



**Diocese of Fresno Education Corporation
Cohort Plan to Reopen 7th & 8th Grades
Kings County
St. Rose-McCarthy Catholic School - Hanford**

Background Information

Name of Applicant: Diocese of Fresno Education Corporation

St. Rose-McCarthy Catholic School - Hanford

School Type:

- ☐ Traditional Public School
☐ Charter School
☒ Private, Independent, or Faith-Based School

Number of schools: 1 Enrollment: 13 (7th & 8th)

Superintendent Name: Mona E. Faulkner

Principal Name: Jamie Perkins

Address:

Diocese of Fresno Education Corporation - Mona E. Faulkner, Superintendent
1550 N. Fresno St.
Fresno, CA 93703

St. Rose-McCarthy Catholic School - Jamie Perkins, Principal
1000 N. Harris St..
Hanford, CA 93230

Grades Proposed to be Reopen as a Cohort:

- ☒ 7th ☒ 8th

Date of Proposed Reopening: 9/14/2020

Name of Persons Completing Application: Mona E. Faulkner, Superintendent in consultation with Jamie Perkins, Principal

Phone Number: Diocese Fresno Education Corporation, 559-488-7420
St. Rose-McCarthy Catholic School: 559-584-5218

Email: Mona E. Faulkner, Superintendent: mfaulkner@dioceseoffresno.org
Jamie Perkins, Principal: jperkins@strosemccarthy.com

Principal Signature: Jamie M. Perkins

Date: 2 September 2020

Superintendent Signature: _____

Date: _____

I. Consultation

Please confirm consultation with the following groups:

☐ Labor Organization(s)

Name of Organization(s) and Date(s) Consulted:

- If no labor organization represents staff at the school, please describe the process for consultation with school staff:

As of late July, 100% of the teachers at St. Rose-McCarthy stated that they were ready to return to teaching face to face onsite. Also, in mid-July each staff member was given an Intent to Return Form (see attached). If the employee stated that he or she did not intend to return in person, the person contacted the Diocesan Health Officer in the HR department. The health officer determined what accommodations needed to be made, if any, for the employee to remain employed by the school.

Parent and Community Organizations Name of Organization(s) and Date(s) Consulted:

Parents were surveyed in late July and 86% indicated that they wanted their children to return in person to St. Rose. All plans for reopening were shared with the School Advisory Board as well.

There are no community agencies using the St. Rose-McCarthy school facility.

II. Elementary School Reopening Plans-See Appendix A Reopening Guidelines

☒ **Cleaning and Disinfection:** How shared surfaces will be regularly cleaned and disinfected and how use of shared items will be minimized.

After known or suspected illness, areas used by effected person will be closed off for 24 hours (or as long as is practical) before cleaning and disinfecting. SRM's cleaning and disinfection protocols will be updated in accordance with

"https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019ncov/community/pdf/Reopening_America_Guidance.pdf"

CDC Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting in Schools. If possible, we will use EPA-listed asthma-safer cleaning supplies with ingredients such as hydrogen peroxide, citric or lactic acid, which do not exacerbate asthma.

EPA List N: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>

Disinfecting of each classroom will be completed during lunch hour and every evening; including the use of foggers as well as approved disinfectants. Each student will have his or her own cover for the keyboard in the computer lab. Each student will have his or her own Chromebook in order to access technology on campus. Chromebooks will not be shared among students and will be collected and sanitized each afternoon. No supplies will be provided by the school. Students will keep the same desk, in the same classroom throughout the day. School office is wiped down after each person is served.

☒ **Cohorting:** How students will be kept in small, stable, groups with fixed membership that stay together for all activities (e.g., instruction, lunch, recess) and minimize/avoid

contact with other groups or individuals who are not part of the cohort.

The 7-8th blended classroom of 13 students will remain in one classroom with one teacher and act as a self-contained class. Any other middle school subject specific teachers, such as math, religion, and science, will instruct 7th-8th graders through the use of Zoom. The 7-8th cohort will be assigned one area of the playground as well as a specific place at lunch and will not have contact with the K-6 students. The campus playgrounds are separated into three zones in order for students to socially distance and have their own play area, maintaining 6 feet apart (see attached). Classroom desks and outdoor cafeteria tables may be used for student lunch time. All desks and tables are six feet apart and students will face the same direction while eating their lunch. Students will eat together in their cohort outside and distanced if the outside temperature is below 90 degrees. Recess will include 6 feet of distancing outdoors.

☒ **Entrance, Egress, and Movement Within the School:** How movement of students, staff, and parents will be managed to avoid close contact and/or mixing of cohorts.

