



Diocese of Knoxville Catholic Schools: Preparing Scholars, Leaders, and Saints

**Continuity of Learning Plan for Catholic Schools, Families, and Students
Pandemic Response Reference Planner
2019-2020 School Year
2020-2021 School Year**

Introduction

Beginning in early February, the Diocese of Knoxville Catholic Schools' Office began monitoring the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) health pandemic daily by adhering to the guidelines and recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) (See the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>), State Departments of Health, governmental agencies, and through Catholic Mutual Insurance. On February 11, 2020, the World Health Organization announced Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) as the official name of the current outbreak of coronavirus disease. It was previously referred to as 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

Later in February, the Catholic Schools' Office provided school leadership with the specific guidance on COVID-19 preparedness, hygiene, and school protocols. The Catholic schools maintained a state of preparedness by staying informed and acting accordingly, as our diocese and schools, are committed to the health and safety of our families, parishioners, and overall communities. As the situation evolved, Catholic school leaders provided consistent and regular communication updates to their respective school communities on the schools' efforts to prepare for the COVID-19 pandemic. The Diocese of Knoxville Catholic Schools are committed to continue this practice of responsive communication.

Once the disease became established in Tennessee, and with the arrival of spring break, in mid-March our Catholic schools intensified their responsive actions by preparing for and transitioning to an *at-home learning* environment instructional program rather than an *in-school* instructional program. With the knowledge that the COVID-19 outbreak continues to evolve, it is important to know that our actions may also continue to change and may change quickly.

With adherence to recommendations from the CDC, the State of Tennessee Health Departments, government officials, and diocesan leadership being the foundational basis for all decision-making regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, this *Continuity of Learning Plan* is intended to be a practical guide for the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Knoxville for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year and to navigate through to the 2020-2021 academic year. The information contained herein does not represent diocesan policy, and it is fluid insofar as the information available to us from health experts and public authorities during the crisis has been similarly fluid. It is also not intended to be a comprehensive pandemic response plan, as we have learned very quickly how to adapt and pivot as needed. The Catholic Schools' Office will update this document based on any updates from these same public authorities and diocesan offices.

The Superintendent of Catholic Schools recognizes the esteemed professionalism and expertise of the principals, presidents, and other school leaders and values their contributions in creating and building an information base of best practices that can be shared across our Catholic schools. In addition, the efforts of parents and the feedback provided by our families during this shift has been invaluable to further shape and refine our plans. Our Catholic School leaders and the Superintendent are extremely grateful for these contributions, as we have learned together during these last several weeks. The Diocese of Knoxville Catholic Schools' Office offers this resource to our Catholic schools and their communities with the hope that it will help light the path in our next steps forward. The resource provides contingency protocols for the continuation of learning during safer-at-home mandates and for re-entry to on-site learning.

Operative Mission: As Catholic Schools, we serve in partnership with our families to provide the educational ministry of faith and cognitive formation, as well as, social, emotional and physical development of every child. Our Catholic schools are committed to keeping its children in community, on track, and prepared for promotion, spiritually and academically. We are uniquely prepared to own, adapt, and deliver on our diocesan Catholic educational values of *Christ-centeredness, student-focused, service to others, respect for all life, and forward/future-thinking* as we prepare *scholars, leaders, and saints* -- all in the context of the Catholic Church and the Catholic worldview of community.

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I. Educational Delivery

Through discussions with the principals, presidents, academic deans, and assistant principals, there have been certain themes that have emerged that confirm who we are as Catholic educators and identification of mission priorities. These themes are:

1. Continue in our mission of educating the whole person: academically, socially, physically, and most importantly, in their faith, while integrating Christ across the curriculum.
2. Focus on essential learning for students---“Quality over quantity.”
3. Be flexible and ready to adapt when needs arise.
4. Emphasize relationships and community in any learning environment design including, especially in our remote programs.
5. Show empathy to others, having gracious assumptions towards others; people are having different life experiences than normal right now.
6. Decisions must support all populations of students.
7. Encourage the use of materials, resources, and platforms that are already in use, while providing training and support for any new resources or platforms.
8. Pray for and extend grace to all in these unique and trying times. Remember everyone processes differently; this is a traumatic situation for everyone.

The Diocese of Knoxville Catholic Schools believe that the optimum educational delivery for holistic development of students is on-site and in-school delivery. In the event that it becomes necessary to maintain learning in an at-home environment away from the traditional school setting, the schools will transition into an at-home or remote learning instructional program model. Instructional delivery plans developed for the transition to at-home learning or for an extended school closure address the following details.

| Item | Details | Examples |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Health and Safety | Focus on how best to educate parents, students, and faculty members about COVID-19, the importance of social | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share guidelines for social distancing |

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| | <p>distancing, and our Catholic social teaching on the marginalized, health and welfare of all, and living in community.</p> <p>Cleaning and disinfecting procedures must be fully implemented according to CDC guidelines.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share WHY this is important to help keep our community safe • Provide Catholic literature on the principles of Catholic social teaching and how this applies to the pandemic • Ask each teacher to create grade level appropriate lessons on COVID-19 |
| Daily/Weekly Assignments | <p>All schools shall shift to an online format without having to retrieve assignments physically. Survey results indicate that students and families benefit greatly by weekly assignments and clear coordination with other teachers. A uniform online platform is recommended.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online via Moodle or Google Classroom • Weekly Zoom or Microsoft TEAMS meetings • Online curriculum platforms through specific curriculum or shared resources such as Khan Academy, NewsELA, IXL, STAR, SuperKids, etc |
| Distribution of Work | <p>Develop a consistent plan within the school for transmission of work. It is important that there is consistency to help parents navigate with several children and possibly multiple teachers.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Until the online shift is complete, teachers may email paper packets out to families or have families pick-up packets with a staggered pick up/drop off schedule • Shift to completely online by the week of April 13, 2020 |
| Faculty Attendance and Responsibilities | <p>Delineate expectations for teachers, office personnel, and staff during this time. Identify alternative roles or jobs for those employees who are not directly involved with online instruction (i.e. cafeteria workers, janitors, instructional aides or assistants, office staff).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will work from designated remote/home work-areas during their regular scheduled hours • Teachers may have access to their classroom in a manner that honors and |

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| | | <p>protects social distancing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers may have “office hours” each day where they are available for one-on-one phone calls or Google meets to answer student questions• Teachers should submit weekly lesson plans to school leaders as is the standard procedure for the school• Teachers will respond to student/family emails and requests for calls within one school day• Develop a schedule for teachers/faculty members to contact or connect with students and their families.• Document these attempts and interactions• Host at least one Zoom, TEAMS, or Google meet with students weekly for each class or subject they teach throughout the week• Provide meals or take-out meals for families to give cafeteria personnel opportunities for work and to avoid food waste• See additional guidelines for faculty |
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| | | expectations later in this paper |
| Student Attendance and Responsibilities | <p>Student attendance should be a combination of work completed and contact with the teacher. Each school will develop a plan to comply with compulsory attendance even in at-home learning.</p> <p>Create a plan for contacting students or families who are not responding to online efforts.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must check in with the teacher daily when class is in session via email, online submissions, phone call, or meeting • Students must complete daily and weekly assignments • Students will turn in assignments as indicated by the teacher (daily or weekly) • See additional guidelines for student behavior and expectations during online learning later in this plan |
| Expectations for Parents | <p>Communication to parents is very important, especially for younger students. Families with younger students will need more frequent contact.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage parents or families (especially of younger students) to create a daily schedule (See the template example provided) • Have a morning meeting to set expectations and goals for the day. • Designate specific learning times and break times throughout the day • Build in time for Mass, prayer, or other devotions • Build in time for outdoor play and activity • Have a wrap-up meeting. How did it go? What can we do better tomorrow? |

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| Grading | It is recommended that teachers use holistic grading, grading for mastery or product quality, rubrics and other grading tools. For more information, see the section on grading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options include: participation, classwork, projects, homework, online assessments, products |
| Communication | Establish direct communication lines with all stakeholders (diocesan leadership, faculty, families, and students) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily/weekly emails, videos ZOOM conferences Telephone calls |
| School Culture and Engagement | Consider adding an element of fun to keep students engaged | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual spirit week At-home studies with our pets Dress-up like a famous piece of Art Best beard for High school boys Best Science project School-wide reading competition Read-aloud with the celebrities (principal, bishop, etc) |
| Donor Relations | Consider how you might engage with your community partners to leverage their support during this challenging time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual auctions Zoom meetings with our families Build relationships |

Superintendent of Catholic Schools Expectations for At-Home Learning

- Identify and apply for various grant opportunities to support the schools.
- Provide a periodic prayer for the community either virtually (recorded and posted) or in written communication for the school communities—faculty, students, families.
- Support principals and teachers in their roles as instructional leaders through increased presence through ZOOM or correspondence creating professional learning communities through communication and educational resource distribution.
- Support school leaders as they monitor and implement at-home or remote learning within their schools.

