



Our Lady Star of the Sea School  
PO Box 560, 90 Alexander Lane  
Solomons, MD 20688  
Phone (410) 326-3171

Pastor: Father Ken Gill  
Principal: Mrs. Jennifer Thompson

July 22, 2020

Dear OLSS Families,

We are still working to complete the Archdiocese of Washington's extensive re-opening plan for the 2020-21 school year. Our students' and staff's health and safety are our top priority. In compliance with Maryland State regulations in effect as of today, our small class sizes and unique setting, combined with numerous new health and safety measures that will be in place on the campus, will allow us to open for in-school instruction for the upcoming school year.

I would like to share some updates with you, and expect our final re-opening plan to be completed and published by the beginning of August.

## 1) 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR STUDENT INSTRUCTION OPTIONS

OLSS School is offering two options for parents to choose from for student instruction for the 2020-21 school year. The tuition cost for both options is the same.

### **OPTION 1: In-School Instruction**

- Daily in-class, teacher-led instruction
- Digital curriculum platform to ensure learning continues without any disruption if an unexpected school closure occurs
- Enhanced health & safety protocols (social distancing, increased cleaning, temperature checks, face masks, frequent handwashing, hand sanitizer stations)
- Reduced class transitions and large group interactions
- Students using this option may change to Virtual Instruction at any time for the remainder of the year

### **OPTION 2: At-Home Virtual Instruction**

- Live online teacher-led instruction Monday-Friday
- Same digital curriculum platform & learning pace as in-school students
- Support services available (e.g. tutoring)
- Virtual parent meetings available

In order to adhere to CDC guidelines for social distancing, we will need to set a maximum class limit for In-School Instruction. If parents select Virtual Instruction, they must commit to this learning platform for at least the first half (1st & 2nd quarters) of the 2020-21 school year. In January 2021, or at whatever time it is announced by the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Office, conditions will be assessed and if deemed safe, students who have been virtual learning will be given the option of returning to In-School Instruction for the remainder of the school year. However, if conditions do not allow their safe return to the classroom, virtual students will continue their instruction online for the remainder of the school year.

**Parents must decide by July 31, 2020 if they would like to select and commit to the Virtual Instruction option by emailing me at [principal@olsss.org](mailto:principal@olsss.org).**

## 2) FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL TRANSITION

For everyone's safety, and to help students and staff transition to the new regulations, we will be staggering class start dates during the first week of school. The plan is as follows; any adjustments will be communicated to parents:

- **TUE, AUG. 25:** School open for PK only (PK students will be assigned a date to come in for their individual Introduction & Assessment during the week of Aug. 25-28)
- **WED, AUG. 26:** School open for Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades only
- **THU, AUG. 27:** School open for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, & 5<sup>th</sup> grades only
- **FRI, AUG. 28:** School open for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, & 8<sup>th</sup> grades only

## 3) START OF SCHOOL YEAR SCHEDULE

To help students and staff transition to the new regulations, the following adjustments have been made to the start of the school year schedule:

- **The first two weeks of school (Aug. 25-28, Aug. 31-Sep. 4) will be 12:30pm dismissals.**
- The first full day of school for all students will be Tue, Sep. 8.
- After Care will be available beginning Tue, Sep. 8.
- Students should bring their lunch to school every day for the first two weeks of school.
- The Hot Lunch Program is tentatively scheduled to start on Tue, Sep. 8.

## 4) NEW HEALTH & SAFETY REGULATIONS

### Temperature Checks:

- All students must have their temperature taken by an OLSS staff member with a contactless thermometer before exiting their vehicle in the morning carline.
- If a child has a temperature higher than 100.4°F, they will not be allowed into the school and must be immediately taken home by their parent/guardian.
- If a child is exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms such as headache or coughing, they may not be allowed into the school and must be taken home by their parent/guardian.
- OLSS staff members will be required to ask parents daily in the morning carline if their child(ren) have been exposed to anyone with COVID-19.
- Before Care, After Care, and the PK Program are regulated by the Maryland State Dept. of Education and will have specific MSDE guidelines that must be followed. At the present time, the regulations state that Before Care and PK students' temperatures need to be taken by the parent/guardian bringing them to school, with a thermometer brought from their home, in front of the teacher, before they may enter the building.
- Students who arrive on the VVS Charter school bus will have their temperatures taken by the bus driver before getting on the bus and will also have their temperature taken upon arrival at OLSS.
- OLSS staff will enter the school through the side door and have their temperature checked with a wall-mounted electronic temperature monitor stationed there.

