

Immaculate Heart of Mary School Community,

It is with a grateful heart that I write to share our school's plan for returning to academics this fall. First I would like to thank the 14 members of our school committee; which consisted of Parish and school staff, teachers, and parents. They generously gave of their time weekly, throughout the summer, for these important conversations and I could not have put this plan together without all of their input, help and support.

Like most of the nation and world, our community runs the continuum of varied opinions regarding both this virus and the return to school. Our committee represented many of those varied opinions. We thought about, talked about and attempted to support the different circumstances of our students and their families. Despite our best efforts, our plan will likely not please every family and you may still have concerns. I ask that you please reach out to me so we can individually talk about your specifics and find a way to support your family. Social media cannot help alleviate the fears you may have or solve specific needs of your family - but I certainly will work with you to try. Thank you for trusting me with those concerns.

We will continue to adjust the plan if/as necessary to ensure the continued safety of our students, staff and all of their families. I ask that we all continue to be patient moving forward as we implement our plan and continue to respond to the guidelines of the Diocese of Wilmington, Delaware Department of Health, and the Governor's Executive orders. I will continue to communicate with you along the way as we all are in this together.

At this time our PreK, Kindergarten, and Second Graders are able to be in school for in person instruction 5 days per week. There are many safety precautions that will be put into place within their classrooms and the school which are detailed below.

Our Third through Eighth graders will operate within a hybrid model. Those models could be different by school throughout the Diocese and while not based entirely on percentages we do have to be mindful of the number of students coming into the building daily. The current hybrid cycle will run from October 13th until Thanksgiving. As we approach Thanksgiving, both as a Diocese and a school we will evaluate the current conditions and communicate any changes.

Our hybrid model ...

Students participating in face to face learning will have both synchronous and asynchronous learning. Half of the students for in person learning (Group A) will attend school on Mondays, Tuesdays and alternating Wednesdays while Group B works remotely. Group B will then attend school alternating Wednesdays, as well as Thursdays, and Fridays while Group A works remotely. We realize this is less than ideal but is necessary to allow our students to safely get back to school while managing our numbers.

Parents/students who selected remote learning will not be able to change to in person learning until each cycle is complete. Parents/students who selected in person learning would be able to

change to remote learning prior to the end of each cycle if they wish. If/As each cycle ends, all parents will have the opportunity to update their selections regarding In person vs. remote learning and make changes if necessary.

I thank this community immensely for your support. Attached you will find additional information on our current school plan and the changes to the campus and building to accommodate students and staff back to campus. Please read through it carefully as it also details remote learning and hybrid instruction.

As always, thank you for your continued support.

God Bless

Mrs. Tina Morroni

## **Immaculate Heart of Mary SY2020.21 School Plan**

### **Remote Learning**

- Students will be expected to be online every morning at 8am for homeroom. At that time attendance will be taken, WIHM Morning show will be live streamed with morning prayer and announcements.
- Students will have a schedule to be online with each core academic class/teacher daily. Attendance will be taken in each class. This doesn't mean students will be live for 6 ½ hours daily, as that amount of screen time is not healthy for children, but there will be a schedule for students to be live with each content teacher. Teachers will typically instruct for 30-40 minutes. Other times of the day will be designated for students to work.
- Students will not be expected to be in uniform but will be expected to be dressed appropriately in clothes. Pajamas are not acceptable classroom attire.
- Behavior appropriate for school is imperative for learning. Students' attention will need to be on the teacher and all other distractions (pets, toys, TV shows and video games, etc.) should be away.
- Students will be learning the same material as the students physically in attendance in the building. Assignments are due on the assigned due date and will be graded in the same manner as if the students were physically present in school. Students will be held to the same academic standard as in person peers.
- The 'Grace before Grades' that guided us through the unfamiliar remote learning of the Spring will not be in place for the fall. Diocesan grading will be in place.
- Staff at grade level clusters will use common platforms and have consistent remote routines. Google Classroom/Google Meet is the primary platform for use.
- Professional Development is being provided for staff so that all are familiar and comfortable with these platforms. Parents (and students) will have an opportunity to also learn more about the platforms in advance so that they are comfortable in advance of remote learning beginning.

