

St. Martin Parish School
*The mission of St. Martin Catholic School is to teach a life of
Prayer, Leadership, Love, Service and Kindness through
Catholic Education.*

July 23, 2020



Dear Parents,

Like most of us, I assume you and your family are enjoying your summer but anxious to hear about our plan to reopen in August. What will the day-to-day schedule look like? What new guidelines will be in place? How will we, as a faith community, remain connected to what we love and care about, while embracing the many important health and safety guidelines already in place? Dodging and weaving all of the many mixed messages on social media, the daily news, and even simple conversations with friends and family has created a level of uncertainty and anxiety in all of us.

My role and task as the leader of our school is very clear to me. I know *I am the person responsible for helping to set the tone and culture of our community*, and there is a level of research and preparedness you are expecting from me and the faculty. In order to help create an environment that will foster not just our students' personal safety, but also their spiritual and academic growth. I have done a lot of researching, reading, and networking over the past months. My actions have been fueled in part by knowing that you have chosen a Catholic school for your child and your real priority begins with a desired partnership in nurturing your child's soul. You have chosen St. Martin School not just because you want your child to have an excellent education; you have an eternal goal in mind. What important job and privilege we have as Catholic educators - thank you for trusting us in this ministry.

I have been working closely with local health officials, local school districts, local Catholic schools and the Diocese of Jefferson City to develop a reopening plan that meets the needs of our school community. The faculty and staff is committed to your family and we are doing our best to take all scenarios into consideration. As we developed our plan we placed the highest priority on your child's mind, body and soul. Please remember that *you will be the one to set the tone in your family* for how your child(ren) does in school this year. No matter what is decided or implemented; how you talk about the plan, trust in our faculty, and live your faith, will have the most influence on your child's attitude, their growth, and also their potential anxiety.

I have one simple favor to ask of you; when you read the plan, please read it in private. If you have concerns or questions about any part of it, please send them directly to me. I welcome your insight and feedback. I understand that as a parent it is your duty to question, reflect, inquire, research ... but try not to have your children hear these initial conversations. It is so important they hear a positive message of solidarity about returning to school, and our top priority should be to make them feel safe as our start date approaches. I look forward to clearing these initial hurdles of logistics and processes, so we can focus on our true mission of feeding our children's souls, while molding their minds and hearts.

Thank you so much for your continued trust, feedback, support, and prayers. Your positive energy and your AMAZING kids keep our faculty moving forward. I really can't wait to get our new year together started. I think God has given us a unique opportunity to stop, prioritize, and focus on His cross. His cross is the place where all struggles seem bearable and all miracles are capable.

RE-OPENING PLAN

Attached to this newsletter you will find our plan to reopen school. In preparing this plan one thing was for certain: at any given moment circumstances can change and things will need to be tweaked or readjusted. With that in mind slowly read through the plan, in private. If you have any questions please direct them to me. I will be happy to discuss the reasoning behind certain decisions and answer any question you might have.

Please keep in mind that decisions, choices and planning were all centered around what will keep our school community safe and moving towards a FULL year of classroom instruction.

JAGUAR NECK BUFF

I think the number one question I have been asked this summer is "will the students have to wear a mask?" As I am writing this newsletter my decision is yes, they will have to wear one in gatherings within the school for at least the first two weeks of school. That decision lead to more questions like where do the students store them, how can our youngest children keep track of them throughout the day, who's going to make sure they are washed? and a plethora of other questions were asked.

After much discussion it was decided that a neck buff would be the best option for *all* our students. The neck buff can be worn around the child's neck throughout the day and when they need to cover their mouth and nose they can simply pull it up. This will help alleviate the hassle of keeping track of their masks. So, the school will use some of the CARES ACT funding to purchase one per student and for each staff member. If you would like to order extra neck buffs please use this link: <https://payit.nelnet.net/form/qi7ffogW>. Please complete a separate form per child as it will help with sorting and personalization.

Additional directives will be given in regards to the washing and wearing of the neck buffs in future, thank you for your patience. There was a mask listed on the student' supply list, please do send that mask also. It will be kept as a backup or for emergency purposes.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Many things will be different this year when your child(ren) arrive at school. Sadly, we will not be able to use the services of our Jaguar Club to greet the children each morning. Instead the children will be greeted by a teacher, staff member and/or Mrs. Clingman.

All families should expect to drop off their child(ren) using the car line. You will enter using the east drive (by the tennis courts) circle around the church and wait at the flagpole until you are signaled to pull in front of school. We will be using the three entrances into school. Upon exiting their car the

child(ren) should have their face mask/neck buff on and should wait at their car to get their temperature taken. Once they get their temperature taken they will enter through their designated door –West door: Preschool 3 year olds, Prekindergarten 4 year olds and Kindergarten; Middle Door First, Second, Third and Fourth grades; East Door: Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth grades. The door will be propped open to avoid countless touches. Your child then will immediately go and wash their hands, then they will go to their homeroom class. Doors to the school will open at 7:00.

For safety sake no family should park in the parking lot and walk their child to the door. We do not want children passing between the cars in front of school. On the rare occasion that a family will need to park then they should get the attention of the teacher on duty to help them safely pass from the parking lot to the building.

Classes will begin at 7:30 this year. We needed extra time in the day in order to schedule cleaning and disinfecting time throughout the day. We also wanted to ensure there was extra time to wash hands. It's important that your child arrives on time so they are ready to begin class at 7:30.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

After school dismissal will be similar to drop off. You will pick your child up in front of school. To avoid an all school gathering in the gym, the children will remain in their classroom and as you pull in front of school they will be summoned to their designated door. As with arrival, for the sake of safety all parents/drivers should remain in their car.

