



COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS PLAN  
2020-21

8-10-20

St. Henry's Area School provides academic excellence while following the teachings of Christ and the Catholic Church.

## Introduction

Challenging times often bring out the best in people. That truth held firm in the spring of 2020. Schools were closed down and forced to operate in a manner that no one had experience with. Overall, we were able to adapt and make the end of the school year acceptable. The 2020-21 school year will most likely be challenging as well. Challenging to keep our kids safe, our families working, and our community and schools thriving. We have created a plan that will allow us to rise to those challenges going forward.

Our goal for this fall is to safely bring back our students to in-person school if they choose so. We will also be offering a distance learning package for those that would rather go that route. This plan will help spell out some of the protocols for us to do just that. These include rigorous hygiene and hand washing, use of face coverings, physical distancing, reducing interaction between groups, staying home when sick, protecting those most vulnerable to the disease, and expanding testing and tracing capabilities, among others. However, what can often get lost in long lists of practices is that it is not one mitigation strategy, but a combination of all these strategies taken together that will substantially reduce the risk of transmission. In other words, establishing a culture of health and safety in our school that focuses on regularly enforcing these important practices is more important than any one measure. We will be constantly evaluating our circumstances, reflecting on the health and well-being of our students and staff, and adapting to unforeseen changes. This guidance cannot guarantee the absence of COVID-19 cases in our community or building, this is a reality we understand, but we can do our best to help protect our students and staff.

Flexibility is a key component in this plan. There is flexibility built in so students can easily go from in-person to distance learning as needed. There is also flexibility in knowing that this plan will likely need to be adapted as we go. We will do our best to be flexible with you so that we can continue to provide academic excellence while following the teachings of Christ and the Catholic Church.

Mr. Smith

## Fall Planning 2020

St. Henry's Area School is planning for three scenarios as directed by the Diocese of St. Cloud and the Minnesota Department of Education.

- Scenario 1: In-person

In this scenario, students will be in school for in-person learning, but parents will have the option to choose distance-learning for their child if they prefer. We will strive to create 6 feet of space between children and teachers and face coverings will be worn as mandated by the State of Minnesota. This is the likely re-opening scenario for our area.

- Scenario 2: Hybrid model with strict social distancing and capacity limits.

In this scenario, the school is limited to 50% capacity of each learning area. Based upon square footage of our classrooms, we are allowed up to 18 students in each room. Thus, we would remain fully open in this scenario. Grade 4 would have to be moved to the music room for this scenario. Strict social distancing requirements of 6 feet between students will be followed at all times and face coverings are required. As with the above scenario, distance learning would also still be available for those who wish.

- Scenario 3: Distance-Learning Only

In this scenario, school will be closed and students will learn through online methods from home. This scenario may be implemented if local, regional, or statewide COVID-19 factors worsen enough to require the suspension of in-person learning. Our distance learning plan will differ some from last spring as we will have made some adjustments to our planning. Most likely, there will be live instruction throughout the day with the option of viewing a recorded version of that live instruction at some other time if needed.

Future decisions to increase or loosen restrictions and to shift between scenarios will be made in consultation with the Otter Tail County Public Health Department.

St. Henry's Area Preschool will remain open regardless of what scenario the K-6 is in.

# Section 1 - Operational Practices

## **COVID-19 Point of Contact**

The principal will be the point of contact for all matters related to COVID-19. The principal will be communicating all aspects of this plan to the appropriate stakeholders. The principal will be the point of contact with state and local health officials as well. If the principal were to become ill, the parish administrator would become the contact point.

## **Training**

Training will be provided for staff, students, and parents by using this plan as a guide. The principal will be providing that training. Items to be covered in the training will include but not be limited to the following:

- Social distancing protocols and practices
- Drop off and pick up routines
- Visitor procedures
- Hygiene practices
- Face covering requirements
- Signs and symptoms of COVID-19

## **Social Distancing Protocols and Practices**

Students will be kept as much as possible with students from their own classroom. Teachers in grades 5 and 6 will swap rooms rather than students moving through the building. There will be separation of each class in the lunchroom and recess field as much as possible. We will dismiss classes at the end of the day by class and discourage any type of gathering on the playground after school. Students that are picked up by their parents at the end of the day will stay in their classroom until their parent arrives. The students will then be released for curbside pickup.

