

RETURN-TO-SCHOOL PLAN FOR PARENTS

*IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19
August 12, 2020*



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August 12, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope you and your loved ones are healthy, safe, and enjoying your summer. It is with great pride that we share this school reopening plan with you in an effort to provide a detailed layout of the policies, protocols, and procedures for the 2020-2021 school year. The circumstances we have all found ourselves in this year are not anything any of us could have imagined even six months ago, however, I believe all of us can emerge stronger if we continue to work together for everyone's safety and best interest.

While summers are usually filled with camps, trips, and warm weather activities, it seems as though we have been consumed with the 'right thing to do' in service to our students, their families, and our school staff. We have been getting used to wearing masks, practicing social distancing with others, and truly experiencing some level of fear in the uncertainty of this pandemic. I would like to assure parents that while school may look and operate differently, our commitment to our students has remained a constant. Every decision on every level of planning has been focused on the overall health, safety, and well-being of our students, their families, and our staff members.

I am confident in the collaborative process used to create this reopening plan, and comforted by the ways in which we have balanced health and safety with what is academically, behaviorally, socially, and emotionally best for our students. The plan was developed with the dedication and commitment of our staff members from every level, the Archdiocese of Newark, and you the parents. As I have always said, I encourage and appreciate your notes to me expressing your ideas, your concerns, and your fears.

As you can imagine, the plan has taken a tremendous amount of time, effort, and collaboration, and I thank each and every one involved for their hard work and support. The days ahead are still uncertain, and we will be tasked with responding to circumstances as they change and evolve. Let's be prepared to pivot, rethink, and perhaps even rework aspects of the plan as necessary so that we may continue to provide an excellent academic experience to our students.

I ask for your continued participation and ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in this process as we move ahead and look forward to the day when we can say 'remember when.....'.

Sincerely,

Bernadette Miglin
Principal

INTRODUCTION

This plan has been created to aid in navigating the reestablishment of our school where employees, students, and families feel safe and to reduce the impact of COVID-19 conditions upon returning to the school. The guidelines referenced in this plan are based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), and the State of New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) *The Road Back*. Regular updates will be made to this plan based on information provided by the CDC, WHO, and applicable federal, state and local agencies.

SOURCES:

CDC - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html#anchor_1589931942037

NJDOE - <https://www.nj.gov/education/reopening/NJDOETheRoadBack.pdf>

PRINCIPAL PRINCIPLES, LLC, STEPHANIE MCCONNELL, - <http://www.principalprinciples.net>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1. Are face coverings required for staff, students, and visitors in school facilities?

Yes. All staff, students, and visitors are required to wear face coverings except in highly unusual circumstances with the (advance) permission of the schools office of the Archdiocese of Newark. *PLEASE PRACTICE WEARING FACE MASKS BEFORE SEPTEMBER.*

2. Are students required to wear face coverings during specials/electives such as music or physical education?

Yes unless the class takes place outside the building and a physical distance of six feet apart can be maintained students will wear face masks for the protection of all.

3. Who is responsible for supplying face coverings and other supplies to staff and students?

The student (family) is responsible for ensuring that children attending In Person classes arrives with a mask meeting the requirements outlined below (Mask Wearing). Students with improper masks will have to go home and return with the proper mask. It is recommended that students carry a backup mask should their mask become damaged or soiled. There are no exceptions to the 'Mask Wearing' policy outlined below.

4. Can staff and/or students wear face shields instead of face coverings?

Currently, the CDC does not recommend use of face shields as a substitute for face coverings. Therefore face shields without masks are discouraged, and a special application to the principal is required.

5. Should students, staff, or others who have been tested for COVID-19 attend or visit school while they await test results?

No. Anyone who is sick must stay home from school.

6. If a student who has been at school is identified as having COVID, does the entire class have to be quarantined for 14 days?

As provided in CDC guidance, if individuals have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, meaning they are within 6 feet of someone for at least ten minutes, they should self-quarantine for 14 days from the date of last exposure before returning to school. In the case of a positive COVID test, the Jersey City Health Department will conduct contact tracing to determine whether or not an individual has been in close contact with a student and advise any affected individuals, via trained contact tracers, to self-quarantine for 14 days.