- Host weekly virtual meetings with school leaders to share what is working and to encourage collaboration and innovative teaching methods.
- If desired, host some virtual meetings with teachers across the diocese to share best practices and innovative methods, such as team-teaching, multi-school seminars, others ideas.
- Compile and maintain a list of helpful resources to support remote learning, donor engagement, marketing, or other needs
- Setup optional virtual training opportunities with professional development providers and trainers coordinated through the Catholic Schools' Office that teachers can participate in remotely.
- Monitor system-wide unit and lesson planning, virtual instructional time, and grading to ensure continuation of learning occurs.
- Communicate decisions from the diocesan leadership team.
- Open and transparent dialogue/communication. Be assured that the Superintendent of Catholic Schools is here to serve the school communities, so do not hesitate to contact Catholic Schools' Office with any concerns or questions.
- Pray without ceasing.

Principal/President Expectations during At-Home Learning

- If not already in place, establish a technology and communication response team for community technology needs.
- Provide a regular message to staff and students and lead a daily prayer session for students and families.
- Monitor teacher unit and lesson planning, virtual instruction time, and grading to ensure continuation of learning occurs.
- Ensure that a method of student attendance is obtained.
- Host a virtual faculty meeting regularly, at least once per week is recommended.
- Provide weekly updates to the superintendent on teaching and learning progress.
- Actively consult with other principals on best practices and collaborative opportunities.

- Provide weekly updates to the superintendent on other elements of school management (finances, enrollment, marketing, development, etc.)
- Provide weekly communications to the parents and families.
- Plan for alternative coverage in the event of faculty absences or illness.
- Respond quickly to superintendent requests for information or data concerning grant opportunities.
- Pray without ceasing.

All Teacher Expectations

- Pray. We need your prayers and the prayers of your students, especially now. Help them connect with God in these times and nurture their spiritual growth. Offer interactive prayer/spiritual reflection whenever possible
- Continue to consider ways to focus on relationships and connections, not just content.
- Continue to integrate the faith into lessons
- Create cross-curricular work when possible to maximize efficiency (PBL learning)
- Keep in mind that we need to strike a balance between advancing in the curriculum and keeping student stress and screen time to a minimum. Remember that older siblings may be helping younger ones in the family and that parents are also trying to work from home
- Reach out directly to students or families that you have not heard from.
- Begin live meetings with prayer and continue to serve as the spiritual leader of your class or grade level
- Provide opportunities for your students to interact with their peers online. This might mean giving feedback on an assignment, making a collaborative response, hosting discussion boards, or beginning group sessions with a social connection and check-in. This can leverage technology to build stronger and deeper relationships.
- Create projects/choice boards that give students and families flexibility to complete the work and tap interest/motivation
- Provide students with writing/journaling opportunities that connect to service in the household or other experiences in their life that promote growth in their life-skills and contribute to the well-being of the family and family relationships
- Grade using assessment rubrics or holistic grading; Utilize student self-grading and reflective responses for their efforts (Next week, I will share some specifics with the school leaders).

- Incorporate activities that do not involve screen time into our at-home learning
- Create and communicate an alternate learning plan in the event that families cannot access the Internet
- Presume the best of your students and parents.
- Provide feedback on student work regularly and/or contact the parent regularly to check in
- Provide each student in your homeroom/class with a personal check-in weekly according to the guidelines established in your schools
- Consult with other teachers in your community to collaborate as much as possible
- Adopt a growth mindset. Be bold and take the opportunity to try new things and take risks with content delivery. Your school administration will be there to support you through the successes and challenges.

Student Expectations

- Adhere to your school's Honor Code/Handbook and diocesan policies.
- Set up a workspace and work time for yourself.
- Follow your school's out-of-uniform dress policies when attending live sessions.
- Students are expected to attend all live classes and/or sessions. During these live sessions, you will be required to turn on your device's camera so the teacher is able to see you during class. Check-in to see class as specified by your teachers no later than 5 minutes into the class or you may be marked absent. Remain signed into the class the entire time with the teacher.
- If you leave in the middle of a class, you must notify your teacher by email that you are leaving and why. A parent email should follow to report the reason.
- Absences will still be recorded by the school. If you are unable to attend a live class and/or session, then your parents need to report your absence to the school per school guidelines for reporting absences.
- Schools' absence make-up policies apply to at-home learning.
- Continue on your path to successfully completing this school year by striving for academic excellence and achieving mastery of the curriculum in order to complete your current grade level.

- School policies concerning academic integrity still pertain. Do your own work.
- As part of a conscious effort to continue to develop your life skills, be sure to make positive contributions to household work and family life. School will be reinforcing your need to make positive contributions at home.
- Communicate if you have any questions or concerns. Ask for help if you need it.
- Be considerate of others during online conversations.
- Behavior considered to be distracting to class meetings and/or other students, or not following the directives for virtual classroom management by your teacher, can be written up for classroom disruption or insubordination according to your school's conduct code.
- Follow your school's acceptable use policies regarding technology.
- Remain hopeful knowing your teachers are doing all they can to move your education forward in an excellent manner.
- Obey the Fourth Commandment.
- Remember you are 'at-home in school' and not just at-home. You have a job to do and that is to be a scholar and learn. This is an opportunity to learn a new skill and grow in responsibility in this new model of learning. It is a time to be a leader in your home.
- Assuming you are not using your cell phone as the classroom device, it should be silenced and put away during 'at-home learning'. Limit your distractions.
- Pray. We need your prayers and the prayers of your family, especially now. Make it a priority to connect with God during these times to feed your spiritual growth.

Student Guidelines for Online Etiquette

As an online student, communication is a bit different than in a face-to-face setting. We pride ourselves in providing several opportunities for social interactions, but the difference is that most communication is via written text in an online environment. Because this means you are missing body language cues and immediate feedback from your "listener," it is very important to understand some common rules for good online etiquette. This ensures that the message you intend to convey is received correctly.

1. Be respectful. While it is easier to say hurtful or disrespectful things without standing face-to-face with someone, it is important to remember that your classmates and teachers are real people who are affected by the words you say and write. It is essential to keep in mind the feelings and opinions of others, even if they differ from your own. If you would not say it to someone's face, do not say it online either.

2. Be aware of strong language, all caps, and exclamation points. It is easy for written text to be misread and misunderstood. Have you ever sent a text message with good intent but your recipient thought you were being rude? If so, then you've experienced this firsthand. By being cognizant of strong language, you can identify potential confusions before sending messages. Tip: Read everything out loud before you send it.

3. Be careful with humor and sarcasm. Certainly, you shouldn't avoid being funny. We love to see your personality shine through in online classes. Many of our teachers are exceptionally funny too. As mentioned in Rule #2, make sure that it is clear you are being funny and not being rude. Emoticons and smileys can be helpful when conveying humor or sarcasm so that it is read correctly. Just remember to keep the smiley faces away from academic papers.

4. Grammar and spelling matter. While texting, textspeak can be great for your friends. In an educational setting (even online) however, keep it formal. Your written communication should be professional and reflect proper writing style. Save written shortcuts and less than stellar grammar for parent-approved social media, if you must, but follow grammar rules for school.

5. Cite your sources. Whenever you are sharing an idea that originated from someone else (even if it is not word for word), it is good practice to cite that source. This applies to discussion forums too. If you read a great thought in your text, share it, but be sure you let your audience know where you saw it first.

6. Do not post or share (even privately) inappropriate material. Enough said there. Nothing is truly private online.

7. Be forgiving. Remember that not everyone will know these rules before posting. Try to be understanding of others when they struggle with written communication. It is very different from simply talking to a person face-to-face.

8. Consider others' privacy. Ask for permission if you want to forward someone's email messages to third parties. Keep in mind that all private email mail is considered copyrighted by the original author.