Students will be taught always to stay to the right when traveling through the halls and up and down the steps. The stairs on the north side of the building will be used most to go up, and the stairs on the west side of the building will be used to go down. This should help maintain adequate distancing between the classes.

Desks in the classroom will remain as close to 6 feet apart as possible. Teachers/students will try not to share items in the classroom. Students will remain masked in music and recorders will not be played.

Bathroom usage will be limited to 50% of the available stalls, and tape marking a distance of 6 feet will be placed behind the sinks to enable kids to distance themselves. Lunch schedule will be more staggered to allow for more distancing while going through the line. Dismissal from lunch will also be more staggered to avoid congestion at the tray area. Recess will be changed so groups can be isolated to certain sections of the playground. Teachers will be responsible for recess pick up and using the restroom facilities at the end of recess.

Students will be reminded of appropriate distancing guidelines by the teachers and staff of the school. Informational posters will be placed all around the building reminding students and staff of appropriate procedures for social distancing, hand hygiene, and face covering protocols(these will be covered in the next section).

Special Circumstances regarding distancing:

- Limiting the amount of students at Mass.
- Converting parent interactions to virtual meetings or phone calls.
- Making modifications or cancelling high risk situations: (Christmas program, field trips, overnight camps, etc.)
- Adjustments made to the nursing office-Nurses office reserved for those with COVID or Flu Like symptoms. All non-COVID related incidents would be transferred to Mr. Smith's office.
- Limiting of non-essential visitors (scheduled/regular volunteers will be permitted)
- Keeping students outside more as weather permits.

#### FACILITY CHANGES

- North stairs will be for going up. West stairs for going down.
- Students and staff will need to stay to the right in the halls and remain 6 feet apart.
- Students and staff while waiting for things, traveling, and in the classroom, should stay 6 feet apart.
- All fountains, except the water bottle filling station, will remain off.
- Limited number of students in the bathroom at one time.
- Windows will remain open as much as possible to promote air movement.
- No cooperative activities between classes unless remote.

### **Classroom Configuration**

We will seek to maximize physical distance between students in the classroom. We will remove tables in the kindergarten room and replace them with desks. Desks will be facing in the same direction, rather than facing each other, to reduce the possibility of transmission of germs.

## **Health Screening at Entrance for All**

Maintaining 6 feet between households, students will have their temperature taken using an infrared thermometer. If the temperature reads 100.4°F or more, the student will be sent home immediately. Parents should wait for a thumbs up before leaving at drop off. If there is a need, two people may be available for temp checks. If students have ridden the bus and have a temp of 100.4°F or more, they will be taken directly to the nurse's office and their parents called for pick up. If temp is below 100.4, the students may enter and proceed to the classroom. The same protocol will be used for staff and visitors prior to entering the building. If a student arrives at school on a bus and the bus company doesn't provide temperature checks, the same procedure will be used.

We ask that you don't administer fever reducing medication prior to sending them to school. If they have a fever, they need to stay home.

**We also ask that you go through this morning checklist daily at home and recommend you check temperatures at home if possible. Keep your child home if they are sick. This checklist applies to all adults entering the building as well.**

- Has your child/employee been in recent close contact with anyone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19? If so, quarantine for 14 days.
- Has your child/employee had a fever of 100.4 or higher or a sense of having a fever in the past 3 days? If yes, keep home and watch for other symptoms below.
- Has your child/employee had two or more of the following symptoms in the past 3 days: If yes, keep home and look into having your child tested for COVID-19.
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
  - Sore throat.
  - Chills
  - New loss of taste or smell

- o Muscle or body aches
  - o Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
  - o Congestion/runny nose-Not related to seasonal allergies
  - o Unusual fatigue
  - o Severe headache
- Has anyone in your household had any of the above symptoms in the last 3 days?
  - Has anyone in your household traveled internationally in the past 14 days?
  - In the past 14 days has anyone in your household traveled to any of the CDC listed “hot” states that are in dark orange on the map located at <https://www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases?>

If the answer to all of the above is no, your child is permitted to attend school. If answers to any of the above are yes, then distance learning needs to take place for that student for 14 days. If employees answer yes to above questions, a plan will be worked out with administration.

