

## **Q & A for Fall 2020 Reopening**

Please review the following additional information regarding masks, safety protocols, distance learning, carline/park & walk & BASP, lunch, new families, & Mass.

### **Masks**

***Question: What additional information can be provided regarding facemask requirements?***

Any color/design mask or face covering/neck sleeve would be acceptable, as long as it is not offensive or otherwise inappropriate. Land's End will have masks for sale beginning in mid-July and parents have the option to purchase masks with our school logo, if they choose to do so.

Masks and face coverings include non-medical grade disposable face masks, cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth), or full-face shields to protect eyes, nose, and mouth. Face shields may be superior to cloth face coverings in many circumstances, given improved ability to see mouth movements and improved air circulation.

Students, staff, and visitors are required to wear face coverings when entering and exiting facilities, and when not actively exercising. Our school may, for example, allow students who are actively exercising to remove face coverings as long as they maintain at least six feet of distance from other students and staff who are not wearing face coverings. However, we will require students and staff to wear face coverings as they get into positions that allow them to maintain safe distancing and in spaces where a minimum of six feet of distance cannot be accommodated.

***Question: Can masks become optional when the state allows it for the public?***

We will constantly re-evaluate, but our goal is to make decisions that will allow our students and teachers to maintain their health and safety so in-person school can continue to be offered.

***Question: How will students with cognitive, sensory, or health issues be handled when it comes to masks?***

All students are expected to wear a face covering that is appropriate and comfortable for them. Students will be coached in appropriate etiquette and hygiene and provided with friendly reminders regarding safe practices.

***Question: Will younger students receive negative consequences if they have difficulty wearing masks?***

No, we will be working with our Counselor, Nurse, and Dean of Students to help children adapt to the use of masks. Students may be gently reminded to wear masks and supported in their individual challenges, but they will not receive any disciplinary action.

## Safety Protocols

### ***Question: What is the procedure if a student or staff member has symptoms of COVID or has a positive diagnosis?***

In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:

- at least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
- the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
- at least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared

In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and who is not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, such individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to the campus until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.

If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the individual must either (a) obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) receive two separate confirmations at least 24 hours apart that they are free of COVID via acute infection tests at an approved COVID-19 testing location found at <https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>.

### ***Question: What is meant by "close contact"?***

"Close contact" refers to an individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19. Close contact is determined by an appropriate public health agency. For clarity, close contact is defined as:

- being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on while not wearing a mask or face shield); or
- being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes, while not wearing a mask or face shield

if either occurred at the same time the infected individual was infectious.

Individuals are presumed infectious at least two days prior to symptom onset or, in the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, two days prior to the confirming lab test.

### ***Question: How and when will the school community be notified regarding identified positive cases?***

If an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, St. Martha will notify our local health department, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

We will close off areas that are heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case (student, teacher, or staff) until the non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected, unless more than 3 days have already passed since that person was on campus. Consistent with school notification requirements for other communicable diseases, and consistent with legal confidentiality requirements, we will notify all teachers, staff, and families of all students in a school if a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers or staff who participate in any on campus activities.

***Question: Will the school still be used for group meetings such as CCE in the evenings?***

St. Martha will only offer CCE through a distance learning program online for the fall semester. If other groups use the school facility, the rooms will be thoroughly cleaned.

***Question: Will students be separated from each other by plastic in the classroom?***

No, this could result in reduced air flow.

***Question: Will students have P.E. and recess outdoors?***

Yes, our school follows a minute requirement that guides us in instructional planning time which includes minutes devoted to PE and recess. Students will have recess outdoors, weather permitting. The back parking lot will be closed to visitors to allow more space for students to be outdoors and maintain distance from other classes.

***Question: Will lunch be in the cafeteria?***

Students will eat in their classrooms as we return to school. Accommodations to eat in the cafeteria will be constantly re-evaluated.

***Question: Will they still have PE in the activity center?***

PE classes will be accommodated outdoors, as much as logistically possible.

***Question: Will masks be removed during small group instruction to help aid in learning reading and phonics?***

Masks will only be removed when students and staff can social distance appropriately or when eating or drinking. Teachers will incorporate face shields during direct instruction to ensure clear delivery of instruction.