9. Think before you hit the send button. Think carefully about the content of your message before contributing it. Once sent to the group, there is no taking it back. Grammar and spelling errors reflect on you, and your audience might not be able to decode misspelled words or poorly constructed sentences.

10. Brevity is best. Be as concise as possible when contributing to a discussion. Your points might be missed if hidden in a flood of text.

11. Stick to the point. Contributions to a discussion should stick to the subject. Don't waste others' time by going off on irrelevant tangents.

12. Do not type in all caps. Typing in caps is considered shouting or screaming online. Various studies on the topic reflect that it is more difficult and takes longer to read text that is typed in all caps.

13. Frivolous email. Do not forward jokes, "chain letters" or unimportant email to other students without their permission. Not only does it fill up their mailboxes but may offend people who do not share the same sense of humor or who are tired of these types of email.

Parent Expectations during at-home or remote learning

- Support the community and prayer life of the school.
- Establish a workplace and a work time for your student.
- As part of conscious effort to continue to develop your child's life skills, be sure your child makes positive contributions to household work and family life. Our schools will be reinforcing the students' need to make positive contributions at home.
- Students are expected to attend all live classes and/or sessions. During these live sessions, students will be required to turn on their device's camera so the teacher is able to see the student during class. Students need to check-in to class as specified. Student work will also be counted in the student's attendance.
- Continue to report absences per your school's guidelines.

- School's absence make-up policies apply to at-home learning.
- Behavior considered distracting to class meetings may result in disciplinary intervention.
- Work with your student's teacher to establish a work schedule and routine for your student.
- Be sure your child eats breakfast and other meals.
- School policies for academic integrity apply.
- Allow your student to do their work. Student policies on student original work and academic honesty still apply.
- View your child's work and grades in RenWeb.
- Presume the best of the teachers and school leaders.
- Please follow the appropriate chain of command if an issue arises. Please contact your child's teacher first with any concerns. Matthew 18:15 "If your brother "sings {against you}, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother."
- If you have multiple school-aged children, stagger their work times as much as possible.
- Be sure your child gets daily exercise.
- Schools are not expecting faculty/staff to share personal cell phone numbers. Please contact your child's teacher through school provided contact information.
- Please allow the teacher time to respond to you. With online or remote learning, it is expected the teachers will have increased electronic communication.
- Please alert the school to any difficulties your student may be having---emotional, cognitive, physical, or spiritual.
- Our schools are here to work with you. We are in this together.
- Pray. We need your prayers and the prayers of your family, especially now. Please make it a priority to connect with God during these times to feed your spiritual growth.

Instructional Methods during At-Home or Remote Learning

Recommended guidelines for student commitment each day are as follows:

- Pre-K: 60 minutes per day
- Grades K-1: 90 minutes per day
- Grades 2-3: 120 minutes per day

- Grades 4-5: 150 minutes per day
- Grades 6-8: 180 minutes per day
- Grades 9-12: 220 minutes with a minimum of 120 minutes contact time per subject per week
- **Resources:** Consult the *phases of implementation* and other administrator resources in the Appendix at the end of this document. Each school has created a warehouse of common resources for their communities.
- **Value:** Educational value does not mean MORE. Prioritize academic content standards into core areas. Choices must be made between “must dos” and opt-in “enrichment” for more accelerated students.
- **Assessment & Grading:**

“Assessment is essential to the learning process, grading is not. Be principled first and actionable second. It is more important we do what is right for students and figure out the logistics after” (Wormeli, 2016).

At-Home Learning and Grading

Recognizing the stress that COVID-19 has placed on our families and the desire for the general welfare of all, especially our students, has been a driving force in our decision-making over the last few months. For grading academic performance during this time, it is the recommendation of the Catholic Schools’ Office that each school evaluate their students in an individualistic and holistic manner. Using data gained from a variety of sources and influencing factors, the teachers in collaboration with the school administration, shall provide a grade for the fourth quarter and a final grade for the year. A student who was not failing prior to the start of ‘at-home’ learning cannot fail because of this fourth quarter. Each student’s grade will be based on information collected and analyzed from numerous sources:

1. Student’s historical academic performance prior to the onset of ‘at-home’ or remote learning
2. Student’s current academic performance during at-home learning
3. Interventions or accommodations implemented to promote student success

4. Survey information or other knowledge obtained concerning the family's unique circumstances, such as technology access or other factors that could negatively impact academic performance, as well as, the social and emotional health of the student.

In order to take these factors into account, when calculating grades for the spring of 2020, schools may choose to calculate final averages in two different ways and only record the higher of the two on permanent records.

- **Average 1st - 4th Quarters**
- **Average 1st - 3rd Quarters**

The better of the two averages will be recorded for the year and all final report cards and records will indicate *2019-2020 (COVID-19)* to reflect this decision. It is important that our actions reflect our efforts to ensure that we are doing what is best for each family and responding in a judicial, compassionate manner. This compromise takes into account both the hard work of teachers and students during this time of remote learning and the serious and varied impact of the pandemic on many of our learners.

As we move forward through the remainder of the school year, it is important that our educators continue to set high academic expectations for our students while exercising every tool to provide support for our learners. The following suggestions are based on the philosophy that students should be treated equitably, not necessarily equally. Our students with academic success learning plans or English as a Second Language (and all other students!) may need alternative grading in order to give them a fair and equitable grade during this time of at-home school. Without classroom instruction and/or the same level of support at home, for some students, completing assignments will prove to be more difficult. It is important to be mindful of the purposes for grading.

Purposes for Grading:

- **Achievement:** To measure mastery of goals or specific skills
- **Progress:** To indicate progress in learning over a specific period of time
- **Effort:** To acknowledge the effort that a student puts forth in learning

- Comparison: To compare students in terms of their competence, progress, and effort
- Instructional Planning: To identify students' learning strengths and weaknesses
- Program Effectiveness: To look at the efficacy of the instructional program
- Motivation: To motivate students to learn, to reward learning, and to promote self-esteem
- Communication: To provide feedback to students and parents

Suggestions:

- Offer assessments for completion grades, especially if students tend to be scoring either higher or lower than what they normally score when they are in school.
- Consider the value of an assessment in evaluating student learning. Is passing a spelling test as valuable as being able to construct sentences that demonstrate the understanding of the words?
- Provide feedback, then allow students to resubmit assignments for a higher grade.
- Keep expectations high for students who have the ability to perform at a higher level. Differentiated assignments would provide an opportunity to challenge the top students and to meet the needs of all students.
- Reduce assignments as needed in order to ensure the quality of the work being assigned.
- Use multiple grading for assignments. Teachers could record 2 grades for an assignment. Depending on the subject, teachers could give one grade for effort and one for achievement, or one for content and one for style. This provides the opportunity for students to receive a grade that reflects the fact that they put in their best effort, even if the result was not at the level of their peers.
- Provide open-ended questions that ensure that students are reading the required material in order to answer questions. Some students would benefit from online or Zoom-style conferences to discuss the material instead of completing written assignments on their own.
- Use rubrics for Problem-based or project-based learning (PBL)
- Allow students to complete self-reflections or assign grades for their work
- Provide contracts for specific grades (i.e. if a student does A, B, C, then they get an A, if a student does only B, C, then the student gets a B, etc).
- Allow students to provide their best effort for grading. (For example, select the best essay for grading)

Standardized Assessment

Standardized assessment such as Iowa Assessments or ACT will not be given in the spring of 2020. Plans will be made to administer standardized assessments when the assessment agencies allow or when school is back in on-site session. Advanced Placement exams will follow the guidelines of the College Board. Assigning a grade in a distance-learning context will require teachers to reconsider the kinds of assessment.

- Reporting on student progress is essential and each school leader should work diligently with their teachers and families to individualize the evaluation process of every student.
- Align assessments with your core academic standards (focus on major clusters/concepts).

Mathematics Instructional Planning Options:

1. Examine your grade-level standards and identify the major and supporting clusters. Given what is left to teach, emphasize the major clusters. Collaborate on this with the next grade-level teacher as these clusters will need additional reinforcement when students return.

OR

2. Examine the major clusters for the whole year (concepts already taught and/or not taught yet). Provide opportunities for learning that would emphasize these concepts or a deeper understanding of them if previously taught (this would help students to prepare for the next grade if students/parents wonder why a topic is reappearing). Collaborate on this with the next grade-level teacher to ensure vertical alignment.