According to MDH, students/staff that tested positive may return to school after staying home at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND until no fever for at least 3 days without medication AND improvement of other symptoms. Siblings and household members also stay home for 14 days. If a test result is negative but symptoms still exist with no other diagnosis, students and staff need to stay home at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND until no fever for at least 3 days without medication AND improvement of other symptoms. Siblings and household members also stay home for 14 days. If something else is diagnosed, not COVID-19, follow health care provider’s guidance.

If someone has tested positive, we will follow Minnesota Department of Health recommendations going forward.

If an extended period of absence happens, our typical work make-up policy will be flexible with each situation.

### **Drop-Off and Pick-Up**

Students will now be asked to enter on the north side of the building. Doors will open at 7:45 AM. Maintaining 6 feet between households, students will have their temperature

taken using an infrared thermometer. If the temperature reads 100.4 degrees or more, the student will be sent home immediately. Parents should wait for a thumbs up before leaving at drop off. If there is a need, two people may be available for temp checks. If students have ridden the bus and have a temp of 100.4 or more, they will be taken directly to the nurse's office and their parents called for pick up. If temp is below 100.4, the students may enter and proceed to the classroom, not the library as in the past. The same protocol will be used for staff and visitors prior to entering the building.

Students that ride the bus home will be dismissed by grade for the bus. The bus will pick up on the north side of the building. Those walking home will be dismissed next. These students will be encouraged to go home and not congregate on the playground. Those students waiting for a parent pick up will be dismissed on an individual basis from their classroom. Parents will park on the west side of the building forming a line of cars. When the dismissal teacher sees a parent, they will call for that family to be dismissed. This will continue until all students have been dismissed.

## **Transportation**

Statute requires the public school district to provide equal to and from transportation services for nonpublic school students in the district as it does for public school students. See Appendix A for Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.86.

Districts are required to transport nonpublic school students within the district on days that the district is providing in-person instruction (whether fully in-person or a hybrid) and is transporting public school students to and from school. The routes and times are scheduled at the district's discretion. The public school transportation must provide the same level of safety for nonpublic schools students who are transported as public school students, e.g., social distancing, masks, bus cleaning, distance limits between home and school, etc.

When a district is providing in-person or hybrid instruction for some or all grade levels, the district is responsible for transporting nonpublic school students of the same grade levels.

When a district is providing in-person or hybrid instruction to some grade levels and distance learning to other grade levels, the district is responsible for transporting nonpublic school students of the same grade levels as public school students receiving hybrid instruction. The district may choose to continue to transport all nonpublic school



grade levels, but is not required to provide transportation to nonpublic school students whose public school peers are receiving distance learning.

When a district is providing in-person or hybrid instruction to schools of all grade levels but one or more schools is providing distance learning only, the district must provide to and from transportation to nonpublic school students within the district.

When a district is not in session or is in a fully distance learning mode for all schools, the public school district is not responsible for transporting nonpublic school students to and from the nonpublic school.

The public school district is responsible to transport meals to nonpublic school students only if the nonpublic school has an agreement with the public school system for meals.

The public school district is not responsible to transport coursework between the nonpublic school and the nonpublic school students' homes if the nonpublic school is also in a distance learning mode.

Plan to arrange for alternate transportation or use the distance learning approach as needed.

## SECTION 2-Health and Well-Being

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

The janitorial staff will increase the amount of cleaning of high-touch surfaces in the building using approved chemicals. The classroom teachers will also more frequently clean those areas in their classroom. Students will be able to clean their own workspaces using disinfectant wipes as needed in the classroom. Gloves will be available for all staff for cleaning in their classrooms. Our students will no longer wipe tables in the lunchroom to prevent possible exposure in the lunchroom.

If someone is sick and has gone home, the area will be off limits until thoroughly cleaned. Circulation will be increased once the area is cleared, and the area will be disinfected completely. Once that process has been completed, that area can be opened.