After School Care parents will follow the same procedure. Car tags should hang from the rearview mirror and be visible to the ASC personnel, who will be watching from the middle door. When you pull to the curb, your child will be summoned to the ASC room. (Mrs. Schroer's old first grade classroom). They will get their things and come out to the car. Please do not pull away from the curb until your child(ren) is buckled securely into their seat.

DIOCESAN POLICY ON TRAVEL AND PROTOCOLS FOR COVID-19 TEST RESULTS

Anyone visiting a current COVID-19 hot spot or traveling internationally will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days before being allowed back on parish/school property. This includes students or anyone who is on parish/school property on a regular basis. This may require staff to utilize sick days, vacation days, or short-term leave. Please use the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) map of hot spots to help your staff determine if their travel takes them to a current hot spot. States at the highest levels of current cases qualify as a hot spot.

<https://www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/index.html#cases>

Protocols for when someone receives a positive COVID-19 test result are available for pastors, administrators, presidents/principals, PLCs and other leadership.

Changes for the Lunch Program This Year

The Lunch Program strives to offer nutritious, tasty lunches for your child. In recent years, they have dedicated themselves to provide as many fresh fruit and vegetable offerings by adding a daily fresh or frozen fruit along with a regular option. They also take pride in the salad bar that is provided in addition to the regular vegetable offering.

They have been working hard behind the scenes to come up with different TEMPORARY options to make this happen. It is very important to the staff during the pandemic uncertainty that they continue to provide as much fresh fruit and vegetables that they can while keeping your child and our volunteers and staff as safe as possible.

This may include temporarily offering pre-made salads and vegetable cups instead of the open salad bar. Offering a fresh or frozen fruit as our option 2-3 times a week depending on availability. Temporarily changing the meal service from “offer” to “serve” to limit contact. If you have any questions please contact Mrs. Carel at ccarel@stmartinjc.org

BACK-TO-SCHOOL BLAST-OFF SUNDAY, AUGUST 16TH

We will be trying something different this year. Because we had to cancel Summer Blast-off -a beloved day by all the kids- in May, we thought it would be fun to blast-off the beginning of the school year with a mini version of the fun-filled day. So... don't forget to sign-up for a time to come to school on August 16th to drop off your student's supplies, meet their teachers, have your child's school picture taken, sign-up for volunteer opportunities and committees, and then have lunch hosted by the Home & School organization. Every family should make plans to attend!!! Please use the sign-up link to schedule your time to come.

<https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/11698976838690007/false#/invitation>

If your family is not planning on attending please send us an email to let us know. Thank you this will help us plan on how much food to prepare.

BIRTHDAY TREATS

Students may continue the tradition of bringing a treat to share with their class. However, these treats will need to be bought and individually packaged. The child will only be allowed to pass out in their homeroom. Unfortunately they will not be allowed to walk around school and hand them out to the faculty. To help temper the disappointment the student celebrating their birthday will be allowed to come out of uniform on their birthday. If the child's birthday is during the summer they may celebrate their half birthday. If their birthday/half birthday falls on a day with no school they may pick another day that month to come OOU. Also Mrs. Carel will celebrate monthly birthdays with a birthday treat in the cafeteria.

WATER BOTTLES

When searching for a water bottle to bring please make sure that the lid screws on and has some type of spicket/straw. It would help us tremendously if the child does not have to take the top off. Also, if

you have one that does not sweat it would help with the water mess left on the desk. Thanks for your cooperation in this manner.

WHAT'S NEW IN MATH THIS YEAR?

This year St. Martin School's first, third, fourth and fifth grades will be participating in beta study for Illustrative Mathematics. After extensive research for a math program that would meet our expectations for our students in the areas of applying mathematics, problem solving and making real world connections it was evident that Illustrative Mathematics would be the resource that will help us help the children best.

Illustrative Mathematics uses a hands-on approach that is carefully planned to help students develop and understand mathematical concepts and procedures. As the students and teachers work through the year expect communication in regards to this unique resource in helping to prepare your child to think at deeper levels while meeting the diocesan math standards. If you have any questions about our new math program please contact your child's math teacher.

The kindergarten and second grade will not be participating in the program this year.

CLEANING SUPPLIES

On your children's school supply list there were items, paper towels and disinfecting wipes listed. Several families have expressed concern of not being able to find these items and have asked if they can simply donate money so the school can purchase these items through our janitorial supplier. The answer is, absolutely yes! If you would prefer to donate the money you would spend on these items, instead of hunting for them, simply put your donation in an envelope marked "disinfecting wipes/paper towels".

Also, if your family needs assistance in purchasing school supplies for your children please email at principal@stmartinjc.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW

Grandparents Day: Sept. 11 at Niekamp Park at 1:30

Picnic with Parents: April 30 at Niekamp Park time to be announced

HOME & SCHOOL UTV RAFFLE

Congratulations Daniel Toosley, who one \$11,000 from the UTV raffle. Thank you to all the families who helped to sell the 465 tickets. The H&S association made \$11,000 on the fund-raiser.

In closing, remember through your prayers and the intercession of our patron saint, St. Martin and under the mantle of protection from our Blessed Mother Mary, we will have a successful “normal” school year.

So, I ask the Lord to help each of us to grow in VIRTUE. Help us to build a life of grace.

God Bless,

Mrs. Julie Clingman

Attachments:

Re-Opening Plan