### Face Masks:

- All students in Grades 1-8 must wear face masks in the school buildings.
- Students must put face masks on as soon as they step out of their car in the morning.
- Students will not have to wear face masks for more than one hour without a break.
- Students must always have one extra face mask in their desk or backpack.
- Please teach your child how to put on and remove their face mask in a safe manner, and explain their importance, to help them prepare to wear them during school.

**Classrooms:**

- Teachers and students will practice social distancing in the classrooms.
- Student desks will be at least six feet apart.
- Classroom windows will be left open for air circulation whenever possible.
- Students will stay in their designated classroom or outdoor classroom. Middle school and Specials teachers will come to their classrooms for instruction.
- Before Care and After Care will have their own designated areas in the Providence Room, that will not be used by any other classes or groups.
- No outside groups will be allowed to use school classrooms or the Providence Room.

**Outdoor Time:**

- Students will spend more time outdoors for instruction and recess breaks.
- Outdoor classrooms will be set up on the Providence Room patio and in tented areas.
- Students will have snack breaks and lunch outdoors whenever possible.

**Entry and Exit Doors:**

Students in Grades 1-8 will enter and exit the main school building through different doors throughout the school day, by class, following designated traffic patterns:

- Kindergarten & 1<sup>st</sup> grade: Main doors, far right door
- 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grades: Main doors, far left door
- 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades: Doors located at the back of the school

**Morning Arrival:**

Students will report directly to their classrooms upon arrival in the morning.

**Afternoon Car Line Dismissal:**

Students will be dismissed in small groups to the afternoon carline, similar to our “rainy day dismissal” procedure.

**Parents & Visitors:**

Following CDC protocol, no parents or visitors will be allowed in the school buildings.

- If an emergency situation arises where a parent must enter the building, they will be met at the main door by an OLSS staff member and have their temperature taken.
- The School Secretary must be notified in advance if a child must be picked up early from school (e.g. for an appointment). The parent will be met at the door by an OLSS staff member with their child to be signed out.
- No in-school volunteer opportunities will be available when the school year begins.

**COVID-19 Symptoms:**

- If at any point during the school day a child exhibits COVID-19 symptoms, such as fever, headache, or coughing, he/she will be taken by the OLSS School Nurse to a designated quarantine location on the school grounds.
- Parents will be notified immediately by a phone call from the school, and are expected to pick their child up within 30 minutes.
- Please have a local contact on your Emergency Pickup Form who will be able to pick your child up if you are not able to arrive at the school within 30 minutes.

## 5) FOOD & DRINKS

- The Hot Lunch Program is tentatively scheduled to start on Tue, Sep. 8.
- Students should bring a snack and lunch to school every day for the first two weeks of school.
- Please send a labeled water bottle with your child daily. The water fountains will be out of service, but drinking water will be provided in each classroom.
- We will no longer be selling milk or juice at lunch time.
- Since students will eat snack and lunch in their classrooms, we ask that parents send either water or a clear juice that will not stain the classroom carpets if spilled.

## 6) PAYMENTS TO THE SCHOOL

Per CDC guidelines, **we will no longer be accepting any cash or checks at the school office.**

- Lunch tickets will no longer be available from the school office and **MUST** be purchased exclusively from the Online School Store. The PayPal fees for lunch tickets will be removed so no extra costs will be incurred.
- PE uniforms must be purchased through the online school store. Parents may pick orders up from the school office on the Aug. 21 Open Day, or orders will be sent home with the child.
- Any school items requiring payment (e.g. field trips) will be made available on the Online School Store.
- All Tuition, Before Care, and After Care payments must now be paid through your TADS account. TADS offers flexible payment options, including automatic bank payments, automatic credit/debit card payments, or mail-in payments. Cash payments for Tuition **ONLY** we be accepted at the Parish Office.

As you can see, there are many new procedures and preventative measures, some that will be quite time-consuming, that we will all need to adjust to in order to keep our students and staff safe at all times. We will always follow federal, state, and local laws, and will communicate updates with our school families as quickly as possible. I am confident that by working together, we will be able to have a successful school year.

Grace and Peace,

*Jennifer Thompson*

Mrs. Jennifer Thompson  
Principal