Specific plans (see attached) have been provided to parents and guardians for drop off and pick up procedures. Students will go directly to their parent's vehicle. Parents remain in the vehicle and do not transport any child/ren but their own. There are no plans for volunteers to be on campus. All meetings, including faculty and staff meetings will be through Zoom calls. Arrows have been placed on walkways helping the children remain as distant as possible going from classroom to outside or to parent pick up.

☒ **Face Coverings and Other Essential Protective Gear:** How CDPH's face covering requirements will be satisfied and enforced.

Face covers are required of all students, grades K-8 at all times while on campus except for lunch and recess. Faculty, staff and students are provided with disposable masks if they don't arrive wearing one. Employee taking staff members temperatures as they arrive at school will wear a mask, shield and gloves. Teachers will also be provided with shield with their mask for taking student temperatures.

☒ **Health Screenings for Students and Staff:** How students and staff will be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 and how ill students or staff will be separated from others and sent home immediately.

Each staff member must fill out a questionnaire, (see attached) stating that he or she has not been in contact with anyone testing positive for the virus. Any symptom must be declared on that form and the employee is sent home and must be cleared by a physician before returning. If a child displays any symptoms related to the virus or is in any way unwell, the child is isolated in a separate room and the parents are called to pick up the child immediately. The child cannot return until cleared by a physician.

☒ **Healthy Hygiene Practices:** The availability of handwashing stations and hand sanitizer, and how their use will be promoted and incorporated into routines.

St. Rose-McCarthy has fresh filtered bottled water stations in each classroom. Each student fills his or her water bottle to drink during the day. The water stations are disinfected after every use. Hand sanitizer is positioned at every entrance and in the school office and in each classroom. Students will be

taught the proper way to wash hands and the area will be sanitized after every use. Touchless water faucets, soap dispensers, and paper towel holders have been installed in all student restrooms. A new procedure for monitoring the student restrooms has been developed to ensure that no more than four students are in the restroom at one time. Outdoor drinking faucets will be converted to additional handwashing stations.

☒ Identification and Tracing of Contacts: Actions that staff will take when there is a confirmed case. Confirm that the school(s) have designated staff persons to support contact tracing, such as creation and submission of lists of exposed students and staff to the local health department and notification of exposed persons. Each school must designate a person for the local health department to contact about COVID-19.

We have a parent who volunteers to serve as our school nurse. She is a school nurse and has received extensive training in contact tracing and will assist the principal with the contact tracing process. SRM will use the symptomatic student and positive case templates provided by KCDPH to ensure close contacts are easily identified and promptly notified (see attached). The principal will notify local health officials and the Office of Catholic Education (OCE) and will use the communication templates provided by the Kings County Office of Public Health. St. Rose-McCarthy will work with the local health officials to determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.

☒ Physical Distancing: How space and routines will be arranged to allow for physical distancing of students and staff.

Tape, adhesive stickers, and markers will indicate the 6 feet of distance that must be maintained in the office and waiting in lines. All desks have been arranged in each classroom observing the 6 feet of social distancing. Staff members observe distancing in all shared spaces such as teacher work rooms and in hallways. Only one staff member at a time is allowed in the work room. As one teacher enters the work room, he/she will close the door. Upon leaving, the staff member will spray the room with disinfecting spray to prepare for the next staff member. If teachers need to speak to one another, they should be outside and 6 feet apart rather than going into each other's classrooms. No small group tables are used in the classroom. Groupings are done by physically moving desks. No shared desks are ever used.

☒ Staff Training and Family Education: How staff will be trained, and families will be educated on the application and enforcement of the plan.

All staff members are trained prior to the opening of school. The Office of Education provided all schools with a training PowerPoint presentation (see attached) that was required of all employees. St. Rose-McCarthy employees spent two days reviewing the COVID-19 PowerPoint presentations and discussed the safety precautions needed in order to return to school. We staged a "Day in the Life" of a student and walked through each protocol, from drop-off in the morning through pick-up in the afternoon. The school principal has shared lots of resources with parents and many of these resources may be found on our COVID page on the school's website - <https://www.strosemccarthy.com/covid.html> Parents also signed an agreement stating that they accept and agree to comply with all safety measures taken by the school, (see attached). Family education is currently taking place using Zoom meetings and through email. Emails to parents outline the new safety protocols required when they are on campus for any reason. The Zoom meetings conducted by teachers and the principal review these new guidelines and allow parents to understand the safety procedures and practices developed to keep their child(ren) safe while at school.

☒ **Testing of Students and Staff:** How school officials will ensure that students and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 will be rapidly tested and what instructions they will be given while waiting for test results. Describe how staff will be tested periodically to detect asymptomatic infections.

