

St. Andrew Apostle School

Return to Learn-Initial Plan Summer 2020



Overview

St. Andrew Apostle School followed a “safety first” philosophy as we prepare to return to campus for the 2020-2021 academic school year. Since the spring, we have been working with the Archdiocese of Washington, COVID-19 task force and have also compiled a committee of the parish office, Father Mel, the advisory board, faculty, staff and a group of parents to review the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Maryland State Department of Health and Montgomery County Public Health and Human Services.

It is understandable that parents have a variety of perspectives on students returning to campus. We are making fact-based decisions about the return to campus. There is one article we would like to highlight for you, published by the CDC:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/reopening-schools.html>.

Our plan to return to campus was not taken lightly and we have spent countless hours planning to ensure that the safety and well-being of our students, faculty, staff, and families is the priority. St. Andrew’s summer camp, now in its sixth week, has helped us to prepare.

We recognize the public health situation is evolving, may change at any given time, and we are prepared to act on it. As such, this document is considered a draft and additional details will come as we get closer to the start of the academic school year. You can expect we will have a host of new policies, procedures, and protocols. The school will not operate as it has done in the past and we appreciate your patience as we work through these next few weeks.

Available Options

We will be asking all school families to decide on their first quarter learning modality in the coming weeks. We ask that you please first read this entire plan before deciding. Families will be asked to make a choice for the first quarter in a follow-up email. For logistical and safety purposes, it will be imperative that we have your selection by August 7, 2020. While at any time, families will be able to opt into the 100% virtual format, we will not be able to allow families to switch from virtual to an in-person format during the 1st quarter. As mentioned above, this is a high-level overview of the plan and additional details will come before the start of the school year.

- *Five days a week, in-school learning*
or
- *Five days a week, online learning*
or
- *Three days a week (Mon/Wed/Fri), in-school learning – Two days a week (Tues/Thurs), online learning*

Precautions, Preventative Measures & Preparation

We will be relying on all our families to be truthful and to comply with all health-related policies and procedures. Prevention is the key to any successful plan. While we are not in the business of monitoring personal liberties, we are asking for all of our families to be considerate of others and to assess how your action may potentially impact others. Families should consider delaying any travel to at-risk areas. We all need to cooperate to have a successful school year.

Health Screening

Each student, faculty and staff will be required to complete a daily health screening assessment prior to their arrival on campus. Additionally, each student will have their temperature checked before they are permitted to get out of their vehicles. All faculty and staff members will also participate in the same daily health assessment.

ADW Acknowledgement Form

All families will be required to read and sign the ADW acknowledgement form, which outlines best practices and accepted behaviors for returning to school, during this time of COVID-19. That form will be available prior to the start of school.

Cleaning Procedures

The common areas and restrooms will be cleaned multiple times per day. Hand hygiene will be emphasized and practiced throughout the day. A hydrostatic fogger was purchased to help with the sanitizing process.

Social Distancing

All classrooms will have extra furniture removed and desks are in the process of being placed apart. All desks will be facing in one direction within the classroom and staggered. Students will not be permitted to be in the hallway/common areas/restrooms, en masse. Hallway monitors have been assigned to help enforce social distancing. When possible, teachers will be utilizing outdoor areas for lunch and instruction. Visuals will be placed throughout the building as a reminder about social distancing. Students will be required to wear masks during entrance, exit, and at other times throughout the day.

Illness

Should a student fall ill during the school day, he/she will be directed to an isolation room, which is being set up within the building annex. A staff member will contact the parents/guardians and they will be required to pick-up their student immediately. Anyone with a fever above 100 degrees will need to leave the school grounds as soon as possible. Closer to the beginning of school, we will inform you of our new sick policies and procedures and protocols.

Academics

All students, regardless of chosen learning modality, will be held to the same academic standards and expected learning outcomes. Grades will be issued, on a quarterly basis, and progress reports will be available to junior high students. We will be utilizing *Google Classroom*, *Nearpod*, *Zoom* and *SchoolSpeak* for academic delivery and announcements. Our faculty may also adopt other e-learning methods, platforms and software. Lessons will be prescribed with solid due dates and faculty will communicate deadlines as appropriate.