There will be less sharing of supplies. Students will have their own supply container with their own things in there. If supplies must be shared, they will be disinfected. Digital devices will not be shared amongst students without it being disinfected. Supplies will be restricted to each classroom(cohort). If toys are used, the students will have to wash their hands prior to and after using the toys, and sharing of these toys/items will be discouraged. Toys can be disinfected between uses.

Physical Education and playground equipment will only be used by students from the same cohort. They will then be placed into a bin in the equipment area labeled "Used" for cleaning by the janitorial staff. This will be done multiple times per day. If equipment isn't in the "Used" bin, it has been cleaned and can be used. Equipment cannot be shared between cohorts without it first being cleaned.

We will have 2 playground cohorts, K-3 and 4-6. These students will be separated into quadrants by grade on the playground to continue with our classroom cohort model. Usable playground quadrants will be East Playground, South Playground Equipment, South Playground field, South playground lot. The students will rotate through the quadrants throughout the week. Students will be encouraged to remain 6 feet apart on the playground at all times. One class will be allowed in the gymnasium at a time. All equipment that is used will be disinfected between usage. Hands will be washed prior to entering and upon exit of the gymnasium.

Religious education is requesting the use of the building on the 1st Sunday and Wednesday of the month. Religious education staff will be trained on how to clean after the use of the building. Desks will not be used by religious education. No outside groups other than religious education may use the facility.

## **Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**

Staff and students will be trained (and re-trained as needed) in appropriate hand washing and respiratory etiquette. When handwashing, individuals will use soap and water to wash all surfaces of their hands for at least 20 seconds, rinse thoroughly, and dry with an individual disposable towel. All of our handwashing facilities are touchless. Signage will be placed near the sinks to remind the students to pray during their hand washing routine. Touch free hand sanitizing stations are located in each room of the building and in the front entryway. Sanitizer contains a minimum of 60% alcohol. Students also should have a personal hand sanitizing bottle.

## Face Coverings

Per state mandate, face coverings will be required for everyone in the building and on the school bus.

Face coverings will not be required for:

- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance
- Anyone who cannot tolerate a cloth face covering due to developmental, medical, or behavioral health needs
- Anyone who is eating or drinking

Alternatives to masks such as clear face shields may be considered for those with health conditions or situations where wearing a face covering is problematic. Doctor's note will be required for anyone not wearing a face covering. Distance learning is available for anyone not willing to wear a face covering. There will be mask-free breaks built into the daily schedule as we all get used to this mandate. These breaks will be outdoors with at least 6 feet of distance between students.

The following is information from the mandate:

- Types of face coverings can include a paper or disposable mask, a cloth mask, a neck gaiter, a scarf, a bandanna, or a religious face covering.
- A face covering must cover the nose and mouth completely. The covering should not be overly tight or restrictive and should feel comfortable to wear.
- Any mask that incorporates a valve that is designed to facilitate easy exhaling, mesh masks, or masks with openings, holes, visible gaps in the design or material, or vents are not sufficient face coverings because they allow droplets to be released from the mask.
- A face covering is not a substitute for social distancing, but is especially important in situations when maintaining at least a 6-foot distance from other individuals who are not members of the same household is not possible.

Families will be asked to supply and maintain/clean face coverings for their children. The school will have some available for students, staff, and guests. Staff and students will be trained on the proper use of face coverings.

## **Drinking Fountains**

All fountains will be inoperable except for the new bottle filling station located outside the main office. Markings will be on the floor at that site for social distancing. All will be asked to bring their own water bottle.

## **Facility Ventilation**

St. Henry's Area School is equipped with air exchangers throughout the building. Windows will also be used to circulate air.

# **SECTION 3-CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

## **Curriculum Planning**

As usual, teachers will prepare a year long plan for each subject area to ensure that state standards are met. Teachers will be focused much more on units, rather than weekly or daily snippets. This will enable students to be fluid between in-person or distance learning. We will be focusing on updating our reading curriculum this year by sampling and possibly piloting new resources and purchasing more leveled readers for our school.