7. How will the classrooms be set up for social distancing?

Each classroom has been set up with a maximum of 12 seats to allow for social distancing. In addition, the aisles in between the rows of desks will contain clear plastic barriers to allow for extra student-student protection.

8. How does the Distance Learning Option work?

Teachers will post the Daily Schedule on the appropriate Google Classroom homepage. Students will login at 8:00 to the 1st class on the schedule and participate from home via Zoom conference. As students rotate through the daily schedule, the appropriate teacher (homeroom, gym, music, Spanish, art, etc.) will conduct all lessons on-line. Some lessons

may also be recorded and posted on the Google Classroom homepage for those parents who need to see the lessons later in the day.

9. How is the Distance Learning Option for fall/2020 different from the spring/2020 Distance Learning Model?

The fall/2020 Distance Learning Model will include lessons live streamed to students at home from 8:00 am to approximately 2:30 pm. Breaks will occur throughout the day for hand washing, lunch periods outside the classroom, or other non-instructional time as indicated by each classroom teacher.

10. When do I have to make my choice between Distance Learning and In Person learning?

Parents must notify the school no later than Monday, August 17th about their choice of program. For parents not making a selection, students will be placed in Distance Learning Model.

11. What happens if all 12 In Person seats are taken for a particular grade?

The students over a count of 12 will have to be enrolled in Distance Learning until the end of the 1st Trimester when parents are allowed to request a change to enrollment.

12. Can I change my selection?

Students may not rotate between In Person and Distance Learning. At the end of the 1st Trimester, the selection may be changed based on whether or not there is room in the classroom. Should a child not be able to wear a face mask continuously, parents may be asked to switch to a Distance Learning Model to ensure that the child is able to focus on learning and for their comfort both physical and psychological.

13. How has the physical building been modified for COVID19?

There have been many modifications to the building to allow for social distancing. For example, there are one way stairways so that students do not cross paths going in opposite directions. Students will no longer bring messages to the office. 'Mailboxes' have been installed outside each classroom where office personnel can pick up messages throughout the day. Hand sanitizing stations have been placed in all entrances and outside the restroom doors. Restroom doors have been fitted with Step'n Pull devices to allow for door opening using your shoe. Extra shelves, desks, and tables have been removed from classrooms to the extent possible to allow for efficient daily cleaning. Fans have been installed in all classrooms so that the air is exhausted continuously throughout the day. Most classrooms will contain plastic barriers between rows of desks to add another layer of protection between students. The lunchroom will be reserved for three classes only for the 1st Trimester while other classes eat lunch in their homeroom: these assignments will be rotated throughout the year. Signage has been placed throughout the buildings to remind students and staff about social distancing and hand washing.

14. What will I see as I approach the Main Entrance on the first day of school?

Students may not enter the building until 7:30. This is because the Morning Meeting will no longer be held in the gym. Students will proceed directly to their classrooms where the Morning Meeting will be held over the P.A. system. There are two established entrances for students:

Main Entrance: Grades 4 to 8

Aftercare Entrance: Grades PK to 3

There will be a temperature check at each entrance beginning at 7:30. Students arriving at school who are screened with a temperature greater than or equal to 100.0°F will be returned to parents. A second temperature check will be done mid-morning. Students will proceed directly to their classrooms where teachers will be waiting to begin the day.

Late Arrivals: Especially given these circumstances, arriving late at school is discouraged as it presents a disruption in the smooth flow of the day. Please do everything you can to arrive between **7:30 and 7:55** when the doors will be closed.

The gym uniform (with sneakers) will be worn EACH DAY for In Person Learning so that parents can wash it each night to reduce contamination. No jumpers or skirts for girls or shirt and tie for boys this year. Let's be safe and keep everything as clean as possible.

15. How will dismissal be done?

- *Students in PK to Grade 3* will be dismissed from the school gym (one at a time) to the ramp by the church parking lot beginning at 2:30. To the extent possible, parents are asked to avoid congregating at the bottom of the ramp and to assist in the social distancing effort.
- *Students in Grades 4-8* will be dismissed at the Ferry Street doors from 2:45 – 3:00. To the extent possible, parents are asked to avoid congregating on the sidewalk and to assist in the social distancing effort.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE REOPENING PLAN

In order to ensure the continued well-being of our employees and students, the following guiding principles have been put in place:

1. EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT SAFETY MEASURES
2. HEALTH GUIDELINES
3. SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

PHASES AND TIMELINES

Information and direction about the phases and timeline will be sent to all employees and parents before implementation. Please see below for a summary of the phases and timelines.