Any student or staff member who has any symptoms of the virus or reports that they have been exposed will be sent home immediately or if notified by phone, will not be allowed to come on campus until the results of a COVID test are complete. An employee shares his or her results with the Diocesan Health Officer and then the principal is notified if the employee is safe to return. Parents must have a letter from a qualified physician stating that the child is safe to return to school. That letter must be shared with the school principal before the child is allowed back to school. We have a very small faculty of ten certificated teachers/administrators and seven classified part-time employees. We will test 50% of our employees each month and rotate these two groups of staff members being tested over time. Under the CARES Act, Covid-19 testing is covered by the Diocesan Health Plan with no cost to the individual being tested.

☒ **Triggers for Switching to Distance Learning:** The criteria the superintendent will use to determine when to physically close the school and prohibit in-person instruction.

The Office of Catholic Education will close St. Rose-McCarthy if 25% or more of the Catholic schools in Kings County have closed due to COVID-19 within 14 days, and in consultation with the local public health department. St. Rose-McCarthy may typically reopen after 14 days, in consultation with the local public health department provided a thorough cleaning and disinfection regimen has been completed. Public health has been consulted and done their investigation of the outbreak.

☒ **Communication Plans:** How the superintendent will communicate with students, staff, and parents about cases and exposures at the school, consistent with privacy requirements such as FERPA and HIPAA.

The Superintendent will send a letter to all parents explaining the cases and exposure without releasing any names (see attached). In case of an emergency, St. Rose-McCarthy faculty have many ways to reach our parents & guardians very quickly. We are a small school with only 12 families who have a 7th or 8th grade child enrolled and we are in close contact frequently. The Administrative Assistant to the Principal is able to email, send a text alert through our attendance accounting system, or broadcast a telephone message within a matter of seconds. We also have a very strong social media platform and parents respond very quickly via Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/strosemccarthy/> and Instagram, and through the SRM News. In the event of a COVID case on campus, all individuals' names will be confidential in communications. All protocols listed on the Diocese Re-Opening Guidelines document and the CDC guidelines will be followed.

The Kings County Department of Public Health COVID-19 information may be found on the school's website - <https://www.strosemccarthy.com/covid.html> . Parents have been provided with a list of testing centers in Kings County (see attached).

Additional Comments:

St. Rose-McCarthy School continues to prepare for re-opening. Sliding glass barriers protect office staff

and minimize their contact with parents and office visitors. A sick room has been set up and disinfected in the event of a sick child. This sick room is an isolated room, away from other students. Chairs have been removed from the front office area to ensure that visitors do not linger in the office. Cones and temporary fencing outline the playground zones for students to play during recess and PE periods. PPE's, disinfectant, hand sanitizer, Lysol spray & wipes, single use masks, gloves and shields are on hand in every classroom for teacher use.

Over 60% of the St. Rose-McCarthy parents are deemed essential workers and are in dire need of in person learning and before- and/or after-school care for their children. Our school is tuition-based and distance learning poses a financial hardship on our parents who must go to work and now they have to pay for full time child care in addition to tuition. Also, parents and faculty have expressed deep concern for our students social and emotional well-being. When the schools had to close from March 16th through the end of the last school year, we had several months to be together, get to know one another, and make solid friendships and relationships. Now we are starting over. Students have a different teacher, some of their friends have had to leave our school due to financial constraints, while other students, new to St. Rose-McCarthy have enrolled and joined our school family. It's difficult to make strong personal connections in a Zoom meeting. Many of our students suffered from anxiety, loneliness, and depression when we had to close last spring. It's not easy for parents either, even the parents who are stay-at-home parents or now have to work from home. We have families who have up to five and six kids at home! Imagine trying to meet all of their needs, ranging from infant to teen.

We are blessed with an amazing school facility. Our classrooms are huge. We can place up to 22 student desks in a room, 6 feet apart, and our 7th-8th class has only 13 students enrolled. We have two very large playgrounds and ample space for three classroom cohorts utilizing the playgrounds, each of which may be divided into three different zones. The outdoor lunch tables may be used for classes to eat lunch and there is plenty of space to keep students 6 feet apart and stagger the lunch periods. Tables and benches will be sanitized between use. (see attached photos)

We are so grateful to have been granted the approval of our K-6 waiver and we are simply requesting you consider our unique situation and allow us to bring back our 7th-8th grade students who feel that the best thing for their child is to attend school, here with their teacher. If the 7th-8th graders are not allowed to return to school with their siblings on September 14th it will present a hardship to our families who have to work outside the home and do not want to leave their child home alone all day. Those who may prefer distance learning will still have that option.

Thank you and God Bless you.