### **In Person Learning**

#### **Arrival/Drop Off**

- All students (PreK-8th) and all adults must wear masks at arrival.
- Parents must remain in their vehicles. Parents are not allowed in the building at this time. If a student needs assistance with carrying in items school staff can assist.
- If a student in grades PreK-4th grade arrives late (After 8 am) - parents should park in one of the first Reserved spaces of the first row (opposite the gym doors) and call into the school office so that a staff member can come out and facilitate the signing in of the student.

- Students arriving late in 5th - 8th grade can walk themselves into the building and sign in at the office.
- Students (and siblings) in PreK3, PreK4 and Kindergarten will now be dropped off in front of the gym and wait with staff in the gym until 7:55am when they will transition with their teacher and assistant to their classroom. Parents should enter the school parking lot from Weldin, as the rest of the morning drop off line does but turn from the carline and proceed in the driveway between the school gym and the convent (towards Shipley). Parents will pull into the circle in front of the gym for students to be assisted from the vehicles by staff. After students have been helped from the car, parents will proceed to Shipley. We apologize for any inconvenience but in order to prevent backed up traffic in the gym loop - only a right turn onto Shipley will be possible at this time.
- Siblings of PreK - Kindergarten children can also be dropped off at the gym but will proceed through the building and out the front doors and into the designated lines out front for their specific cohort/class.
- Mrs. Morrone and Staff will be in Face masks. They will assist students from the cars and into the gym. Staff will then use sanitizer before assisting the next car and student.
- Students in Grades 1 - 8 will continue to be dropped off in the main parking lot via the same carline drop off procedures. Once students are out of their cars each cohort will have their own line and students will be spread out across the parking lot more than previous.
- Student cohorts will enter the building utilizing all of the doors so that students can maintain distance and staggered entry into the building.
- On inclement weather days (rain, snow, temperatures less than 32 degrees) PreK-Kindergarten will arrive in the same manner at the gym. Students in 1st - 8th grade will proceed immediately into the building and into their classroom.

### **Restrooms**

- All students (PreK - 8th) and adults must wear masks when in the hallways and restrooms.
- Signage has been added to designate the maximum allowed persons in the restrooms, importance of frequent and proper handwashing as well as reminders to social distance.
- The number of people allowed in the restrooms is equivalent to the number of sinks available. In most of our restrooms that is three people, although our smaller restrooms in the lower hall will designate only two students at a time.
- Bathroom attendance will be monitored by the teacher/assistant for the cohort using the restroom at any given time. The teachers will have more frequent and scheduled bathroom and handwashing times built into the academic schedule.
- Although students will be monitored at the restrooms - Cross markings on the floor in the hallway will designate 6ft waiting spaces for access to the restroom. Additionally hallway signage for mask usage and social distancing will serve as constant reminders to students.

## Classrooms

- All students (K - 8th) must wear masks (gaithers are no longer allowed) while in the classroom except during snack and lunch. Students in PreK can wear masks when in the classroom if requested by the parent.
- During this uncertain COVID time, students will be able to wear either their school uniform or their gym uniform to school.
- All adults will be permitted to wear face shields without masks while in the classroom if they are further than 6ft away from students and face shields with face masks when they are 6ft or closer to students.
- All area rugs, upholstered furniture, curtains, and excess equipment/furniture is being removed from the classrooms. In almost all of our classrooms carpet flooring has even been removed and replaced with tile.
- Classroom bookcases and 'libraries' have been packed for the time being and are being stored.
- Desks in our classrooms will be spaced approx. 4ft apart. The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended 3-6ft. Once final classroom/cohort numbers are determined we will likely be able to space the desks further and will place them 6ft and beyond when able.
- All student desks will be faced in the forward facing direction.
- Students will use their own individual supplies and/or be assigned materials that won't be shared. In instances where supplies must be shared supplies will be disinfected between students.
- All students in a classroom will be a cohort and will remain in that classroom with that cohort of students for all classes and activities. For grades/classes where students have multiple teachers the teachers will move classrooms NOT the cohort of students. The only exception to this will be 5th - 8th grade Science. Those grades will leave from their cohort classroom when it is time for Science. They will walk socially distanced to the science classroom. The previous class (if there was one) would have already left so that the classroom can be disinfected before the new cohort arrives. Cohorts will not pass one another in the classroom or hallway.
- Additional precautions for our PreK and K classrooms will include rotating manipulatives and stations more frequently, frequent sanitation throughout the day of manipulatives and frequent hand washing for staff and students.
- Students will not be sat immediately beside or opposite one another at tables.
- Nap mats will be spaced 6ft or more from one another with alternating student heads and feet.
- Vinyl sit upons have been purchased for our PreK and K classrooms for circle time and floor activities.
- No students will have scheduled Specials classes for the first Trimester. Although we realize the value of Specials as a mental break for students, as well as the value of Arts in brain development, the rotation of student cohorts make scheduling specials too difficult for this trimester. Students will still be exposed to specials and those activities as

those teachers will be utilized throughout the building. The Specials teachers will be in/out of student cohorts to support our grade level and content teachers.