Phase	Timing	Items
Planning	July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplies, equipment • Prepare detailed work schedule for phases • Prepare building for reopen with thorough cleaning
Phase 1	August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement social distancing protocol and open facilities with limited access/use
Phase 2	August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand use of school based on recommendations and data from CDC, NJDOH, New Jersey Governor, and applicable state and local agencies
+Phase 3	September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open school • Expand full operation based on recommendations and data from CDC, NJDOH, New Jersey Governor, and applicable local and state agencies • Determine what restrictions/guidelines stay in place

VISITOR RESTRICTIONS

St. Nicholas School will not allow normal visitation to our campuses until reopen date. Only St. Nicholas School staff is allowed on campus during preparation for reopen.

Once school begins in September, visitors and volunteers will not be permitted to enter the school building until further notice and guidance from CDC or state government. Fewer people entering the school building allows for greater implementation of safety measures.

This will result in changes in our New Parent Orientation and Back to School events typically held in the school gym, but now planned as Zoom events. Check school calendar:

www.snsjc.com Scroll to bottom of page for updated calendar

HEALTH PROTOCOL AND SCREENINGS (EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT)

Schools are required to adopt a policy for screening students and employees upon arrival for symptoms and history of exposure. Each parent/guardian should conduct a health screening prior to arriving at school each day. A parent waiver will be provided to each family requiring them to check their child for symptoms and temperature daily prior to going to school.

The school has chosen to do a visual screening and temperature check upon entering the school building and mid-morning for students and staff.

The school's policies for screening include the following:

Staff must visually check students for symptoms upon arrival every day and/or confirm with families that students are free of COVID-19 symptoms (via waiver).

COVID-19 symptoms including:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
- Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19

All screening information is kept confidential by the school staff and nurse.

If a student comes to school with any of the above symptoms, they are refused admittance to school. Should a child present with any of these symptoms later in the day, the student will be isolated and the parent or emergency contact will have to pick up the student immediately. A doctor's note and/or a negative COVID-19 test is required for a return to In Person Learning.

Mask Wearing:

Masks are required to be worn for all teachers and students from PK3 to 8th grade during arrival and dismissal, including while exiting a vehicle.

- For comfort, familiarity and ease of use, students should provide their own face coverings and, have an extra with their belongings.
- Mask designs (if any) must be neutral and not distract from the purpose of education or the teachings of the Catholic Church.

- The CDC recommends the use of a cloth face mask.
- Masks must cover nose, mouth, and chin and not be loose or hanging.
- Masks may not have holes or tears or obvious defects.
- One-way valve masks are strictly prohibited. These masks permit exhaled air to pass unfiltered and do not sufficiently mitigate the risk of infection.
- Schools will have extra masks on hand in the event that a student or staff member does not have a covering or if the covering breaks or becomes unusable.
- Visitors must bring their own mask or face covering.
- Visitors may be denied access to the school building or environs (if students or staff are present) if they do not utilize a face covering or if they have an insufficient or prohibited face covering (e.g. one valve mask).
- Visitors who have an underlying health condition should contact the building principal at least 24 hours prior to visiting the school in a non-emergency situation to discuss if an accommodation may be made.
- Parents/guardians/caretakers are expected to wear a mask during pick up and drop off if they do not remain in their vehicle.
- Mask breaks will be given to students when outside the building. Teachers will determine the timing, frequency and appropriateness of the breaks based on the needs of their students while ensuring the safety of the cohort.

Employees:

School staff is required to wear a face covering unless doing so would inhibit the individual’s health (see ‘Mask Wearing’ above under Health Screenings).

- If an employee becomes ill at work or if another person is exhibiting symptoms of COVID19 at work, they will be asked to leave work and go home or to the nearest health center.
- Employees returning to work from an approved medical leave should contact HR. You will be asked to submit a healthcare provider’s note before returning to work.
- If an employee has been diagnosed with COVID19, the school, Office of Schools, and local health department must be contacted. The health department will determine the next steps.

Students:

- Parents are encouraged to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick.
- Students are required to wear masks and are required to do so when social distancing cannot be maintained. (see ‘Mask Wearing’ above under Health Screenings).

