

Dear Parents,

As promised, we want to keep you apprised of updates that will impact our 2020-2021 school year as they develop. As you may have heard, Governor DeWine released guidelines today for schools to follow in safely reopening for the 2020-2021 school year. There are five broad guidelines, each with elaborative details as well as flexibility for individual schools and districts to adapt and follow. The five broad guidelines schools need to follow are:

- Vigilant assessment of symptoms for staff and students, including daily symptom checks and temperature taking, with anyone having a temperature over 100° or COVID-19 symptoms required to stay home or be sent home;
- Washing and sanitizing of hands, with sanitizing stations available in all high traffic areas such as entrances and classrooms;
- Frequent cleaning and sanitizing to eliminate spread of disease on shared surfaces;
- Maintaining social distance, striving for at least 6 feet of distance between all individuals in all areas where possible, including classrooms, hallways, playgrounds, drop-off, pick-up, and buses; and
- Development of a face covering policy considering all available science, including a requirement for all school staff to wear face coverings and a recommendation for all students in grade 3 and above to wear face coverings, with adjustments and accommodations as needed.

Armed with these new guidelines, as well as the ongoing work of our task force to prepare for reopening school, we plan to offer families a choice of two learning formats for their children when our school year begins on August 24:

OPTION 1: A traditional on-site, in-person learning experience in our classrooms five days per week, incorporating health and safety modifications in accordance with COVID-19 guidelines. This option includes the ability to phase into and out of distance learning as needed based upon health conditions in our building and/or as mandated by state or local officials. (See below.)

OPTION 2: Full-time distance learning for students who are unable to safely return in person, or are uncomfortable returning in person. This will occur simultaneously with in-person instruction in classrooms.

First and foremost in our planning is ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all of our students and staff. We recognize the importance of students being together with peer groups and interacting with teachers and classmates in face-to-face educational settings. However, we must do this safely. The health and safety protocols we are developing, include, thus far:

- Providing equipment and supplies to keep our learning environments clean and safe for students and staff. This includes physical barriers where appropriate, hand sanitizing supplies in every classroom and common areas, and floor markings to ensure proper distance between individuals at all times. This planning is ongoing and specific information will be provided as we prepare to open school.
- Following guidelines published by the Centers for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics for symptom screening and temperature checks of each staff member and student prior to entering the building, wearing face coverings (type to be determined), maintaining social distancing, and having a separate clinic area for care of students or staff with COVID-19 symptoms.
- Restricting visitors and volunteers in our building. Details will be provided as planning continues.
- Eliminating or adapting large events or adapting them to virtual or appointment-only formats.
- We are also planning for transient, intermittent periods of in-person learning and distance learning at points during the academic year as COVID-19 ebbs and flows in our community. We want to assure you that the distance learning your children may experience during the 2020-2021 school year will be markedly improved from what we quickly assembled as schools were forced to close in March. Our teachers have begun what will be ongoing professional development to hone their fluency in using Google Classroom, which will be our primary distance learning platform. We are also working on plans to build greater consistency in the approach taken across classrooms within a grade, and across grade levels throughout the school. We are also taking steps to ramp up technology within our classrooms to better facilitate distance learning occurring simultaneously with in-person learning.

We look forward to being able to share concrete plans with you as soon as we are able to do so. Until then, we ask for your continued patience as we work through the many details of planning in the midst of this ever-evolving situation. In the meantime, to help us with our planning, we are asking you to take a moment to complete a brief survey to share with us your opinions regarding returning to school in August. Please click [here](#) for the survey.

We also want to remind you that if you and your child(ren) travel this summer, particularly to one of the “hot spot” areas and particularly close to the beginning of the school year, it may be recommended that you and your child(ren) self-quarantine for two weeks to avoid potentially exposing our students and staff to COVID-19. We ask that you keep this in mind and be respectful of the health and safety of our entire school community and plan accordingly.

As we move ahead with planning for the details of the 2020-2021 school year, we would also like to share with you some changes to our faculty and staff for the coming school year.