### **Recess**

- All students will be able to participate in recess and time outdoors
- All students (K - 8th) will now be required to wear masks during recess. Students will wear masks to transition from classroom to recess and back. Masks will be required during outdoor or indoor recess as students are running and playing hard and aren't able to remain 6ft socially distanced.
- Students will be able to play on the playground equipment but only 1 cohort at a time. Cohorts will take turns rotating between playground equipment, blacktop and field. The playground equipment will be sanitized by our custodial team after each cohort group before the next cohort arrives.
- Mrs. Reilly will support the students with organized and safe distant play opportunities during recess. The use of balls and other playground equipment will be limited to only those items that can be disinfected between student use.

### **Lunch**

- All students will need to pack their lunches as school begins as there will be no hot lunch program to begin the school year.
- Students will eat lunch as cohorts in their classrooms.
- Classroom assistants and/or Cafeteria monitors will monitor students in their classrooms during lunch times.
- Students will dispose of their trash only into a trash can outside their classroom door in the hallway.
- Only adult school staff, appropriately masked and gloved will handle the trash cans.
- Lunch times will be staggered in order to allot time for students to wash their hands before lunch, after lunch, and after recess.
- Classrooms (including student desks and chairs) will be disinfected, by school staff, after lunch while students are outside for recess.

### **Cleaning/Disinfecting**

- All water systems have been opened and inspected since our time away from the building in the Spring.
- All air conditioning systems have been inspected, cleaned and are operating in accord with CDC guidelines.
- Current recommendations are to increase air circulation of outdoor air as much as possible. As the weather allows...
  - Windows will be left open as much as possible.
  - Classes will utilize opportunities for outdoor classes as much as possible.
  - Classrooms with air circulation handlers are being inspected for use.
  - Classroom without air circulation handlers, portable air circulation units/purifiers are being obtained.

- Classrooms with air conditioners will have air off and windows opened periodically throughout the day (especially during recess and outdoor class times).
- As the weather changes, and the heat is turned on making outside air circulation more difficult....Air purifiers have been purchased and placed into each classroom and office space.
- Custodial staff and our night time Cleaning company have been 'trained' on appropriate cleaning procedures and EPA approved disinfectants.
- The majority of cleaning and disinfecting will occur when students are not present. Highly used and frequently touched areas may be disinfected when students are present in school but not in the immediate area being disinfected (ex. Science classroom between student changes, bathrooms between cohorts, classrooms with students out at recess).
- Only staff are responsible for cleaning and disinfecting.
- Frequently touched surfaces (light switches, door knobs, door frames, etc.) will be cleaned with an EPA approved disinfectant multiple times throughout the day by school staff. Bathrooms, railings and other heavily used areas of the school will be disinfected even more frequently.
- Playground equipment and athletic equipment will be disinfected after each use. Cohorts will be limited to play on the playground to just their cohort. Other cohorts will play on the blacktop and field.

### **Student/Staff Health**

- A school support team composed of administration, school counselor, nurse and staff members has been created to focus on and monitor the mental health and wellness of our school community.
- Resources for mental and behavioral health, both internal and external, will be made available to families and staff for support during this time.
- Mrs. Maloney, our new guidance counselor, will be meeting with cohorts to introduce herself to students and support them socially and emotionally at this time.
- Signage has been posted in bathrooms reminding students of proper handwashing procedures which will also be reinforced by teachers and staff.
- Time has been scheduled for students to hand wash frequently.
- Individual hand sanitizers were added to school supply lists and will be available at student desks. Additional automatic hand sanitizer stations had been added throughout the campus.
- The State of Delaware has arranged for all school staff to continue being COVID tested once per month as the school year progresses. These tests will be mandatory for staff and will be provided at no cost to our staff.
- Parents will be important partners in the health and wellness of our campus. Parents will need to conduct daily home health screenings on their children to ensure wellness before sending students to school.
  - Parents will check student temperatures every morning. Temperatures greater than 100.4 must stay home and consider COVID testing.