AN APPLICATION TO THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK IS REQUIRED FOR STUDENTS WHO REQUEST IN PERSON ATTENDANCE WITHOUT A MASK. PARENTS SHOULD CONSIDER DISTANCE LEARNING IN THESE CASES.

- Student health checks must be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations.

- Results must be documented when signs/symptoms of COVID-19 are observed.
- Any screening policy must take into account students with disabilities and the accommodations that may be needed in the screening process for those students.
- The gym uniform will be worn for In Person Learning so that parents can wash it each night to reduce contamination.

Protocol for Symptomatic Staff and Students

The school has adopted procedures for symptomatic staff and students. Procedures include the following:

- Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others.
- Students should remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult which *must occur within the hour* for the protection of all concerned. *PLEASE be sure you have someone who can get to the school quickly.*
- Continuous monitoring of symptoms
- Follow current State of New Jersey Communicable Disease Service guidance for illness reporting - <https://www.nj.gov/health/>
- If the school becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in the school tests positive for COVID-19, school officials must immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.
- Adequate amount of personal protective equipment (PPE) available, accessible, and provided for use has been procured.

If an employee or student becomes ill on campus, he/she will immediately report to the **Nurse's Room** and a case form will be completed.

Once the employee or student arrives at the **Nurse's Room**, they will be immediately provided with a mask and gloves. This is to help protect other employees and students and prevent the potential spread of the virus.

- The nurse must call the local health authority and seek advice regarding transportation and location.
- The nurse and others attending the suspected infected person, should also wear a protective mask and gloves while working with the suspected infected person. If a mask is not tolerated by the child, staff should use a face covering and follow social distancing guidelines (6 ft. away).
- The nurse will direct the ill employee to leave work or call the parent of the student to be picked up and go home.
- The nurse and principal must identify persons who may have come in contact with the suspected infected person. *Unless required by the local health authority, the name of the employee should not be provided.*
- Advise employees that they may have been in contact with a suspected employee and to carry out self-screening every morning, and based on the results, contact the HR department.

- The isolation area and suspected employee's or student's work area/classroom must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, in addition to all other common surfaces recently touched by the employee or student.

When an individual tests positive for COVID-19, the school will immediately notify the Jersey City health officials, staff and families of a possible or confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.

We are prepared to provide the following information when consulting public health:

- The identity of the person with COVID-19 or probable COVID-19 (i.e. staff, child in care, household contact).
- The date the person with COVID-19 or probable COVID-19 was last in the building
- The date the person developed symptoms.
- Types of interactions the person may have had with other persons in the building or in other locations.
- How long their interactions were with other persons in the building.
- If other persons in the program have developed any symptoms; and
- Any other information to assist with the determination of next steps.

Readmittance Procedures After Recovery From COVID:

Readmittance procedures for students and employees to school after recovering from COVID-19 will be established in conjunction with the school nurse under guidance from the Jersey City Department of Health.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing is an effective way to prevent potential infection. St. Nicholas School employees, students, parents, and visitors should practice staying approximately 6 feet away from others and eliminating contact with others. All signage regarding traffic flow and safety that is posted in the building MUST be followed – every time. Age-appropriate consequences and responses to non-compliance will be followed. See Parent/Student Handbook posted on www.snsjc.com

- St. Nicholas will allow for social distancing within the classroom to the maximum extent practicable. This will be achieved by ensuring students are seated at least 6 feet apart and considering the flow of student traffic around the room. Social distancing guidance will support a 3-foot radius around each student desk (from the center), resulting in a 6 foot total distance between any two students.
- If this physical distance is not possible, additional modifications will be in place. These include using physical barriers and turning desks to face the same direction (rather than facing each other) or having students sit on only one side of the table, spaced apart.
- Traffic Flow – Signage will be posted on the hallways walls and doors to mark the walking direction in order to maintain the social distancing requirement of 6 feet
- Classroom windows will be opened to allow for greater air circulation. Exhaust fans have been installed in the window frames of all classrooms. Fans will exhaust

classroom air continuously through the school day because we know that indoor environments with re-circulated air are the riskiest of environments for COVID-19 spread.