ELA Instructional Planning Options:

1. Examine your grade level standards and identify the 2-4 major critical concepts that would yield the most leverage for increasing student achievement. Use the remaining weeks to focus only on elements in these identified scales. Collaborate on this with the next grade-level teacher, as these concepts will need additional reinforcement when students return.

OR

2. Examine the critical concepts for the whole year (concepts already taught and/or not taught yet). Provide opportunities for learning that would emphasize these concepts or a deeper understanding of them if previously taught (this would help students to prepare for the next grade if students/parents wonder why a concept is reappearing). Collaborate on this with the next grade-level teacher to ensure vertical alignment.

- In consideration of the circumstances created by this pandemic, under which all are affected, consider offering no “zeros,” and ultimately, no holding back students from grade-level promotion if they can demonstrate proficiency in core standards.

II. Communications

Communication is important all the time, but it is critical in times of crisis. People need information and they need reassurance from their leaders. At a minimum, the following are communication elements that must be considered.

- **Regular Outreach**: An expectation of principals is to be in regular communication with faculty and staff beyond email, especially if they are working remotely. A quick phone call or a zoom meeting to check in at multiple touch-points during the week would provide: 1) support and encouragement for teachers, 2) important data for principals for decision-making (e.g., work load, meeting expectations, etc.). Principals should also be gathering any feedback they have received from families.
- **Message with Value**: In your written communications to the community, it is good to acknowledge the sentiments of the current moment without being heavy-handed. In fact, it is not always necessary to mention COVID-19 anywhere, but it is necessary to keep our essential message of *faith* at the forefront. This, ultimately, is our differentiator.

III. Marketing & Enrollment

With families under economic duress, how do we market for 2020-2021 in the midst of a pandemic?

- **Leading by Example**: Thanks to the hard work and ingenuity of our school leaders and teachers, at-home learning has allowed our schools to remain in session throughout the spring. As we lead by example, we can and will bring new families into the fold as well. We can leverage our values of *Christ-centeredness, student-focused, family-oriented, and forward-thinking* to attract the next generation of students and their families. A modified recruitment process will meet the current times.
- **Retention of students**: Regular outreach to families at this time is critical. Think about the Nordstrom customer service approach to families. It is a matter of marketing to the ones you already have. Every conversation we have with a current parent or student is a retention conversation. We know that we serve their children and families better than anyone. Objections are problems to be solved. We need to spend the coming weeks making sure they stay with us as we move beyond this pandemic, and it is not too soon to start asking. As a resource, here are the [presentations from Partners in Mission](#) to support your efforts (Diocese of San Diego and Partners in Mission, 2020)

- **School Tours**: Explore the ability to offer classroom visits and school tours with high-quality video ads of school in session to push out to parents. Creating a video “school tour” using existing footage or still photographs of the campus is fine. In-person tours should be done practicing social distancing practices.
- **Parent Ambassadors**: Instead of a school tour, have any interested prospective families talk to current families. That way they can hear about the experience first-hand. This can be in the form of a normal call or a zoom call so that students can be involved.
- **Recruitment**: Right now is an excellent time to use our Distance Learning experience to get into contact with mothers of preschoolers. Think of “mom and me” or digital happy hour events to engage parents and toddlers. If you have not already, this is a great time to reach out to parish families whose kids aren’t at our school (e.g., newly baptized, CCD students, etc.).
- **Social Media Leverage**: Using social media is crucial during this time. Host contests with your current families having them say why they love your school or virtual family spirit weeks can be a great way of showing your community.
- **Get Back**: Please make sure that your office staff is checking and returning calls in a timely manner.
- **Development**: Make a clarion call to your families, alumni, and benefactors asking them that if they are maintaining, or somehow increasing their income during the Coronavirus economy if they would consider making additional donations—above their normal level of giving—to help families in need attend your schools next year. Some middle-income families who maintain their incomes may be receiving federal stimulus funding. Ask families in those situations to consider donating those funds to help provide temporary scholarships to families in need. Families who maintain their incomes will spend less on eating out, vacations, and fuel because of the stay-at-home measures.

IV. Financial Operations

With the country’s economics in a flux, how do we best anticipate our year-end cash flow and prepare for next year’s budget?

- **Cash Flow**: Monitor the school’s trends to prepare for a worst case scenario (20% drop in tuition, 50%, 80%, etc.). Some highlights to consider during this process:
 - Ensure February cash is reconciled.
 - Enter projections for the entire month of March (at this point you can use mostly actuals).
 - Use a critical eye to identify fixed expenses vs. those not needed due to distance learning.

- Renegotiate any contracts that you can to increase cash flow
- Consider applying any refunds generated by COVID-19 to outstanding balances.
- Analyze your Student Activities to identify what refunds, if any, need to be addressed.

Once finalized, review the results to strategize efforts to address any potential shortfall in advance.

Budget Preparation: Budget preparation for 2020-2021 should include conservative enrollment projection based on analysis of your recent trends and the impact of the current pandemic on families. Your projected enrollment should also determine your staffing needs. These can be hard decisions to make. The Catholic Schools’ Office, Office of Finance, and Human Resources can assist in your analysis. Please submit proposed budgets for 2020-2021 by **June 5, 2020**.

V. Tuition

A family’s financial commitment through tuition provides the partial revenue necessary for budgeted operational expenses, such as compensation. It is the decision of the Diocese of Knoxville to ensure compensation for all employees will continue during the time that safer-at-home practices are implemented. The Diocese of Knoxville Catholic Schools’ make every effort to be responsive to individual family needs and extenuating circumstances that impact the ability to pay tuition and other school-related expenses. The pastor, the school principal, or the president will evaluate tuition support needs on an individual family basis. The following are the recommended guidelines for administrators.

- **Make every effort to work with families having financial hardship. Please do not allow financial need be the reason for any family to leave our schools:** Our schools’ primary mission is to fulfill the educational and evangelizing mission of the Holy Catholic Church. As such, our focus is to serve and minister. We are called to assist and support our families. Therefore, each school shall work with families in the short term rather than lose them forever. If family members have lost employment, work with them on staying enrolled through the end of the year, even if it means a temporary loss of income for the school. Let them know that we can re-evaluate in the summer regarding tuition for next year once they have a better understanding of the economic impact on their family.
- **Registration Fees:** Registration deposits from families at this time act as a commitment on their part for the upcoming school year. We also know that families might be fearful that they will not

get a refund if their circumstances change and their child cannot attend. In consultation with your pastor, you have discretion to work with these families and assure them a return of their deposits if circumstances do not change. Because registration fees typically fund startup costs for the new school year, it is possible to roll registration into tuition for a family who is experiencing financial difficulties.

- **Alternative Tuition Schedules:** Schools should not create unilateral discounts or suspend tuition across the board. This can and does have a detrimental impact on other Catholic schools in the diocese. It is possible to creatively consider alternative tuition schedules for *some families* based on circumstance in order to meet their temporary needs for 2019-2020 and to set them up to return in 2020-2021. Please consult diocesan offices prior to making any final determinations here.
- **The Importance of Tuition:** A final note here underscores the fact that a family's financial commitment for this year has been budgeted to meet the school's operating expenses. It is important to maintain the 2019-2020 income and expenses within the current fiscal year. Prepaid athletic or activity fees may be refunded to families experiencing hardship. If fees are not refunded, the school may apply these fees toward the 2020-2021 book fees. Other prepaid fees for the next school year should be applied to that fiscal year. Again, this should be exercised on a case-by-case basis.

VI. Employees

What do we do with our employees as work and income decreases?

- **Teacher agreements:** The Diocese of Knoxville Catholic Schools' Office and Human Resources recommend that you do not distribute employment contracts or make verbal offers until late May or early June. At that time, consideration should be given to essential employees first, such as teachers. School leaders need to evaluate regularly the impact on the current budget and enrollment projections. With this in mind, it is prudent to hire teachers at a larger than normal student to teacher ratio, such as 1:30 as opposed to 1:24. It will be much easier to recruit additional employees if necessary rather than to have to make a reduction due to decreases in August. There remain too many unanswered variables to make these determinations with great assurance. The Diocese of Knoxville will not increase the salaries for any employee for 2020-2021. The hard reality is that we do not know what the state of our schools will be once this crisis is over.

