

St. John Lutheran School | School Campus Reopening Plan

Frequently Asked Questions

As of 8/6/2020; subject to change

HEALTH AND SAFETY FAQ

Q: What is the criterion for St. John Lutheran School to be open?

A: The State of Michigan is currently in Phase 4, which allows for schools to be open, with requirements.

Q: What does “reopening our school” really mean?

A: Gathering as a school community is an integral part of education. Our plan is to reopen our school building to students this fall as we are in Phase 4. This means that all students are welcome to return to classes for face-to-face instruction, regardless of what the Rochester Community School District decides. We have developed an in-depth plan that addresses numerous aspects of the reopening process, and how our school will function once reopened.

Q: Will students be safe when school is reopened?

A: Safety is always our top priority in Lutheran education. In constructing our reopening plan, we have closely studied guidance from federal and state authorities and are adopting protocols to meet that guidance.

Q. What cleaning guidelines will be in place?

A. Disinfecting of surfaces, hallways and shared spaces will be expected every 2-4 hours by spraying tables and desks with Agent X or diluted isopropyl alcohol (75% alcohol / 25% water) and allowing to air dry. An electrostatic cleaning machine with no wait time will have regular ongoing use. Disinfecting wipes will be used sparingly due to limited availability. Students will wash their hands after using shared items/spaces; the items/spaces will be sprayed and allowed to air dry while the students wash their hands. Along with disinfecting, the Pre-K rooms, Care Room, and lunchroom will use a 3-step sanitation procedure for tables and desks.

Q: Will students and staff need to wear masks at school?

A: As we are in Phase 4, per the Governor’s order, following are the requirements.

All students in grades 6-8 are required to wear masks at school both in common areas as well as in the classrooms. Masks may be removed for brief periods of time under certain

circumstances (such as outdoor play or lunch). However, when masks are removed, students must remain physically distant from one another (at least six feet).

All students in grades Preschool and Young 5's, as well as Kindergarten through 5th grade, will be required to wear masks in common areas such as hallways, but will not be required to wear facial coverings in their classrooms, unless (1) students do not remain with their cohort class (i.e. – homeroom) throughout the school day or (2) they come into close contact with students in another class.

All staff will be required to wear facial coverings in common areas as well as when in classrooms, except during meals. Teachers will be supplied clear face masks so that students can see the teachers' faces.

A doctor's note will be required for any students or staff who cannot medically tolerate wearing a mask.

Should the state shift to Phase 5, masks will become a recommendation rather than a requirement.

Q: Do I need to purchase masks for my child?

A: Yes. We are asking all parents to purchase masks for their child. Parents may opt to buy disposable or reusable masks. For disposable masks, each mask must be thrown away at the end of every school day and parents should send extra masks to school with their child. For reusable masks, each mask should be washed at home after each day of use, and students should bring at least one extra reusable mask to school. Masks do not need to be solid color; please do not have any inappropriate messages or artwork. Disposable masks are available as well in the Atrium or at the Main Office, for any students who may forget their own mask at home. Students should be able to put on and take off their own facial covering.

Q: Can face shields be used instead of masks?

A: Public health experts advise that face shields are not to be used in place of masks, primarily because they are open on the sides. Clear masks (often referred to as 'smile' masks) have been ordered for our teachers. Neck 'gaiter' masks are also acceptable as these provide full coverage.

Q: Will teachers teach children how to use masks?

A: Yes. We know that students will need training to learn how to properly wear masks. We will spend time at the beginning of the year helping children learn how to safely keep masks in place. We appreciate parents sharing this information at home as well.

Q: Will students be required to physically distance at school?

A: When students are with their class or cohort, safe distancing practices will be practiced and taught by our teachers and staff, who will also provide gentle reminders throughout Phase 4.

Q: Should I take my child's temperature every day before school?

A: Yes. A high fever is a symptom of COVID-19. We ask that parents take their child's temperature every day before their child is taken to school. If your child has a fever of over 100°F (as mentioned in the Family Handbook and the Preschool/Young 5's Handbook) your child should be kept home from school. You should contact your child's doctor and the St. John Main Office. Similarly, you should ask your child if he/she has any of the other [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, such as a sore throat, coughing, or nausea. If your child complains of these symptoms, you should keep him/her home and contact your doctor and our Main Office.

Q: How will drop-off and pick-up be handled?

A: Pick-up and drop-off locations are being finalized, with the goal of minimizing contact between student cohorts. Parents will be asked not to congregate near school doors or at the pick-up area.