- Ad-hoc Interactions/Gatherings – Non-essential/informal meetings and visiting will be avoided. This included parent meetings, HSA meetings, back-to-school, etc. Please refer to the school schedule at www.snsjc.com for the complete school schedule now to be conducted on-line.
- A new Dismissal Schedule will be adopted to allow for socially distanced school dismissal. Please look for guidance from your child's classroom teacher.
- Shorter academic periods may be necessary to accommodate cohort hand washing schedules and timed release into the hallway for travel to gym or lunchroom.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

In order to minimize exposure to COVID-19, PPE may be needed to prevent certain exposures. PPE can include:

Masks: Face masks are an important part of employee protection, as well as personal hygiene, social distancing, and frequent cleaning efforts. (see 'Mask Wearing' above under Health Screenings). School staff is required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health.

Students are required to wear face masks as part of the in person attendance policy. (see 'Mask Wearing' above under Health Screenings).

AN APPLICATION TO THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK IS REQUIRED FOR STUDENTS WHO REQUEST IN PERSON ATTENDANCE WITHOUT A MASK. PARENTS SHOULD CONSIDER DISTANCE LEARNING IN THESE CASES.

Gloves: Touching your face with contaminated hands, whether gloved or not, poses a significant risk of infection. Wearing gloves does not diminish the need to wash your hands. Please remember to wash your hands properly as it is the number-one defense against any virus. Additionally, the proper removal of gloves reduces the risk of being exposed to contamination.

Please note that social distancing should still be practiced even with the use of gloves and masks.

In addition to using PPE, please remember to:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow

CLASSROOM AND COMMON SPACES

All teachers and students are asked not to visit another classroom outside of their team or grade level. Employees are requested to disinfect their own personal workspace (teacher desk, phone, etc) throughout the day, giving special attention to commonly touched surfaces.

Classrooms:

- There should be a 6 foot separation of desks and children. If the 6 foot separation is not feasible (considering the size of the room and number of students per class), students are required to wear masks and desk guards will be installed at desks. Desks will be turned to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other) or have students sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart.

- **To the extent possible, students do not change classes or leave their rooms.** Cohorts are established to include the same group of children each day to allow for minimal disruption when illness is discovered in a cohort. **Where possible, teachers will change classrooms, with students staying in the same classroom.** For all grade levels: Students will be directed under the supervision of the teacher to clean their personal space (including desks, cubby etc.). This includes students using approved cleaning products to wipe down desks when leaving the classroom and arriving in the classroom.
- Larger rooms (i.e. auditorium, cafeteria, gym) can be used as classrooms to allow for social distancing if necessary.
- Allow minimal mixing between groups/cohorts.
- Allow outdoor classrooms where possible and when seasonally appropriate.
- Provide hand sanitizer in every classroom, in accordance with CDC guidelines.
- All classrooms will be continuously ventilated with window-mounted fans.

School Entrances, hallways, and common spaces:

- Students are expected to arrive between 7:30 – 7:45 at the following entrances:
 - The Main Entrance will be utilized for students in Grades 4-8.
 - The Aftercare door is the new entrance for students in grades PK3 to grade 3.
- There will be **NO** morning meeting in the gym. Students will travel directly to the classrooms and the morning meeting will take place on the school P.A. system.
- A health screening will be conducted for each student each day at their assigned entrance and a second screening midmorning.
- When a teacher is concerned that a student requires attention for health reasons after entering the classroom, they will notify the school office so that an adult is waiting for the child either at the Nurse’s Room or the school office.
- Students are required to social distance when entering or exiting building. The use of masks is required (see ‘Mask Wearing’ above under Health Screenings). Physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on walls, to help ensure that staff and students remain at least 6 feet apart in lines and at other times is used.
- One way stairwells will be established through signage. All MUST follow.
- All must maintain social distancing in hallways and common areas.
- Non-essential interactions between students and staff will be minimized throughout the school day.
- Student cohorts are established by class as an effective strategy to limit exposure and contact.
- Strict limit of commingling between classes or other groups of students.
- No large group gatherings are allowed in the building for any reason.
- Hand sanitizer at school entrances and outside all bathrooms, lunchroom, and aftercare will be provided.
- Signage around school buildings to provide hygiene advice, social distancing, and traffic direction and reminders will be posted.
- Increased frequency of cleaning all surfaces, including high touch surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, etc.
- Teachers will limit the number of students in the hallway at the same time by staggering release from classrooms.