- **Faculty Staff members:** The diocesan plan is to maintain and continue benefits and compensation of our school employees with the assistance from the federal stimulus CARES ACT. It is critical that all bookkeepers and school accountants follow the precise procedures provided by the Diocesan Office of Finance and the Chief Finance Officer.
- **Teacher Wellness:** Our schools are special because we care for one another. This is a time when these efforts need to be greatly increased. Take care of your teachers. Provide messaging and resources to support their great work. Catholic Mutual and Cigna provide great resources. Below are additional resources:
- **Teacher Absences:** It is likely that you will have teachers who will be absent for a host of reasons, including health reasons. Prepare for this potentiality. Create a work schedule for teachers that is truly manageable. 10-15 hour days are not sustainable, as reported by some. At most, students should only be carrying half of their normal workload with a focus on core standards. Ask: *What is absolutely essential at this time?* Ideally, our teachers should be preparing their lessons at least 2-3 weeks in advance of delivery, then should they need to be out for any time, another teacher can deliver the materials. Any alternative arrangement would need principal oversight. Keeping in mind that we are living in a “new normal,” possible substitutes could include:
 - Teachers from another grade: This would necessitate some level of collaboration among teachers in a vertical alignment.
 - Specials: Your “special” teachers could jump in at this juncture (e.g., P.E., Art, etc.).
 - Aides and Hourly employees: These members could pull the trigger on delivery and receiving completed student work, but any assessment would have to be coordinated with another teacher with principal supervision.
 - Teachers from another school: If your teachers are already working closely in a network with other diocesan teachers, connect with your fellow principal and see whether you can form a contingency plan between schools.

Employee Resources

- **Employee Assistance Program**
- <https://1saxj2i1vq934y49o1o3msw9lu-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/EAP-Employee-Flyer.pdf>

- **Resources from St. Luke’s Institute:**

- Managing Coronavirus Anxiety – Great resource to help with tangible things to help manage your self-care

- <https://www.sliconnect.org/managing-coronavirus-anxiety/>

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- How to Pray in Times of Crisis

- <https://www.sliconnect.org/how-to-pray-in-times-of-crisis/>

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- **Additional Resources:**

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- Coronavirus: Practicing Wellness While You Stay At Home

- <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-practicing-wellness-while-you-stay-at-home>

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- 25 Free Live Stream Exercise Classes

- <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/health/fitness/a31792038/coronavirus-live-stream-workout-classes/>

- Webinar: How To Manage Your Mental Stress From The COVID-19 Crisis

- Monday, April 13 3pm

- <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/348840>

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- **Wells Fargo Financial Resources:**

- Staying Calm During Turbulent Times

- <https://www.wellsfargo.com/retirement-plan/articles-seminars/staying-confident-during-turbulent-times>

- Investing with Confidence

- <https://www.wellsfargo.com/investment-institute>

- Market Information during the Coronavirus

- <https://www.wellsfargo.com/investment-institute/coronavirus-impact/>

VII. Diocesan Support

- **Diocesan Contacts:** To expedite a quick pastoral response to your questions, it is important to channel your questions to the right diocesan offices:

- Catholic Mutual Group:

- Paul Simoneau, psimoneau@dioknox.org, 865-584-3307
- Human Resources:
 - Jennifer Mills, jmills@dioknox.org, 865-584-3307
- Finance:
 - Shannon Hepp, Chief Financial Officer, shepp@dioknox.org, 865-584-3307
- Stewardship/Development:
 - John Deinhart, Director of Development, jdeinhart@dioknox.org, 865-584-3307
- Communications:
 - Jim Wogan, Director of Communications, jwogan@dioknox.org, 865-584-3307

VIII. Family Support

How do we best support our families when they are under all sorts of stress?

- **Maintain Community**: Our schools are communities, and the more the parents feel in community with us and each other, the more families we will retain. Parents will stay when we assure a sense of safety, a sense of belonging, and sense of continuity. Through our sincere efforts at conveying our care and love for the family and our students, families will be spiritually and emotionally supported and nurtured. By investing in the school, parents are investing in the future of that unique community. Maintaining community traditions socially will remind families of this community.
- **Connect**: Remain in constant communication with families. Parents and students must feel supported and properly engaged by staff. Supportive schools demonstrate an ability to adapt, differentiate, and meet the needs of their students as they engage and support them. This includes supporting parents with teaching and motivating students.
- **Survey**: Keep taking the temperature of your school community--both parents and students--to gauge how they are doing, and then...
- **Adapt**: Adapt and differentiate to meet the complex needs of students and parents. Adapt because community and belonging is most important.
- **Build Virtual Community**: Students, parents, and educators alike crave contact with their peer communities. Be creative in creating **Peer Support Groups** for these same members:
 - Kids need their community. Parents cannot be the sole source of socialization. Taking age, maturity, and proper supervision into consideration, encourage online chats, gameplay, emails, etc.
 - Encourage retaining strong bonds with friends to show the value of school-based peer socialization.

- “Parking lot talk” makes educators cringe, but the parking lot is where parents connect and build community. Here are some specific examples of how we can facilitate a virtual parking lot:
 - Social media: Most schools have vibrant parent groups on Facebook or other platforms.
 - Start new groups (Instagram for the class, for example)
 - Private Facebook Groups, specifically for parents
 - Start a Zoom/Google Meet hangout for parents (“Virtual Happy Hour”)
 - Keep your parent/community groups meeting regularly
 - Start an online game
 - Host hangouts with experts (e.g., on prayer, coping, stress management, helping kids with homework, supporting kids with learning differences, etc.)
- **Online Safety**: With an entire educational delivery being moved online, safety remains of paramount importance.
- **Monitoring**: Preview lessons, especially in subjects parents are not comfortable with.
- **Modelling**: Model the relationship God has with us as a community through shared prayer, online faith events, parish efforts to support the community, and the like.
- **Love**: Above all else, love them to death!

IX. Health & Well-Being

How do we best promote health and well-being within our school communities? What happens if a student, teacher or staff member contracts COVID-19?

The CDC website continues to update its information on the COVID-19 virus. The following information was posted April 1, 2020:

Patients infected with the COVID-19 virus have reported mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms that include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty Breathing
- Loss of taste or smell
- Vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours

Patients are diagnosed by approved laboratories who test throat and nose swab samples sent in by healthcare providers. There are designated healthcare facilities throughout the state that have the ability to perform local testing for the COVID-19 virus.

School Reopening Guidelines for On-site Instruction Phase I:

- **If an employee is not comfortable coming into the school and the ability to work remotely is possible, we should allow that individual to do so.**
- **Teachers are considered essential employees and this may not be feasible for teachers.**
- **All employees, students, and visitors should be screened prior to entering the building** with the following questions:
 1. Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
 2. Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath or a sore throat?
 3. Have you had a fever (100.4 or higher) in the last 48 hours?
 4. Have you had new loss of taste or smell?
 5. Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?
- **Temperature screening employees, students, and visitors:**
 - Have a single entry point for all employees, students, and visitors in the building. Screening point for students should be directly in the drop-off line so that if students have a fever, parents can take them directly home without the student exiting the vehicle. Require everyone coming into the school to sign in, take, and record their temperature with the provided no-touch thermometer each day upon entry.
- **Direct any employee or visitor who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms** (i.e. answers yes to any of the screening questions or who is running a fever) to leave the premises immediately and seek medical care and/or COVID-19 testing, per Tennessee Department of Health and CDC guidelines. Employers should maintain the confidentiality of employee health information.
- **All employees and visitors are required to wear a mask or face covering when in a common area** (i.e. classroom, hallways, breakrooms, cafeteria, open office/shared space, lobby, church or chapel).

- **Continue to practice social distancing:**
 - During a Phase 1 initial re-entry to school, schools will adhere to a flex or hybrid class schedule of no more than 50% of the class at a time (Refer to the section on educational delivery for further clarification).
 - Meetings should be limited to 10 people or less
 - Stay at least 6 feet away from others
 - Desks in shared spaces should be placed at least 6 feet apart
- **General Sanitation:**
 - All locations are expected to have hand sanitizer available at the entrance of the office as well as sanitizing wipes available for employees
 - Hand sanitizer should be used prior to utilizing any shared equipment (i.e. copy rooms, restrooms, breakrooms, etc.)
 - Regularly sanitize high touch surfaces in common areas (i.e. door knobs, copiers, etc.)
 - Employees are expected to wipe their personal workspaces at the end of each day with sanitizing wipe as well as any surfaces they touch throughout the day
- **Continue to practice good hygiene:**
 - Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces
 - Avoid touching your face
 - Sneeze or cough into a tissue or the inside of your elbow. Dispose of tissues after a single use.