Specific drop-off and pick-up procedures for K - 8 and for PS/Y5 will be communicated to you before the start of school. Currently the plan is K - 8 will be enter and leave via the Music Room hallway (door #3). Preschool/Young 5's drop-off and pick-up will be at the south/east area near the Young 5's classroom, door # 7. Specific details will be provided at K - 8 registration and at Preschool parent orientations.

In addition, when students enter school every day, they will be asked to participate in two tasks in the classroom.

1. Students should wash their hands with soap or use hand sanitizer.
2. If a student has COVID-19 symptoms, he/she will be walked to a quarantine room to wait for parent pick-up.

Q: What does the plan say about safety and cleanliness requirements for school buildings?

A: Our plan includes very specific requirements for the ongoing cleaning and sanitizing and disinfecting of our school. Generally speaking, our building will be cleaned very frequently, with a particular focus on high traffic areas and common surfaces. Windows and/or vents should be opened to maximize air flow.

Q: How will lunch take place when school reopens?

A: To accommodate capacity requirements, we will have three lunch shifts with adequate dining time provided. Serving and cafeteria staff will use barrier protection including gloves, face shields, and surgical masks. Extended barriers will be added to serving areas and all non-essential touch points have been removed. Preschool Full Day students will eat lunch in their classrooms. Young 5's will be in the cafeteria.

Q: What about recess?

A: St. John Lutheran School will still conduct recess, while fulfilling safety requirements. For example, classes must be spread out from one another on the playground, if more than one homeroom is outside at the same time. Whenever recess is outdoors, students may remove masks while staying with their own homeroom, while still maintaining safe distancing.

Q: Can I still volunteer at school?

A: We will be minimizing the number of volunteers this year in an effort to mitigate risk.

Q: Will extended care (before and after care) be available this year?

A: Yes. We will continue to offer extended care for K - 8 as well as for Preschool and Young 5's. St. John Lutheran School follows LARA regulations for extended care.

Q: My child and/or another member of my household is in an at-risk group for COVID-19. Should I send my child to school?

A: Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has defined [conditions in which certain people may be more at risk for severe illness through COVID-19](#). If your child or another member of your household is in an at-risk group, we encourage you to speak to your doctor. Ultimately you should decide whether you feel it is safe for your child to attend school.

Q: Is it okay for my family to travel out of town during the COVID-19 pandemic?

A: We recommend that you not travel out of town during the current pandemic. However, if travel is necessary, we encourage you to become familiar with the CDC's Travel Guidelines. If you or a member of your household travels to another country or to a state identified by the CDC as having a surge in COVID-19 cases, St. John Lutheran School may ask you to wait for 14 days until returning your child to school.

Q: What happens if there is a COVID-19 surge in southeast Michigan and the state imposes more restrictions on schools?

A: If a COVID-19 surge occurs, we will work closely with state officials to determine whether we can continue face-to-face instruction (even on an alternate schedule). If necessary, we will return to at-home virtual instruction. At-home virtual instruction will look different than last spring, with students receiving live instruction throughout the day. Please look for more information in future communications as planning continues.

INFECTION PROTOCOLS FAQ

Q. What if my child has to sneeze or cough?

A. We will ask that your child maintain handwashing throughout the day for 20 seconds minimum each time. We will remind students to cough or sneeze into their elbow or in tissues, and then wash hands or use hand sanitizer.

Q: What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

A: The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has identified several [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, including high fever above 100 (as listed in the Family Handbook), sore throat, coughing, nausea, headache, muscle aches, loss of taste or smell, runny nose, fatigue, diarrhea and difficulty breathing.

Q: What should I do if my child has symptoms of COVID-19?

A: If your child shows [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, you should contact your doctor. Your doctor may ask that your child be tested for COVID-19. You should alert the Main Office and not send your child to school. If the symptoms occur during the school day, your child will be walked to the school's quarantine room, and you will be contacted to pick your child up from school. Students are not allowed to return until COVID tests are completed. If the initial test is verified negative, documentation shall be submitted to the Main Office and the child is welcomed back into school. (If parents opt to not have their child take the test, they are required to have the student quarantine until at least 10 days since their symptoms began with at least one day with no symptoms, per the CDC guidelines).

Q: My child had COVID-19-like symptoms, but tested negative for COVID-19. When can he/she return to school?

A: If your child does not have COVID-19, but has another illness, you should keep your child home until symptoms of that illness disappear.

Q: What should I do if my child tests positive for COVID-19?