Our staff will focus on the following learning areas:

- Reading/Language Arts standards and assessment
- COVID-19 safety protocols
- Distance learning strategies
- Technology-Tools and techniques for distance learners
- Assessments/grading expectations

## **Technology**

Our students will have access to appropriate technology to assist them either in-person or during distance learning. Chromebooks have been purchased for grades 2-4. They are currently on backorder as the demand is high. Grades 5-6 already have them in place. iPads will be shifted throughout the building to grades K-1 to facilitate their learning as needed. Families can choose to use their own equipment at home if they

are more comfortable with it. Consistency across platforms will be established to streamline distance learning.

## **Assessment**

Students in grade K-3 will be given the FAST assessment early in the year to discover gaps that may have formed since last school year. In the spring of the year, grades 1-2 will complete The IOWA Test of Basic Skills, while students in grade 3-6 will take Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments. There will be an enhanced focus on meeting the needs of our students that may have struggled with last year's distance learning period. Baseline assessments will be used at all grades to find out any needs each student may have. Flexibility in assessments will be used if students are choosing distance learning. This may be less typical tests, but more applications of concepts.

## **Attendance, Grading, and Reporting**

- Attendance will be required for in-person or distance learning. Attendance will be taken daily.
- We will follow the same grading scale as listed in our handbook.
- Communication is the key to a solid educational program. Teachers will be in contact often regarding student progress. Grades will be updated often and shared via reports at midterm and the end of the quarter. Grades 4-6 will have private progress reports available online daily.

## **Distance Learning**

Our distance learning program will be a bit different from the spring of 2020. Our distance learning will be live. We feel that classroom interactions and discussions are vital for well-rounded learning. The only way to ensure this is available is to have live classrooms during distance learning. Teachers will turn on a video platform during instructional periods during the day and distance learners will be a part of the class from home. They will be able to listen to instruction and discussion and provide interactive feedback as they wish. These sessions will also be recorded in case of illness to be viewed at a later time if needed. Flexibility will be very important, but the more the students can participate in the live classes, the better for everyone. If for some reason this plan won't work, alternatives will be available. Our acceptable use policy will be adjusted to include distance learning.

## **Learner Support**

St. Henry's Area School will be working closely with Perham Public School and Lakeland Mental Health to meet the unique needs of some of our learners. The needs of the IEP will be met, but a plan is not in place at this time. We are waiting to hear back from Perham Public about how this will take place.

### **Administration Considerations**

Flexibility will be required this year as different situations may arise. It is impossible to be fully prepared for all situations. St. Henry's Area School will change and adapt as needed throughout the year as things change and evolve. With so many unknowns this year, know that the staff will do their best to meet the needs of each student.

## **SECTION 4-CREATING AND MAINTAINING COMMUNITY**

Creating and maintaining relationships is the hallmark of Catholic education. Even amidst these unique challenges, strong communication and relationships are a priority. At the very heart of the school is the celebration of the Liturgy and prayer. The staff will work together in planning, inviting, and collaborating with parents to continue the family environment of St. Henry's Area School.

### **Faith-Filled Opportunities**

We will continue to offer Mass twice per week for students of St. Henry's Area School. We will attend Mass based on our cohorts of K-3 and 4-6. Students in grades K-3 will attend Mass on Tuesdays at 8:45, while students in grades 4-6 will attend on Thursdays at 8:45. Song leaders will be limited to 2 and one person will be the lector. We will plan on other church activities based upon these cohorts as well. Many of the other full group activities done in the school will be reserved for each individual classroom. Each classroom will have individual prayer time throughout the day. We will pray daily together during our morning announcements via the telephone system.

### **Open House**

Open house will take place in the late afternoon/early evening on August 25-27 by appointment based on family last name. Strict social distancing protocols will be in place and communicated in the invitation to families. This staggered open house will allow us only to have  $\frac{1}{3}$  of our families in the building at a time.

## **Communication**

Communication from the school will come in 3 different forms. Short announcements will come via the Remind App. Longer communication will be shared using email and printed newsletters. Parents can expect a larger volume of communication as we won't always have everyone in the building all the time.