Guidance for Ill or Potentially Ill Employees

If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you might have been exposed to it, follow the steps below to help protect other people in your home and community:

- Stay home quarantined unless you are having a medical emergency. People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to recover at home. Do not leave, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
- Call a healthcare provider and seek medical advice—It is important that you call ahead before going to a doctor’s office or emergency room and tell them about your symptoms,

which will allow the healthcare facility staff to take steps to keep other people from getting infected.

- If you do not have a healthcare provider or health insurance, call the local Health Department to be referred to a local Community Health Center.

Your healthcare provider will do a risk assessment, using [CDC testing criteria](#), to determine if you should get tested.

What do I do when a confirmed case has entered a school, regardless of community transmission?

CDC recommends the following procedures regardless of the level of community spread:

Coordinate with local health officials. Once learning of a COVID-19 case in someone who has been in the school, immediately notify local health officials and then notify the Superintendent of Catholic Schools. These officials will help school pastors and administrators determine a course of action for their childcare programs or schools.

Communicate with staff, parents, and students. Coordinate with local health officials to appropriately communicate the possible COVID-19 exposure.*

- This communication to the school community should align with the communication plan in the school's emergency operations plan.
- Plan to include messages to counter potential [stigma](#) and discrimination.
- In such a circumstance, it is critical to maintain confidentiality of the student or staff member as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

During the COVID-19 Outbreak:

- Follow the public health orders and stay at home to stop the spread of COVID-19, except to take care of essential needs or if you are considered an essential worker. If you do go out, make sure you practice social distancing.
- Stay informed, but limit the amount of news you take in if it becomes too stressful.
- Stay in touch with family, neighbors, and friends.

- Participate in streaming Masses or prayer opportunities.
- Be prayerful and hopeful.
- Take care of your mental health. [Tips to Maintain Mental Health and Wellness](#).

Recommended Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Facilities

In preparation for school facility use by students or parishioners, the following detailed guidance is provided for cleaning and disinfection. There is much to still learn about the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Based on what is currently known about the virus and about similar coronaviruses that cause SARS and MERS, spread from person-to-person happens most frequently among close contacts (with about 6 feet). This type of transmission occurs via respiratory droplets, but disease transmission via infectious aerosols is currently uncertain. Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 to persons from surfaces contaminated with the virus has not been documented. Transmission of coronavirus in general occurs much more commonly through respiratory droplets than through fomites. Current evidence suggest that SARS-CoV-2 may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in community settings (CDC, 2020).

It is unknown how long the air inside a room occupied by someone with confirmed COVID-19 remains potentially infectious. Facilities will need to consider factors such as the size of the room and ventilation system design (including flowrate[air changes per hour] and location of supply and exhaust vents) when deciding how long to close off rooms or areas used by ill persons before beginning disinfection.

Definitions

- *Community facilities* such as schools, preschools, daycare centers, and businesses
- *Cleaning* refers to the removal of dirt and impurities, including germs, from surfaces. Cleaning alone does not kill germs. But by removing the germs, it decreased their number and therefore any risk of spreading infection.
- *Disinfecting* works by using chemicals, for example EPA-registered disinfectants, to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove

germs. But killing germs remaining on a surface after cleaning further reduces any risk of spreading infection.

Cleaning and Disinfection After Persons Suspected/Confirmed to have COVID-19 have been in the School Facility

- Close off areas used by the individuals with COVID-19 and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets. Open outside doors and windows and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area. If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
- Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment, such as tablets, computers, keyboards, remote controls) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

How to Clean and Disinfect

- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
- A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 are available on the CDC website. <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products for concentration, application method and contact time, etc.
- Additionally, diluted household bleach solutions (at least 1000 ppm sodium hypochlorite) can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for application, ensuring a contact time of at least 1 minute, and allowing proper ventilation during and after application. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.

- Prepare a bleach solution by mixing: 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
- For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, remove visible contamination if present and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces. After cleaning:
 - If the items can be laundered, launder items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and then dry items completely
 - Otherwise, use products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 and that are suitable for porous surfaces.

Electronics

- For electronics such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, computers, and other shared electrical equipment, remove visible contamination if present.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- Consider use of wipe-able covers for electronics.
- If not manufacture, guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.

The risk of exposure to cleaning staff is inherently low. Cleaning staff should wear disposable gloves and gowns for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash. Gloves should be compatible with the disinfectant products being used. Gloves should be removed after cleaning a room or area.

- Cleaning staff should immediately report breaches in protective cleaning measures such as a tear in gloves or any other potential exposures to their supervisor.
- Cleaning staff and all others should clean hands frequently, including immediately after removing gloves by washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Additional Considerations for Employers

- Continue to work with local health departments to ensure appropriate local protocols and guidelines are followed.

- Employers have a responsibility to educate all employees on safe cleaning and disinfecting practices.

For more information, please see the [CDC website](#).

X. End-of-Year Events

What happens to end-of-year celebrations like graduation, prom, May crowning, etc.?

- **Going Virtual**: It is probable that this year’s graduating classes will experience a “virtual” graduation. Our ability to reconvene in large groups depends on public health guidance for crowd limits. If we receive clearance from public health, it is possible to postpone some events. If/when clearance comes this summer, schools should consider both a virtual event and a supplemental in-person event for graduations to allow final year students to meet with their classmates.
- **Awards Ceremonies**: In general, award banquets can be held virtually or rescheduled for a later date. OFS is planning to reschedule the Annual Catholic Educators’ Banquet as our “welcome back” event. Beyond individual recognitions, it is important that we honor our pastors, principals, teachers and staff once this crisis has ended. More to come.
- **End-of-Year Checklists**: OFS will evaluate whether there is anything needed to be added (or subtracted) from this year’s end-of-year checklist.

XI. Accreditation

The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Knoxville shall maintain and adhere to all strategic-school improvement plans. Internal quality assurance reviews during the spring of 2020 will be suspended. It is recommended that each school develop a narrative summary of strategic initiatives, goals, and actions completed. The date of the next external review is in the winter or spring of 2022.

- **Flexibility**: Adjustments may be required as our focus may change as new needs are identified, such as increased professional development in remote learning instructional best practices.
- **Work with and create a leadership team**: If you do not already have an established accreditation executive or leadership team, please establish one to begin the planning process for continuous improvement and internal review of goals.

- **Surveys:** Utilize the eProve surveys on COGNIA or other school created surveys to evaluate remote learning practices and to gain feedback and input from stakeholders regarding school initiatives. This survey data will be used to make adjustments and provide evidential support of stakeholder input and engagement, as well as, one source of internal evaluation.
- **QAR Internal Assurance Reviews**
 - Document or summarize any tasks related to the strategic school improvement plans.
 - Summarize the QAR actions from the internal visits in a document that will be easily transferred to COGNIA.
- **The DOK Catholic Schools FOCUS Initiative Protocol**
 - During the summer of 2020, school leaders and school leadership teams will be trained in the FOCUS Initiative Protocol for the COGNIA Engagement Review in 2022.
 - A timeline of actions will be developed for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.

XII. Summer 2020

- **Keeping to the Plan:** Because our students are receiving instruction and engaged in distance learning, and with a collective goal of readiness for promotion to the next grade, the Diocese of Knoxville will not have a mandatory summer school, an extended school year, nor a shortened year (thereby adding instructional days to the 2020-2021 academic calendar). Schools should, however, provide recommendations for available continued learning for academically challenged students or those that have been at a disadvantage during the at-home learning period. Schools may choose to use Title I or III allocations to offer individual tutoring or other summer instructional programs.
- **Professional Development:** School leaders shall retain at least one contract day from the 2019-2020 contract for summer professional development for personnel on technology or remote teaching practices.
 - The Catholic Schools' Office will provide recommendations for online learning opportunities or webinars that school personnel may access at home.
 - Professional educators shall maintain a log of professional development activities to be submitted to the Catholic Schools' Office for professional development credit.
 - Title II allocations that were not used in 2019-2020 will be retained for use in 2020-2021. The Catholic Schools' Office will designate 50% of each school's Title II allocation for shared professional development offerings.

