



August 23, 2021

Dear Saint Kateri School families,

I hope that you have thoroughly enjoyed your summer break and have spent the time soaking in as much family time as possible. We can't wait to welcome you back to SKS for the new year!

Last year at this time there were so many unknowns, but we were so hopeful ~ hopeful to be able to be together in learning, to gather in community and faith in our church and hopeful to continue our mission of love and service. We had a successful year navigating the ever-changing COVID-19 protocols and guidelines, keeping our faculty and students as safe as possible and our students learning and growing. Thank you to our faculty, parents, and students for partnering with us to ensure a successful 2020-2021 school year.

This year we will build on all that we learned last year. We will look to the medical professionals for guidance, as we have done in the past, and use their recommendations to drive our school plan for opening for the 2021-2022 school year. New York State has directed schools to follow the guidelines of the CDC and the guidance put out by NYS Education Department further directs us to the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics. We are not doctors or medical professionals ~ school leading and teaching in a pandemic was not included in our coursework but using our resources and leaning on professionals in the field was, and that is what we will do.

The protocols below will be followed in all grade level and Encore classrooms, Before and After Care, for visitors and volunteers:

- Universal masking when indoors for all students and staff regardless of vaccination status when social distancing of 3 feet cannot be maintained. Washable cloth or disposable face coverings can be used. See face covering guidelines in the 2021-2022 Uniform Policy for acceptable examples.
- When outdoors, masking will not be required, but can be worn if preferred, ~ this includes outside recess and P.E. class. Students and staff may still wear masks outdoors and during mask break times. (indoors or outdoors) Harassment of others based on whether or not they are wearing masks will not be tolerated. Please talk to your children about the importance of refraining from making comments to others if they choose to wear a mask or not wear a mask. The use of masks is always explored in contact tracing efforts and the more time spent without a mask the more possible it becomes that a person may need to quarantine.



- Social distancing of 3 feet will be followed throughout the school building, hallways and in church for school events. When students are eating, singing or participating in a physically exerting activity, we will follow 6 feet of social distancing. Due to snack time and lunch time, desks will be placed 6 feet apart in K – 5 classrooms. Preschool classes will accommodate social distancing during class time and times when the students are eating through intentional placement of tables and materials.
- Mask breaks will be included throughout the day when other safety measures can be ensured. Children will be allowed to unmask at their desks.
- Daily Health Screenings for COVID-19 symptoms and contact will continue for staff and students. Staff and students will verify each day the absence of any COVID-19 symptom (i.e., fever or chills cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting and diarrhea). Anyone with a COVID-19 symptom will not be able to come to school.
- Age-appropriate hand washing etiquette for primary and intermediate students will be taught and signage will be posted to reinforce expectations in hallways, bathrooms, and classrooms. Hand sanitizing throughout the day with special attention during times of shared materials and/or equipment.
- Sanitizing of high traffic areas and surfaces done on a regular basis

This year we are excited to be able to invite volunteers into the classrooms and our families into church for Prayer Services and School Masses on a limited, case by case basis. All visitors must comply with the health and safety precautions of the school and parish.

Like last year, these protocols are based on the recommendations given to schools at this time. If further guidance is released, these protocols are subject to change. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding the plan we have put into place.

Thank you and God be with us as we begin another successful school year!

Terri L. Morgan

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