- When necessary, physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least 6 feet apart (e.g., reception desks) will be utilized.

Other Considerations:

- A policy of 'No Shared Supplies or Equipment' will be implemented in all classrooms to avoid contamination between students.
- Adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high touch materials such as crayons, scissors, dry erase markers, etc. will be procured. Each student will have their own materials contained in pencil boxes.
- Electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids, will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before storage for the next use.
- Each child's belongings will be kept separate from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
- Cellphones will be placed in hanging pocket organizers in each classroom.
- Added time will be scheduled to lunch and recess periods to ensure students have time to wash their hands.
- The practice of hand washing throughout the day and during transition times will be added to the daily schedule. Schedules will be established for each class/cohort to wash and sanitize hands.

FACILITIES CLEANING

The safety of our employees and students are our first priority. Upon reopening, our school has been completely cleaned and disinfected and we will continue to adhere to all necessary safety precautions. In addition to the cleaning of the office and school before employees and students return, the cleaning steps outlined below are to be taken to disinfect workplace surfaces, chairs, tables, etc. to protect employees and reduce the risk of spread of infection. Employees follow the frequency stated below. Additional deep cleaning is triggered when an active employee or student is identified as positive for COVID 19 based on testing.

GENERAL DISINFECTION MEASURES

Category	Area	Frequency
Workspaces	Classrooms, Offices	At the end of each use/day
Appliances	Refrigerators, Microwaves, Coffee Machines	Daily
Electronic Equipment	Copier machines, Shared computer monitors, TV's, Telephones, keyboards	At the end of each use/day and/or between use
General Used Objects	Handles, light switches, sinks, restrooms	Several times a day
Common Areas	Cafeteria, Library, Faculty Room, Gym, Tech Lab, Common Areas	At the end of each use/day; between groups

Prepare and maintain hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol):

- In each classroom (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).
- At entrances and exits of buildings.
- Near lunchrooms and toilets.
- Children ages 5 and younger should be supervised when using hand sanitizer.
- Students should wash hands for at least 20 seconds at regular intervals, including before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing. Use of paper towels when touching faucets in bathrooms is recommended. For younger children, supervising adult can leave water running between students to avoid excessive touching of faucet handles.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) if washing with soap and water is not possible.

For Early Childhood programs, when possible:

- Keep children six feet apart during nap time (sleeping cots are oriented head to foot), when eating, and doing other activities.
- No close group learning activities like reading circles.
- Times on the schedule will be designated to take students out of the classroom to wash hands with soap and water, including, at a minimum:
 - at the start of the day when children enter the classroom
 - before snacks and lunch
 - after using the toilet or helping a child use a toilet
 - after sneezing, wiping, and blowing noses
 - after snacks and lunch, particularly if hands are sticky, greasy or soiled
 - when students come in from outdoor play or recess

In limited cases, hand hygiene with an alcohol-based sanitizer or alcohol-based wipes, when there is no visible soiling of hands, are alternatives to hand washing with soap and water by children over 24 months of age, under the supervision of the teacher. The CDC recommends an alcohol-based sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol and to rub the product over all surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry, about 20 seconds, then wash hands with soap and water as soon as possible.

EXAMPLES OF SIGNAGE

Examples of signage placed throughout the offices and school.



FOOD DELIVERY

Students: Bringing or sharing refreshments is prohibited in order to limit the risk of contamination.

Snack items, candy, and drinks will not be provided until further notice (with the exception of grab and go snack and lunch).

This includes the suspension of birthday celebration snacks or other snacks typically shared in the past. No food is to be brought into the building for sharing.

RESTROOM USAGE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

The school will post the maximum capacity sign on the door.

A class/cohort schedule for hand washing and classroom attendance will be posted.

All restrooms with doors have been equipped with 'Step'N Pull' devices that allow for door opening with the shoe. Door handles are covered with pictures showing the use of the foot device. Students will be shown how to use the new devices designed to reduce cross-contamination between students.