***Question: If BASP is only for essential employees, how will the school determine what jobs are essential?***

Essential workers have been defined by the CDC. Please see the list of identified jobs here:

<https://www.federalreserve.gov/supervisionreg/srletters/SR2006a1.pdf>

We are updating BASP registration documents to reflect this, as well as asking parents to list their essential job. This info will go out before the start of the year, but BASP will not be offered the first week of school.

## **Distance Learning**

***Question: For working parents: How will distance learning work? What will be the hours the students need to be online?***

We are researching the feasibility of synchronous learning. This will allow teachers to live stream classes at the time of day they have students; schedules will be provided to parents upon the start of school. If students cannot log on at the recommended times, the recordings will be made available for them to view at their convenience. More information will be provided in the coming weeks.

***Question: Is my student able to change learning formats at any given time?***

With proper notice and change requests related to COVID; yes. Please contact our school office with this request. The time period to go from one to the other is dependent upon individual situations; 1-2 weeks.

***Question: Will we be offering a hybrid option; some days in school other days online?***

No, we cannot accommodate this option at this time, but we are continuously evaluating information to incorporate changes in the future, if needed.

***Question: Please share results of the percentage of parents opting for Distance Learning vs In Person?***

About 15% of our families prefer distance learning to start the year.

***Question: How will work be graded?***

Unlike the spring, most work will be graded for content and accuracy as opposed to completion. Teachers will share their expectations for each assignment and will grade accordingly.

***Question: Level of instruction for distance learning?***

The level of instruction will be comparable to the students participating in face to face instruction.

***Question: Will students be participating in ancillary classes?***

Yes, however, for all classes except for PE, the ancillary teacher will come to the homeroom classroom to minimize cross contamination.

***Question: Will students have a daily check-in with their teachers to answer questions?***

Students can ask questions of their teacher as they arise. However, please allow a reasonable amount of time for your teacher to respond.

***Question: Will students who participate in distance learning receive the same materials as those who attend face to face classes?***

Yes, we will schedule time for distance learning students to pick up their school supplies and books.

***Question: Can students who are distance learning join their peers for physical activities or outdoor lunch periods?***

Yes, we will provide arrangements for distance learning students to occasionally come on campus at designated times, if they choose to participate.

## **Carline/Park & Walk/BASP**

Question: Beginning of School Day?

Arrival begins at 7:30am. Classes start at 7:50am. School ends at 3:10pm, but we will begin dismissing students at 2:00pm for families who can pick up early during the first week of school to allow students to become acclimated with the process.

***Question: We will have kids in both Pre-K and K-8 this year. From previous communication it appears those grades have different drop-of and pick-up protocols. For the few families in our situation, will there be anyway to combine our kids in either carline or park & walk line?***

Unfortunately, no. We are dismissing a bit earlier to allow parents to pick up preschool children first in the park and walk line, and then circle around to the carline. Since all children are remaining in homerooms, we do not have extra staff to escort students through the building to an alternate dismissal area. Also, we are trying to limit shared spaces among students, including dismissal areas.

***Question: Will dismissal be done by last name?***

Students will dismiss from their homeroom classes as their parents arrive, instead of dismissal rooms.

***Question: When will BASP begin?***

BASP is scheduled to begin on Aug. 17

***Question: Option for non-essential employees and BASP?***

We cannot accommodate non-essential employees at this time, as we work to help contain the spread of COVID-19.

## **Lunch**

***Question: Lunch program information?***

Ordering information will be provided via Flocknote before the first day of school. Lunches will be delivered to the classroom by cafeteria staff.

## **New Families**

***Question: Will new families be able to walk students to class?***

Information will be sent to new families in K-8 to arrange a school visit before the first day of school so that we can show your child where to go on the first day. Visitors will not be allowed on campus on the first day of school.

***Question: What about escorting pre-school students to class?***

We can only accommodate one parent/pre-K student with staggered arrival times, more information will be communicated to new preschool families in the coming weeks.

## **Mass**

***Question: Can we put Mass on hold for now?***

Mass is a vital part of Catholic education, but we are taking precautions to ensure student safety; not all students will attend together weekly.

***Question: Are Mass uniforms needed for the beginning of the year?***

Yes, on Wednesdays. Students should follow our established dress code policy.