in high risk groups, or families who are uncomfortable physically attending school may choose the option of continuing distance learning. It is important to us to provide a way to keep each student connected and part of our faith-filled school community. We will accomplish this through a Virtual Learning Program.

Details of our Virtual Learning Program can be found [here](#).

### **Lunch Procedures/Water Fountains**

The lunch room will not be used. Students will eat at their desk behind their UltraBoard Micro Barrier. Students can opt to bring their lunch or receive a contactless lunch delivered to the classroom. Students will not be allowed to share food and/or utensils.

Following the lunch period, all desks and chairs will be cleaned and sanitized while the students are at recess. Windows will be opened during this cleaning period to allow fresh air into the classrooms.

Water fountains will be disabled. Students will need to bring a water bottle with them daily. Water bottles should be clearly marked with the student's name. Bottles may not be refilled from any source of water in the school; therefore students should plan accordingly.

## **Recess/Outdoor Time**

Weather permitting, recess will take place outside daily. Classes will use multiple doors to exit/enter the building for recess. Students will wear their neck gaiter masks while in the hallways on their way to recess and when they are not maintaining an appropriate social distance outside. Individual classes will play together in designated areas spread throughout our grassy campus. When the grass is wet, classes will be appropriately spaced out on the large blacktopped area for proper social distancing between classes. Limited equipment will be available during recess and will be specifically designated for each class. All equipment will be sanitized after each recess period.

During indoor recess students will need to be spaced appropriately. If the students are moving about the classroom and not maintaining a proper social distance, face masks must be worn.

In addition to daily recess, teachers will be planning for a second period of outside time for their classes each day, weather permitting.

## **Weekly Mass**

A limited number of classes will attend mass each week to allow for proper social distancing. Students attending Mass in the church will wear masks and be spaced appropriately. Mass will also be streamed to the classrooms of the students who are not attending in the church.

## **Field Trips, Assemblies and Travel Restrictions**

All field trips, whole school assemblies and performances, will not occur until restrictions are lifted, and participation can occur without accommodations. Family vacations during the school year are strongly discouraged.

## **Dealing with Staff/Student Illness**

Observation of staff and students will take place throughout the day. Staff and students will be referred to school nurse/first aid coordinator if symptomatic. Each student must have a current medical record on file with contact information. CDC guidelines will be followed for staff, students or other members of the school community who become ill or exposed to an individual confirmed positive to COVID-19. If presented during school day the individual will be brought to an isolation area. Each student will require an emergency contact who can pick up within a 30 minute time frame or a time that is reasonable. Mandatory 14 day self quarantine, until testing results determine appropriate action. Symptomatic individuals will be asked to contact their physician or appropriate healthcare professional for further directions.

To safely return to work/school staff or students confirmed to have COVID-19 need to

- (1) not demonstrate a fever for at least 72 hours without the use of fever reducing medicines;
- (2) demonstrate noted improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath);
- (3) at least ten (10) days have passed since symptoms first appeared;
- (4) obtain a doctor's note indicating it is safe to return to work/school.

We will follow recommendations of the Department of Health at the local and state level and guidance from the Diocese of Allentown in notifying staff, families, and the public of confirmed staff or student illness, school closures and within-school year changes in safety protocols.

### **Behavioral Health Supports**

The school will utilize the IU for psychological support as well as any therapeutic services offered by Catholic Charities. A faith and well being committee has been established to focus on the social, emotional and spiritual health and well being of the school community.

### **Visitor Policy**

Non-essential visitors will not be permitted. All visitor and volunteer visits must be scheduled. Volunteers that are needed will have to follow diocesan policy of wearing a face mask, having a temperature check, and wellness screening questionnaire upon arrival. Masks and sanitizer will be available at all entry points.

### **Dismissal Procedures**

Movement in the hallways will be staggered and limited during dismissal. All students, staff members, and parents/guardians will be expected to wear a face covering during dismissal. Car riders in grades K-8 will be dismissed in small groups by grade level accompanied by any siblings. Dismissal will begin at approximately 2:45 PM until further notice. Kindergarten students and their siblings will be dismissed first, followed by 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students, 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade students, 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>-grade students, and 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students.

**All parents and guardians must remain inside their vehicles until their youngest child's grade level is announced and dismissed. No vehicles will be permitted to move until ALL children and adults are safely inside their vehicles.**

## **Extended Care**

Extended Care will be offered for the 2020-2021 school year. This year we ask that families utilize the extended care program only if it is necessary, as capacity will be limited. Students will be spaced socially distanced in the gym. Outside play time will take place when weather permits.

Pick-up from extended care will only take place from the gym entrance this year. Parents/guardians picking up will not enter the gym. Upon arrival at the gym parking lot parents/guardians will call the extended care phone and let the staff know they are in the parking lot. One of the extended care staff members will escort your child/ren outside the door.

Further detailed information about the extended care program to follow.

## **In Conclusion**

The health and safety of our students and staff will be our main priority. The decision making process that would prompt a school closure or other significant modification to our daily operations will be directed by the Diocese of Allentown Office of Education, state and local authorities including the PA Department of Education and the PA Department of Health.

Thank you to the faculty, staff, board members and parents that contributed a great deal of time and effort in developing Our Lady of Perpetual Help School's comprehensive Health and Safety Plan. It will take a combined effort to successfully implement our plan this coming year. We would like to thank in advance some of the key members of our team including our Pandemic Coordinator, Mrs. Criscuolo, our First Aid Coordinator, Mrs. Broscius, our Maintenance Director, Mr. Kovacs and our IT Administrator, Mrs. Calantoni for their continued hard work. Finally, we would like to especially thank Monsignor Sacks for his continued support of our school, our students and their families.