RECESS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Recess will continue to be staggered. If two or more groups are participating in recess at the same time, they will have at least 6 feet of open space between them.
- Cones, flags, tape, or other signs will create boundaries between groups.
- Hand washing will occur immediately after outdoor playtime.
- Students are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing and safe footwear to school that allows for safe movement and is appropriate for the weather in order to participate in physical education.
- In order to mitigate risk of direct contact with equipment (lessons with no equipment and no sharing of equipment such as fitness classes will be allowed).
- Continued designation of specific areas for each class during recess to avoid cohort mixing.
- Physical education activities will focus on personal fitness without the use of equipment and socially-distanced games.

VISITORS ON CAMPUS

Until further notice there will be no visitors allowed on campus. The drop off table inside the Main Entrance is to be used for all deliveries and for pickup of materials (when necessary). Appointments will continue to be required in order to gain access to the building. The mask policy (see 'Mask Wearing' above under Health Screenings) will be strictly enforced. Zoom meetings will be the norm, and in person meetings would be for exceptional circumstances.

CAFETERIA AND MEAL PERIODS

St. Nicholas School will participate in the National School Lunch Program for the 2020-2021 school year. Parents will continue to follow existing policies for payments for lunch in advance. Parents will receive information directly from the school in September about qualifying to receive meals at no-cost or reduced cost. Parents should complete the paperwork as soon as possible and return it to the main office.

The school will use assigned seats in the cafeteria for designated cohorts throughout the year. Three classes will be socially distanced in the lunchroom in September. Other classes will eat lunch in their classroom for the 1st Trimester to be rotated through the school year into the lunchroom.

If cafeterias or group dining areas are used:

- Tables are cleaned and sanitized between each meal service, pursuant to the protocols outlined here by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Students are spaced at least six feet apart.
- Individuals must wash their hands after removing their gloves or after directly handling used food service items.
- Students are served plated meals or meals in pre-packaged boxes or bags.

- Social distancing markers will be placed in the lunchroom so students know how to line up to receive their hot lunch.
- Students are never allowed to share food.
- Students must stay seated in lunchroom to avoid spread of germs.
- Disposable food service items (e.g., utensils, dishes) will continue to be used.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

To stay updated on the most current information:

1. Teachers, students, and parents need to check their email often.
2. Watch for weekly Principal's Communication Letter - Tuesdays
3. Visit the school website.
4. Follow our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/StNicholasSchoolJC/>
5. Check Google Classroom Grades PK3-8
6. Watch for instant messages using School Messenger System (did you Opt in?)

ACADEMICS AND HOME-BASED LEARNING

There are two considerations (Traditional In Person and Distance Learning) for returning to school, depending upon state and local health guidelines. Presently, the State of New Jersey is returning to a traditional face to face classroom instruction in September 2020. We are prepared to provide other models of instruction, such as Distance Learning Model.

Overview of Schedule

Instruction will occur five days a week.

For students who will attend school in-person:

7:30 Drop Off as follows: Grades PK-3 Enter at Aftercare Door
Grades 4-8 Enter at Main Entrance

TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE GRADES PK – 3

Note: Special Subjects (art, gym, music, Spanish, technology) are scheduled at differing times. Please see Google Classroom for details.

Grade PK	Instruction will be delivered via live stream:
	8:15 -- Morning Meeting
	8:30 -- 9:30 Academics
	9:45 -- Snack
	10:20-- 10:45 Academics
	11:00 -- lunch and naptime
	12:30- Individual student academics
	1:00 – Story online
	1:45 - Individual student academics
	2:15 – Pack-up for Dismissal

Grades K-3 Instruction will be delivered via live stream:
8:15 -- Morning Meeting
8:30 -- 9:45 Academics
10:00 Snack
10:20 -- 11:45 Academics
11:45 - lunch and recess
12:40- Story online
1:00 - math
1:45 - social studies/science/religion
2:15 – Pack-up for Dismissal

TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE GRADES 4-8

Instruction will be delivered via live-stream from 8:15 a.m.-2:30 following the regular school schedule. Teachers have schedules posted on Google Classroom and individual website pages.

Note: Special Subjects (art, gym, music, Spanish, technology) are scheduled at differing times. Please see Google Classroom for details.

Remote students will join Zoom via live stream to hear the instruction and see the learning visuals (e.g. charts, vocabulary lists, presentation slides and sample problems), and interact with teachers. Lessons may be recorded and posted by teachers on Google Classroom for the use of parents and students not available to watch live lessons.