- **Summer Activities**: Summer activities may be subject to continued social distance restrictions. This is not to say that you should not be planning; however, it is prudent to inform parents of the current realities (i.e., these plans are subject to change depending on our guidance from public health).
- **Summer athletic practices and conditioning**: Coaches may begin practicing with teams after May 26. However, each session can only have 9 participants with 1 coach.
- **Summer Camps**: Adhere to guidance from public health officials. Optional in person summer camps should not occur in June. Schools with child care connected to summer camps should follow guidance for child care centers to allow for students if families are returning to work and need child care. Guidelines for summer camps have been created by the American Camp Association, the YMCA, and the Environmental Health & Engineering Corporation in conjunction (May, 2020) and may be accessed through *The Field Guide for Camps*.
<https://acacamps.app.box.com/s/7gkh9buu3ntssx2v38gajg4z94631lag>

XIII. August 2020 and Re-entry Planning

Based on available information as of May 12, 2020, it is reasonable and prudent for the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Knoxville to create contingency plans on the following assumptions.

Re-entry Planning Assumptions:

1. The virus that causes COVID-19 will remain in circulation until a vaccine is developed and widely used.
 - a. A vaccine is not likely to be in broad use during the next 18 months.
 - b. During this time, improvements in understanding of the virus and in testing will allow public health officials to act with greater precision when taking steps to slow the rate of infection. Broad stay-at-home orders and long-term school closures are not likely to be needed in the future.
 - c. A second wave of infections is expected, possibly coinciding with flu season in October or November. This wave will not be significant as the first but could result in site, district, regional, or countywide school closures for up to four weeks.
 - d. Short-term closures of single or multiple schools will remain a possibility until a vaccine is widely used.
 - e. Children and staff with significant health conditions will continue to be especially vulnerable during this time.
 - f. Teaching and reinforcing prevention behaviors (handwashing and cough/sneeze etiquette and promoting flu vaccinations will continue to be important strategies in slowing the spread of this and other infectious diseases.)
 - g. Frequent cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces will also be needed throughout this period.

2. It will be safe for schools to return to **normal** operations when all the following have occurred:

- a. The Tennessee stay-at-home order has been lifted and the schools have been re-opened.
- b. The Diocese of Knoxville has resumed Mass celebrations in the Church.
- c. The number of COVID-19 cases in the respective counties in the diocese has remained constant or declined for 28 consecutive days.
- d. The directive to physically distance has been removed.
- e. Limits on group gatherings have been lifted.

3. When schools are permitted to re-open, it is likely that operations will need to be modified to include:

- a. Proactive screening of students and staff for symptoms
- b. A flex schedule with only 50% of the students and perhaps faculty per day.
- c. Social distancing in all settings.
- d. Protective mask coverings for faculty and students.
- e. Loosening of restrictions is likely to be stepped down in incremental phases.

4. Conditions are not likely to improve quickly enough to allow schools to resume normal (pre-pandemic) operations or modified operations during the 2019-2020 school year and during the 2020-2021 school year.

- a. When the stay-at-home order is lifted, limits on group size are likely to still be necessary. Loosening of restrictions is likely to be stepped down in phases.
- b. It is unlikely that traditional graduation ceremonies and promotion or awards assemblies will be allowed until sometime in the summer. Even if permissible, convening groups large during this time frame may still be inadvisable.

5. Deaths from COVID-19 are possible while the virus is in circulation.

- a. While the stay-at-home order and/or restrictions on group size are in place, normal community support mechanisms will not be available to assist with grieving.

b. When schools can resume operations, death within the school community from COVID-19 will still be possible, especially for children and adults in high risk categories.

6. Fear, loss, and isolation will result in the need for increased mental health supports.

a. The strain of 12 to 18 month duration will overwhelm the copings skills of many.

b. Coping for people with pre-existing mental health concerns will be very difficult.

c. Suicide attempts and completions may rise.

d. Families will need additional support for social-emotional wellness.

e. Strain on families may increase incidents of substance abuse, child abuse, and domestic violence.

7. The economic impacts of the pandemic will have significant and lasting impacts on all schools.

- State tax revenues will fall well below those of previous years with reductions in school funding likely for the public sector.
- With orders to close Churches for open/community Masses, offertory will likely decrease and this decrease will impact the diocesan assessment for Catholic schools.
- Job layoffs and business closures will result in higher levels of unemployment, which will contribute to enrollment decline as families move out of the area to areas where they can obtain employment.
- Unemployment will impact families' ability to pay tuition.
- School nutrition programs will be needed by more students and will become a more significant portion of their access to food. Accommodations to provide continued access to meals for children who are ill or required to self-isolate may be necessary until COVID-19 is controlled.

8. Catholic school enrollment may decline at a faster rate than we have seen.

- Parent demand for enrollment in distance learning programs will increase as many will perceive them as a safer and more stable alternative to classroom-based instruction while COVID-19 is in circulation.
- Schools with well-established online programs may see increased enrollment.

- The Catholic schools will have to be prepared to shift and transition freely between on-campus learning and at-home learning.
- Demand for enrollment in district, charter, or other types of distance online learning programs may increase each time the health officials impose social controls in response to increasing COVID-19 outbreaks.

9. Student and employee attendance rates will decline in 2020-2021.

- Students and faculty with COVID-19, and those who are directly exposed, or those who have a temperature with another illness, may miss two or more weeks of school. In larger households, children may be required to miss school for an extended period if the disease affects other members of their family.
- School faculty and staff will become more concerned about COVID-19 symptoms and health and welfare policies will require students and other faculty members with symptoms to stay home.
- Fear and rumors may also negatively affect employee and student attendance rates.
- Substitutes may be in more demand as employee absences rise.

10. Student learning outcomes going into the 2020-2021 year may reflect more variance.

- Some students will begin the next year with learning deficits.
- The most able and advantaged are likely to better prepare.
- The most disadvantaged are likely to suffer learning regression.

Re-entry Planning

The Diocese of Knoxville is carefully considering the manner for on-site re-opening of the Catholic Schools. Through this planning process, we recognize that there will be varying levels of comfort with parents and faculty members concerning a safe return for children at school. The subsequent contingency plans attempts to address these different perspectives. The contingency plans allow for flexibility, transparency and a prioritized emphasis on the health and safety of our community. The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Knoxville are currently preparing the physical campuses to support students in August 2020.

XV. Contingency Plans

The Catholic Schools' Office and school leaders have developed three different re-entry scenarios or options for our families to navigate. The following contingency plans also prepare for waves of interruptions to on campus learning.

In the event our local community experiences a spike in COVID-19 cases, other pandemic outbreak, a natural disaster, or an inclement weather occurrence that causes an interruption of on-site school operations, a shift to at-home learning or remote learning will immediately occur. Schools will communicate these transitions in a timely and transparent manner.

Scenario I: On-Campus Learning

In consultation with the state of Tennessee, local health departments, and the CDC guidelines, the Diocese of Knoxville Catholic Schools are able to execute the necessary physical campus modifications and health and welfare procedures to support students safely returning to the school campuses for the 2020 school year. Under this scenario, the schools will follow the health and welfare protocols established. If a child or faculty member arrives ill or becomes ill throughout the day, the school will follow the appropriate isolation measures dictated by public health guidance.

1. Re-enter school at normal enrollment capacity with revised sanitation and hygiene procedures implemented. The school will adhere to specific health precautions that are in accordance with our diocesan, local, state, and federal requirements.

2. The schools will have rules in place concerning the wearing of masks or cloth face coverings according to CDC guidelines.

3. In the event that local authorities close schools or initiate a stay-at-home order, or the school has an outbreak of COVID-19, influenza or another outbreak, schools (students and faculty) will transition to at-home/remote learning.

4. The standard drop-off and pick-up times will remain the same.

5. Athletic and extra-curricular activities and offerings will be determined by local authorities including TSSAA, but are expected to resume.

6. After-school enrichment and extended day programming is expected to resume.

Scenario II: Blended Learning (at-school learning and at-home learning)

If guidelines from the state of Tennessee indicate that social distancing must be maintained for re-entry to schools, the Catholic Schools will implement a hybrid-learning instructional model consisting of partial on-campus learning and partial at-home learning. If the facility, faculty and student populations will not allow for appropriate social distancing, the schools will establish a flex schedule for students and faculty that would ensure 50% or less of the total student body present on any day. A blend of synchronous (live instruction) and asynchronous (teacher directed and technology-based) remote learning with regular modifications, are to ensure that students are receiving a well-balanced and academically fulfilling experience.

