



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

Pastor: Father Ken Gill
Principal: Mrs. Jennifer Thompson

August 2, 2020

Dear OLSS Families,

We have been working with the Archdiocese of Washington to create an 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.

This document presents detailed information of the re-opening plan for our school.

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. Grading will return to normal procedure and will include homework, projects, and assessments.

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 and "Students to Students" meetings available
- Virtual Robotics Club and Virtual Coding Club will be available to all students

In order to adhere to CDC guidelines for social distancing, we will 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 were asked to decide by July 31, 2020 if they would like to select and commit to the Virtual Instruction option by emailing me at principal@olss.org.

2) FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL TRANSITION

For everyone's safety, and to help students and staff transition to the new regulations and procedures, 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 time to come in for their individual Introduction & Assessment on this day)
- **WED, AUG. 26:** School open for Kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grades only
- **THU, AUG. 27:** School open for 3rd, 4th, & 5th grades only
- **FRI, AUG. 28:** School open for 6th, 7th, & 8th 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 *See Attachments

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 COVID-19 symptoms such as headache or coughing, they **may** not be allowed into the school and may **possibly** need to 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. Before and After Care will now be on the right side of the partition of the Providence Room. No one else may meet there.
- 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: We Care About Our Neighbor

- All teachers, staff, and students in Grades 1-8 must put face masks on as soon as they step out of their vehicle in the morning.
- All teachers, staff, and students must wear masks in the school buildings.
- Students will not have to wear face masks for more than one hour without a break.
- Students must always have one extra face mask at the school.
- 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 five 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 class-specific doors throughout the school day, by class, following designated traffic patterns:

- Kindergarten & 1st grade: Main doors, far right door
- 2nd & 3rd Grades: Main doors, far left door
- 4th – 8th 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; i.e. the Providence House, which is unoccupied.
- 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) CATHOLIC IDENTITY/MASS ATTENDANCE

- We will return to our Wednesday Children's Mass after Labor Day. Middle School Students will help prepare the Liturgies and selected classes will safely attend in person while other classes attend virtually. It is hoped that Eucharistic Ministers will be able to bring Communion to the virtual watchers so that all may be in Communion with each other.
- Fr. Ken has been asked by the Catholic Schools Office to live stream our children's Masses for other schools in the Archdiocese.
- Morning Prayer: The Principal and 8th Grade Students will continue to lead Morning Prayer and students will watch virtually from their classrooms. Students will continue to add to their Prayer Journals throughout the year.
- Student Council and the National Junior Honor Society will continue to meet safely distanced and will continue to sponsor various charity and outreach events throughout the year.
- The school will work together with the Parish to assist our twin Parish and Little Flower School in Belize. Students will continue our Pen Pal/Prayer Partner program and our fundraising efforts to provide school supplies and teacher materials.

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.

7) 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 school's water fountains will be replaced with contactless water bottle filling stations with refrigerated water, where students will fill their water bottles when needed.
- 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.

8) SCANTRON TESTING

- Students will be assessed upon their return to school in Math and ELA/Reading using the Performance Series Express, a shorter, 25-question version of Scantron's Performance Series computer-adaptive diagnostic assessment while still providing the same reports and measurement scores.
- Baseline Testing Dates: August 17 - September 30, 2020

9) COMMUNICATION

- As per CDC Guidelines, we will no longer be sending home paper copies of newsletters, students tests, and work in the weekly Yellow Communication Folders. Parents will have online access to all office paperwork and announcements. Students' graded work will be sent home in plastic protectors every week.

10) VOLUNTEER HOURS

- The number of required Volunteer Service Hours will be reduced because the Coronavirus prevents parents from entering the building at this time. There will be a fundraising goal and gift card sales goal instead. These specific details will be outlined in the HSA Handbook.

11) MARKETING

- HSA will continue fundraising and has set a new goal of \$35,000 due to the uncertainty of various events. The budget has been adjusted to include the purchasing of PPE and Live Stream equipment. Photos will be posted on Facebook, and word of mouth will also be a route for prospective new families to learn about Our Lady Star of the Sea School.

12) HANDBOOK DISCIPLINE POLICY ADDITION

- We are giving our children time to acclimate to their new normal of wearing masks, frequent hand washing, and socially distancing. We have asked you to work with your child to explain the importance of these new procedures. It is imperative that all children obey these new protocols .If a child should break protocol, he/she will be given a written warning called the Protocol/Safety Violation. If the student again breaks protocol, he/she will need to learn from home for one week. If the student has a third violation, then the student will become a virtual learner. Safety is the top priority!

13) ADDITIONAL FORMS RELATED TO RE-OPENING PLAN

- COVID-19 Parent Acknowledgement Form
- COVID-19 Staff Acknowledgement Form
- COVID-19 Sick Student Protocol & Documentation
- Suspected COVID-19 Isolation & Exclusion Flow Chart
- Safety Protocol Checklist
- Cleaning & Disinfecting Log

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. Adhering to these protocols is essential for maintaining a safe environment for all students and staff.

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