- Every morning monitor/ask students for cough, congestion, shortness of breath, or gastrointestinal symptoms. Any positives and the student must stay home.
- Staff are required to conduct the same daily health screening.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been received by the school already. Face shields, masks, gloves, gowns, etc. have been provided by the State of Delaware to start the year and additional have already been ordered. PPE supplies were given to all staff members (with additional available when necessary).
- Students will bring their own masks (gaithers are no longer allowed) to school daily. These masks should be friendly and school appropriate. Face masks only can worn - just Ensure that the student is used to the masks and knows how to wear it properly. We will have some disposable masks if students forget but cannot provide them daily - please send students with masks.
  - If a parent/guardian of PreK student wishes for their child to wear a mask during the day please reach out to me.
  - If a child has a health reason for being unable to wear a mask I would ask parents to please reach out to me.
- Staff will wear face masks for arrival, dismissal, in restrooms, hallways, office and common areas. Staff will be able to wear face shields in the classrooms when able to be more than 6 ft from students and face masks when 6 ft or closer to students.
- A plexiglass window has been added in the front office at Mrs. Bullen's desk as well as a Plexiglass quarantine bed space in the nurse's office for students that present with possible symptoms.
- Water fountains have been turned off/locked so that the drinking spout cannot be accessed. Only the water bottle refill station remains operating. Students should continue to bring their own water bottle from home and will be able to refill them at the water refill station.
- Visitors and Volunteers are not permitted in the building at this time. Required contractors and others will be allowed into the building only when students are not present. A cart will be placed outside on the boardwalk daily for receipt of packages and mail as well as forgotten student items. It will be checked regularly throughout the day and items distributed to students.
- Substitute and itinerant teachers will report to the nurse upon arrival for health assessment prior to signing in for work.

### **Testing/Responding to Positive Cases**

- A portion of the nurses office has been identified as an isolation area. A plexiglass wall has been installed to create this area.
- The Diocese of Wilmington has an assigned Department of Public Health liaison who has been consulting with us on reopening plans. This liaison will be our direct contact with the Department of Health throughout this COVID Crisis. As information in this area is currently evolving - They are our first point of contact for all questions and we will follow all guidelines of the local Department of Health.
- Students who fall ill while at school will be immediately sent to the nurse for evaluation.

- If it is determined that the student will need to go home the student will be kept resting in the isolation area of the nurses office.
- The student will need to be picked up by parents/guardians within 1 hour of being notified.
- COVID testing will be suggested in appropriate instances and the parents/guardians will be given resources for area testing sites.
- Parents will also need to communicate with the child's primary physician.
- Students will need to be COVID negative or symptom free for 48 hours before their return to school.
- Siblings of ill students will also be taken home at that time as a precaution. Siblings may return to school once if they have remained symptom free for 24 hours
- Parents and staff will be asked to notify the nurse of all pertinent health information so that confidential records can be kept up to date. This includes any COVID testing in which the child or members of the household have tested positive.
- If a student/staff member tests positive for COVID-19 we will immediately contact the Department of Public Health and we will then follow their guidance.
- The Catholic Schools Office for the Diocese of Wilmington and the IHM Parish office will also be contacted. Appropriate parent communication will be disseminated.

### **Dismissal**

- All students (PreK-8th) and all adults must wear masks at dismissal.
- Parents/guardians are required to remain in/at their cars. Parents must be in masks when out of their car.
- Parents and other visitors may not come into the building at this time.
- Line-up in the parking lot for dismissal will look different for this fall. Parking lines will be set up by grade. Signs will help parents/guardians picking up know which lane to get into. An aerial graphic of the parking lot is attached to assist.
  - Parking lines will run parallel to the soccer field with an empty lane between cars.
  - Families with children in multiple grades will line up in the youngest child's line.
  - The 7th and 8th grade lane (a combined line) will run immediately adjacent to the soccer field.
  - Subsequent lines will run parallel to the soccer field and 7th/8th line working up the parking lot towards the school. A combined 5th/6th line, a 4th grade line, 3rd, grade line, 2nd grade line and then 2 lines each for 1st, K, and PreK.
  - At each grade's dismissal time the teacher will walk with the students down the car line and hand the student off to the parent/guardian at the vehicle.
  - Families/carpools will be provided with a Surname(s) sign for display in the car to assist teachers with the dismissal process.
  - Any students not able to be handed off to a parent initially will proceed with their teacher back towards the building to wait for any needed 2nd wave of carline cars. Students will wait with their teacher/cohort 6ft or more from any other cohort students.