In-School Learning

- All students will be assigned a homeroom and will stay in this room for the entire school day.
- Faculty/staff will be the ones to move from classroom to classroom.
- Faculty will be utilizing outside spaces as much as possible, including P.E., lunch and learning activities conducive to an outside environment.

The above protocols for in-school learning are similar to those used in a number of other countries which have successfully returned to in-school learning.

Remote Learning

- Online students are expected to move at the same pace as the in-school students.
- Videos of the day's lesson(s) will be posted to the online environment.
- Classwork, homework, and projects will be due as noted, at the same time as the in-school students in most cases.
- Students will need to ensure they have computer/technology equipment in order to meet the demands of the online environment.

Operations

General School Operations

- No visitors, including parents, will be permitted to enter the school.
- All faculty and staff will be trained on all new procedures and protocols. They have already been training and preparing their on-ground and online classrooms.
- Face masks will be worn by all faculty, staff and students upon entering/exiting and in the hallways.
- Students age 3 and up will need to wear masks indoors for the 1st quarter.
- Students must have their own school supplies and they will not be shared between students.
- All classrooms are being cleared of unnecessary furnishings to allow for desks to be spaced appropriately and for ease of frequent cleaning.
- Water fountains have been covered and a water bottle refill station has been installed. Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles, filled and ready for use.
- Students will not be permitted to share food/drinks.
- Whenever possible, lunch will be outside. If there is inclement weather, students will eat lunch in their classroom.
- Students will not attend daily public mass. There will be a daily virtual prayer service and classes will attend mass, in a socially distant manner, in small groups.
- Classes with a large number of on-ground students will be split to form smaller cohorts.
- We will continue to support our community through the “We Care Wednesday” food collection drive for Catholic Charities.

Morning Arrival

- Each student will have his/her temperature taken and health screening completed, in the car line, before they are permitted to set foot onto campus. Anyone with a temperature above 100 degrees will not be permitted on campus.
- Once cleared, students will enter directly, through the outside door, to their classroom.
- Students will hand sanitize/wash before proceeding to their desk.

Daily School Operations

- Students will not move from class to class; only faculty/staff will be moving
- Faculty will utilize outside time as much as possible (weather permitting) for lunch, instruction, recess, etc.
- When outside, students will not be permitted to mix with students from other classrooms.

Dismissal

- Students will dismiss in lines with social distancing.
- Families will be given a number, and students will be dismissed in order of the arrival of the car.
- Family numbers will be announced by microphone; students hearing their numbers will proceed to their cars.
- Dismissal is going to take longer at first and will require patience in the parking lot.

Summary

We know this is a very difficult decision for parents to make and every family has different circumstances. As previously stated, you will be receiving a follow-up email asking for your choice of learning modality which is due by August 7, 2020. Additionally, we are in the process of finalizing additional policy, procedure and protocols and will publish those as soon as possible.

Is school going to be the same? No, of course not, given the global pandemic. However, this presents an opportunity for us to continue to deliver the faith-based, high quality academic programming that you have come to expect from us.

I am drawn again to our mission statement:

St. Andrew Apostle Catholic School is dedicated to educating the whole child in a nurturing and challenging environment in partnership with parents and the parish community. Our faculty and staff provide students with opportunities to develop spiritually, intellectually, and morally, enlightened by the teachings of Christ. We strive to inspire our students to live with faith and integrity, to appreciate human dignity and diversity, and to share their unique gifts and talents in service to others.

It is our goal, that despite the circumstances, we will continue to live up to these high standards. I hope you are making the best of the summer, completing your required summer assignments (as appropriate) and looking forward to having a meaningful 2020-2021 school year! I continue to pray for all of you and those who are suffering.

With hope,

Ms. Susan Sheehan