An updated Acceptable Use Policy will be provided all families to outline the rules for Distance Learning, In Person Learning, and Acceptable Use of Technology along with the Parent and Student Learning Contracts. The Code of Conduct in the Parent and Student Handbook (posted on school website) will govern behavior both for Distance Learners and In-Person learners.

St. Nicholas School’s goal is to design flexible instructional plans that work best in both traditional face to face and remote environments. The following should be considered:

- Teachers will create year-long plans to facilitate more meaningful, interdisciplinary units that can be delivered face to face or remotely.
- Teachers will ensure all instructional experiences include modeling, guided instruction, collaborative work, and independent work rather than over-reliance on independent work during remote learning.
- Teachers will implement best practices in instruction to meet student needs and engagement. Teachers will maximize ‘active student learning’ in lesson planning to increase student engagement.
- Teachers will make adjustments to school-based services plans for students with disabilities to account for accommodations and modifications needed in a remote learning environment.
- Teachers use an “early warning system” to identify and intervene with students who may be exhibiting academic and/or behavioral concerns so that follow-up is timely.
- Teachers will develop a plan for benchmark screening and intervention delivery during face-to-face and remote learning so that the appropriate services are delivered.

In Person Learning – An In-Person Learning Agreement will be signed by the parent, the student, and the school to clearly articulate all considerations and conditions necessary for In Person attendance. These considerations include: the wearing of face masks (see 'Mask Wearing' above under Health Screenings), strictly following social distance guidelines, movement in the hallways and stairwells as directed by new signage, etc. Age-appropriate consequences for students who willfully disregard safety rules.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Students in kindergarten through 8th grade will follow the general education daily schedule. The daily schedule may be found in the Instructional Plan section of this plan and will be posted on the appropriate Google Classroom page.

Some important items to note as you read through the delivery of specialized education services to your child(ren):

- Individualized student schedules for related services are still in process and depend on a multitude of factors. As schedules become finalized, the appropriate member of the Non-Public Schools - Special Education Services team from the Jersey City Board of Education will share the details of your child(ren)'s schedule with you.
- Schedules require adjustment during the first few weeks of the school year due to a variety of factors including:
 - Assessments, outstanding plan reviews, etc.
 - Identifying appropriate cohorts and students and adjusting accordingly
- Speech Services – We are waiting for the Non-Public Schools – Special Education Services team to contact us about this year's services and schedules.
- ESL Services - We are waiting for the Non-Public Schools – Special Education Services team to contact us about this year's services and schedules.
- Counseling Services - We are waiting for the Non-Public Schools – Special Education Services team to contact us about this year's services and schedules.

We are mindful that change is difficult under the best of circumstances and will do everything possible to limit both the number of changes, scheduling of support sessions to the greatest benefit of students, and to provide a safe and supportive environment for your children.

GRADING AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

To receive credit for the courses for this school year students are expected to complete all assignments. The grading policy is located in the school handbook posted on school website.

DISTANCE LEARNING

In the event that the school has to close in 2020-2021, we will follow the guidelines below for receiving and returning student work.

The school will continue to use Google Classroom for grades PK3-8. Google Classroom is the preferred communication method for parents to be able to contact the classroom teachers.

The school will provide daily online virtual instruction for all students along with written work transmitted electronically through Google Classroom.

ONLINE INSTRUCTION

Zoom is our online component to deliver daily live and instruction from the classroom.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/AFTERCARE PROGRAMS

- Participants will adhere to all applicable social distancing requirements and hygiene protocol during any extracurricular activities.
- The use of technology and online resources will be maximized to continue some extra-curricular activities without additional person-to-person contact.
- Use of school facilities are restricted to school-sponsored extracurricular activities and groups, but kept to the absolute minimum. On-line meetings are the standard.
- The school's after care program is permitted and will adhere to social distancing and cleaning guidelines.
- New pre-registration forms will be instituted to reduce overcrowding in the aftercare program.
- The use of the cafeteria and school chapel are considered for short periods of time.
- Once the building is vacated no one may return until school reopens the next day.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Catholic schools have a two-fold charge: providing an education that is academically excellent and one that is deeply rooted in Catholic identity. There will be intentional Catholic values infused across all grade levels and all subject matter. Participation in liturgy and prayer will continue to be encouraged for both traditional face to face and remote settings. Service learning opportunities will remain a priority in our schools.