- Staggered dismissal by grades from the building will follow this general timeline. Multiple doors of exit will be used.
  - PreK dismissal to the carline at 2:35pm
  - Kindergarten and 1st grade Grade at 2:40pm
  - 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Grade at 2:43pm
  - 5th and 6th Grade at 2:45pm
  - 7th and 8th Grade at 2:50pm
- After all grades have dismissed departure from the parking lot will proceed as it has in the past. The bell will be rung to signal the start of car departure. Cones and signs will be removed and the first car in each line will exit. Once the first car from each grade level line has exited the 2nd car from each line will then slowly exit and so forth continuing through all of the remaining cars.
- A 2nd wave of cars is possible. Parents that were farther back in the parking lot and unable to receive their child during the first dismissal will slowly pull forward as the front lines depart. Parents should pull forward in the appropriate grade level line and stop(park) the car. Once all 2nd wave cars have parked teachers will walk students to the parents/guardians at the cars.
  - Parents picking up in this 2nd wave should remain parked until all staff have exited from the pick up lines and the dismissal monitor has signaled for cars to depart.
  - Cars will exit in the same order as the 1st wave, the first car from each line will slowly pull forward and exit. Followed by the 2nd car in each line and so forth.
- If a student in PreK-4th grade has an early dismissal - parents should park in one of the first Reserved spaces of the first row (opposite the gym doors) and call into the school office so that a staff member can walk the student out and facilitate the signing out of the student.
- If a student in grades 5th - 8th has an early dismissal - parents should park in one of the first Reserved spaces of the first row (opposite the gym doors) and call into the school office. Students will sign themselves out in the main office and then walk themselves out to their parent once the phone call has been received in the main office.

### **Additional School Activities**

- School Masses must adhere to the social distancing, masking, and indoor group size regulations. We will send additional information regarding masses in the near future.
- School Concerts and plays would need to follow all Department of Health requirements for gatherings of 50 or fewer people and so will be postponed/cancelled for the time being.
- Field Trips and Service trips off campus are cancelled until further notice.
- School Pep Rallies, student vs. staff competitions, and students dances are cancelled until further notice.
- Open Houses and Student Shadow days are cancelled until further notice.
- Tours with individuals from only one family are permitted with masks and social distancing- outside of school (and Extended care) hours.

- Development and fundraising events in which parents would be gathered on campus are cancelled until further notice.
- Back to School Nights and Meet the teacher opportunities will be virtual this year and a schedule will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.
- Co- and Extracurricular activities will be evaluated on an individual basis. Teachers or sponsors will communicate with students

### **Extended Care**

- More extensive information will be provided by Mrs. Schauer. If you are still in need of Extended Care please be sure to complete the Extended Care registration form.
- Students (1st - 8th grade) must continue wearing their masks/face coverings during extended care while in the restrooms, hallways, classrooms, gym, and outside (if not maintaining social distancing).
- Students will continue to be separated by cohort into extended care. Students will still have an opportunity for homework time.
- Students will still have snack time and will be at least 6 ft from one another for snack since they will be out of their masks for snack.
- Students will transition outside daily as soon as they are able (weather permitting).
- All bathroom regulations and distancing requirements for the school day will be in place during Extended Care.
- Parent Pick up will also be accommodated outside (weather permitting) or at the gym entrance as parents will not be able to come into the building/downstairs.
- Our isolation area will be utilized by Extended Care, in the event a student becomes ill after school.

### **Athletics**

- Elementary level sports will all be addressed by the CYM Office.
- At the present time, Volleyball has been moved to a Spring Sport and Softball has been moved to a Fall sport. Flag Football is being cancelled at this time and will be reevaluated in the new year.
- More information about IHM Sports can be found at their website ([ihmspartans.com](http://ihmspartans.com)) or their FaceBook page (Immaculate Heart of Mary Athletics)