Blended learning will not change our mission as Catholic Schools. This mission utilizes personal attention in the context of global consciousness and the general welfare of all in our community. Our schools will continue to educate the whole child, encourage the pursuit of individual talents and gifts, promote life balance, build confidence, and encourage and provide engaging learning experiences. This learning model will blend daily synchronous (live instruction) with asynchronous (accessible anytime) instruction with a schedule intentionally designed to provide school/life balance, mindfulness, individual exploration, daily reading and journal writing

- **Screening:** Procedures will be developed by each school to screen faculty, students and visitors each day for signs of illness. Schools will follow the isolation/exclusion measures established by the health departments for anyone ill at arrival or during the day.
- **Scheduling:** Specific schedules will be developed by each school community to accommodate the hybrid model. Each student would be on campus five days per two-week schedule
- **Attendance:** Students will be in attendance either on-campus or at-home daily according to the proposed schedule.
- **Educational Delivery:** Schools will be researching methods and procedures to live-stream, as well as, video-tape class instruction for those days when students

are not present on campus. Special area teachers will facilitate learning activities appropriate for a blended learning model.

- **Childcare:** Schools shall evaluate facility space and personnel along with social distancing recommendations so that accommodations can be made for those families who cannot allow their students to remain at home on blended learning days. Accommodations for childcare will be made for these families by fully utilizing all areas of the facility. It is not the intention of this plan to place a burden on working families.
- **Protective Facial Equipment or Masks:** Following guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the CDC, faculty and students will be expected to wear protective facial equipment (masks or covering) when on-site at the school.
- **Hallway traffic:** Schools will implement procedures for hallway movement to minimize physical contact and group exposure while on campus.
- **Music:** Choral and band courses will be suspended to mitigate the chance for spread.
- **Special Area classes:** Schools may adjust some special area courses to adjust for the flex schedule and to ensure appropriate social distancing.
- **Outdoor/Ventilation:** Schools are encouraged to provide outdoor classrooms if possible and to utilize large outdoor spaces for instruction.
- **Nutrition/cafeteria:** Schools will provide an alternative meal delivery plan rather than large groups eating in the cafeteria or commons area, such as eating in the classroom, brown-bag lunches, or cafeteria delivery to the classroom (i.e. students eat lunch in their classrooms or in an outdoor picnic area to allow for social distancing).

Scenario III: Online Learning

For families concerned about their children's safety and welfare on-site or would prefer homeschooling or online learning, the Diocese of Knoxville Catholic Schools' Office is investigating the possibility to offer these families a Catholic school online learning option. This model will provide the greatest flexibility as the students will work independently and asynchronously through their academic courses with support being offered by online Catholic school teachers. Parents interested in exploring this option should contact the Superintendent of

Catholic Schools, sprater@dioknox.org or the principal/president of their local Catholic School. If this becomes available, information will be provided at a later date.

Appendix I:



Administrator Resources

| Resource | Link |
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| <p>DOK Catholic Resources</p> <p>Re-entry to school guidelines</p> | <p>https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/chest-lungs/Pages/Return-to-School-During-COVID-19.aspx</p> <p>(healthychildren.org)</p> <p>http://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/</p> |

(American Academy of Pediatrics)

Religion:

* Holy Heroes:

<https://www.holyheroes.com/Lenten-Adventure-s/37.htm>

* Free Resources for Lent:

<https://www.sadlier.com/religion/blog/bid/79007/resources-for-lent>

* Catholic Icing:

<https://www.catholicicing.com/>

* Catholic Teacher Resources:

<https://www.catholicteacherresources.com/>

* Catholic Online Schools:

<https://www.catholiconline.school/pages/resources>

* Blessed:

<https://dynamiccatholic.com/blessed/first-communion/program-view/session-1>

For Families: Help Your Kids Get to Know Jesus - The entire BLESSED series is available online for free! Each of the 84 episodes will engage your children's sense of wonder and take them on an unforgettable adventure into the story of Jesus and the life-giving truths of his Church.

Sign up for the email program for a guided walk-through of the program.

ELA & Math Resources:

* Abcya:

[https://www.abcya.com/subs
cribe/free](https://www.abcya.com/subs cribe/free)

Has science too. PreK - grades
6+

* Open Education Resources:

[https://www.oercommons.or
g/](https://www.oercommons.org/)

Find resources that can be
shared through Google
Classroom or downloaded
and shared.

* LearnZillion:

<https://learnzillion.com/p/>

* Khan Academy:

[https://www.khanacademy.o
rg/](https://www.khanacademy.org/)

* IXL:

[https://www.ixl.com/signin/s
hcknox](https://www.ixl.com/signin/s hcknox)

* Freckle:

<https://www.freckle.com/> -
Freckle empowers teachers to
differentiate instruction
across Math, ELA, Social
Studies and Science.

* BrainPop & BrainPop Jr.:

<https://jr.brainpop.com/>

<https://www.brainpop.com/>

* Edmentum:

https://info.edmentum.com/Worksheet-Bundles_Download.html?utm_source=marketo&utm_campaign=prospecting%2Bfollow&utm_medium=email Grade-specific worksheet bundles for your students to take home.

ELA Resources:

* Superkids - K-2:

<https://teachers.rowlandreading.org/>

* Storyline Online:

<https://www.storylineonline.net/>

* No Red Ink: noredink.com -

NoRedInk is a free online curriculum that builds better writers. It includes diagnostic tools and assessments, targeted skills practice, a writing platform that guides students through the drafting and revision process, and instructional resources for teachers

* CommonLit:

<https://www.commonlit.org/> - CommonLit is a nonprofit edtech company with an online library of over 1,500 authentic reading passages, text sets, units, and digital learning tools. Teachers can create classes (easy rostering with Google Classroom and Clever) and assign texts digitally. Students can annotate text, respond to comprehension questions, take assessments, and more. Read aloud and translation

tools are also included. Teachers also have access to free data reports.

Math Resources:

* Zearn: It is a nonprofit curriculum publisher on a mission to ensure all children love learning math. Zearn publishes Zearn Math, a top-rated K–5 paper- and software-based curriculum that transforms the daily math block to create engagement and differentiation for all students. In addition to curricular materials, Zearn Math offers comprehensive professional development and School Accounts to support district- and school-wide learning. Visit [Zearn.org](https://www.zearn.org) to learn more.

* XtraMath:
www.xtramath.org - daily math practice

* Splash Learn:
<https://www.splashlearn.com/> - K-5 math program - has both free and paid versions. We would do fine with the free.

Information - Getting Your House in Order
(Provided by the Archdiocese of San Diego)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dIpWvs8bbi9DbpjpKFZaWnrCeRrIaifqh8UJzoaLRqk/edit?usp=sharing>

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| Information - Connection & Relationship-Building (Provided by the Archdiocese of San Diego) | https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NME0auTTCC2_sCUFW8dBSI7ABx8j4uYiWCZ_m9uxmM/edit?usp=sharing |
| Information - Establishing Routines & Structures | https://docs.google.com/document/d/17eZcV91UrCTFeejTGq2c3YvbWV9U8Gq3BkbAVtapLzQ/e/dit?usp=sharing |
| FAQs | |
| TK-12 Communication | |
| Advocacy Group COVID-19 Updates | |
| Council for American Private Education (CAPE) | April 2020 |
| Shared Resources from Other Sources | |
| FAQs on Grading & Graduation (CDE) | |
| School Leaders Say Plan for Remote Teaching. But Take Care of Students First | https://bit.ly/3aOPNzT |
| Corwin’s Toolkit for School Leaders | https://bit.ly/2UDEa8U |
| University of Notre Dame McGrath Institute - Catholic School Administrator Covid-19 Crisis Planning Worksheet | https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wjIysV6UA_oguju3fmNo2oxoRRsgKZt0UKU6eIsnRII/edit?usp=sharing |
| Leading in Disruptive Times (The Main Idea) | Calm and Comfort |
| Resources to Strengthen Your Leadership (The Main Idea) | https://www.themainidea.net/get-inspired/ |

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| <p>Need Catholic Social Media Post Ideas During this Time? Free ideas and links available through the Center for Creative Engagement</p> | <p>https://drive.google.com/file/d/1buoJolkBVL1pkBqftNYyIwRG7ippIZdM/view?usp=sharing</p> |
| <p>From Your Catholic Colleagues</p> | |
| | |
| <p>Distance Learning Plan - Successes, Challenges, & Pivots -</p> | |