First, we have had a number of changes to our kindergarten program. Teachers Mrs. Holland, Mrs. Piekarski and Mrs. Thomson, and teaching assistant Mrs. Paterakis, will not return, but we are pleased to let you know that all of these positions have been filled with excellent faculty and staff members. We will also have continuity in each classroom and across our Kindergarten program with the return of Miss Bennett and teaching assistants Mrs. Kwieciak, Mrs. Olack, Mrs. Parri, and Mrs. Pelini.

A product of Catholic education from Kindergarten through college, Mrs. Ashley Haskins joins our Kindergarten faculty after 15 years teaching at St. Matthew School. Eight of her years at St. Matthew were spent teaching kindergarten, and she is well-versed in the curriculum used in our St. Hilary kindergarten program. Mrs. Haskins is certified in elementary education (PreK-3) with a reading endorsement, and also has a master's degree in library science. She will begin her 18th year of teaching in the 2020-2021 school year.

Also new to our Kindergarten faculty will be Miss Gia Faetanini. An honors graduate on the Dean's List and President's List at Kent State University, Miss Faetanini holds licensure in early childhood education (P-3). She most recently worked as a first grade classroom assistant at Seton Catholic School. Her substitute teaching, student teaching and field experience includes Pre-K through eighth grade in a variety of settings. A St. Hilary School alumna, Miss Faetanini also serves in the Army ROTC program at Kent State where she honed her skills as a multicultural leader and volunteered at the Latvian Orphanage.

We have several new teaching assistants in our primary grades this year. Joining the team in Miss Faetanini's room will be Mrs. Lauren Palumbo, who has served our school in numerous volunteer capacities over the years and has recently served as a long-term substitute teacher in the Copley-Fairlawn School District. Mrs. Palumbo will also assist in various classrooms, especially grades 2 and 3, to help with social distancing and other needs. Mrs. Mary Ann Kaut will divide her time assisting in both Mrs. Morrocco's and Mrs. Walters' (formerly Miss DiPronio) first grade classrooms, alongside Mrs. Elyse Houser and Mrs. Shelly Kohrs. Mrs. Kaut comes to us from St. Matthew School where she worked as a preschool and kindergarten teaching assistant and helped with the school's before- and after-school care program.

Two new teachers will join our intermediate faculty for 2020-2021. Mrs. Dana Salamone will join the third grade teaching team. Mrs. Salamone is well-known at St. Hilary School from her work as a math intervention specialist and substitute teacher. Having taught and tutored extensively in math across numerous grades and school districts for 25 years, Mrs. Salamone is the ideal person to teach our third grade math curriculum. She holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Mount Union College and a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from Cleveland State

University. Mrs. Laura Murphey will become a fifth grade teaching team member. Mrs. Murphey has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in education, both from John Carroll University, with licensure in grades 4-9 math and science. She previously taught grades 5 and 6 math and science in various school districts, and many of you are familiar with her from her work as a trusted substitute teacher who has served our students well in classrooms throughout our building. Mrs. Murphey will teach fifth grade math and science, while Mrs. Rauber will shift to teach fifth grade reading and religion.

In junior high, we have two more new teachers, as well. Mrs. Elise Bennett has been hired to teach seventh and eighth grade math and will have a seventh grade homeroom. Mrs. Bennett comes to us from St. Matthew School where she taught middle school math for three years until the school closed. A graduate of Kent State University, Mrs. Bennett holds a bachelor of science degree in secondary education with licensure in integrated mathematics 7-12. She also serves as an auxiliary math tutor for the Akron Public Schools and as a summer math tutor, and has taught summer school math. Mrs. Miranda Osborne will join the junior high faculty to teach seventh and eighth grade reading and language arts with an eighth grade homeroom. Mrs. Osborne has a bachelor's degree in secondary English education from Kent State University and a master of arts degree in English composition and rhetoric from The University of Akron. She has taught 7th and 8th grade language arts in North Carolina since 2004, and previously held teaching and substitute teaching positions at The University of Akron and area public school districts.

Finally, Mr. Adam Glaus has stepped into the role of facilities manager, and Mr. Pedro Avalos has joined our maintenance staff as the maintenance supervisor.

Thank you for making these staff members feel welcome in their new positions!

We will continue to keep you updated as our plans solidify. We hope you and your families enjoy the summer and stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Woodman, Principal

Mrs. Alexander, Assistant Principal