A: You should immediately contact your doctor for additional instructions. You should also contact the Main Office. ***You should not send your child to school.***

Q: When can a student return to school after receiving a positive COVID-19 test?

A: If a student tests positive for COVID-19, the student must isolate and not return to school until they have met [CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation](#). This includes:

1. At least 24 hours since last fever, without using medicine (e.g., Tylenol, Motrin) to reduce the fever;
2. A reduction of other COVID symptoms by at least 75 percent; and
3. 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Q: What should I do if a member of my household (who is not my child) tests positive for COVID-19?

A: You should immediately contact the Main Office and you will be asked to keep your child home for at least 14 days. If your family member recovers from COVID-19 (by meeting the criteria in the previous question) AND your child shows no COVID-19 symptoms for the 14-day period, your child may be allowed to return.

Q: What happens if my child's teacher tests positive for COVID-19?

A: The Oakland County Health Department (OCHD) is expected to issue guidelines soon, and St. John Lutheran School will follow the OCHD guidelines. It is anticipated that should any employee have COVID-19 symptoms or test positive for COVID-19, we will follow the same protocols used for students (see above). If your child's teacher becomes sick and is unable to work, St. John will provide a substitute teacher.

Q: What if another student in my child's class tests positive for COVID-19?

A: As mentioned above, St. John Lutheran School will follow the OCHD guidelines. It is anticipated that St. John will make parents aware that a student has tested positive for COVID-19, similar to our current process for communication in regards to communicable diseases. All students in the cohort will be monitored closely for COVID-19 symptoms. If more than one student tests positive for COVID-19, it is likely that the entire cohort will be isolated (sent home) for at least 14 days. Students will be allowed to complete work virtually while the cohort is away from school.

Q: Could St. John Lutheran School be closed down due to COVID-19 this year?

A: We will do our best to ensure a safe and healthy environment in the coming year. However, if numerous cases appear, resulting in the isolation of multiple classes/cohorts, with guidance from OCHD, we may need to close the school building and transition all students to virtual learning for a time. Parents will be updated regularly should that need arise.

ACADEMICS AND PROGRAMMING FAQ

Q: Will my child's curriculum be changed this year?

A: Our school will still deliver high quality instruction in core subjects (religion, language arts, math, science and social studies). Special requirements will be in place for departmentalized classes and special area subjects (see sections below). The implementation of safety and health requirements (outlined earlier in this FAQ) will create new complexities in instruction, but our commitment remains to provide your child the best possible Christ-centered education.

Q: Will my child's classroom look different?

A: We will space apart desks and tables in classrooms to practice safe distancing measures. In order to maximize floor space, teachers have removed non-essential furniture and other items. Desks and tables are arranged so that they face the front of the room. All students in K-8 will have personal desks. These steps were taken to minimize risk of any infection in the classroom.

Q: Will students share school supplies?

A: No. Students will not share school supplies (e.g., books, crayons, technology, etc.), including for such subjects as art and music. Exceptions may be made for activities outdoors (such as outdoor physical education classes). Additional Chromebooks have been ordered to provide 1 to 1 technology for K - 5 as well as 6 - 8 which was already in place. If it is impossible to not share supplies, those items will be cleaned immediately.

Q: Will students still change classes?

A: Students in K - 5 will remain primarily in their homerooms for instruction, with many special subject area teachers rotating to classes. For middle school, students change classes for core subjects (religion, language arts, math, science and social studies) and students are required to wear masks, providing some flexibility with planning. Middle school students can continue to rotate to other classrooms, or remain in their cohorts; details will be shared as plans are finalized.

Q: Will schools still offer classes in special subject areas (e.g., art, music, PE, etc.)?

A: Yes. As with departmentalization (see last question), special subject area teachers will travel to each class's homeroom for instruction whenever possible. This will be particularly likely for such subjects as art, computers (1 - 5) and foreign language. If students visit spaces such as the gymnasium, sanctuary, or library, the room must be cleaned after every cohort.

Q: Will students participate in field trips?

A: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, St. John Lutheran School will not participate in in-person field trips while the state is in Phase 4.

Q: I need to meet with a teacher or the principal. Can these meetings occur?

A: Yes. These meetings can take place virtually via phone or video chat or face-to-face, while practicing safe distancing. Previously scheduled personal appointments may also be available, on a limited priority basis.

Q: Will school chapel still take place?

A: School chapel falls under the guidelines of worship. Chapel will be held in the sanctuary, where seating accommodates spacing requirements using alternating rows. To keep within capacity requirements, there will be a K - 4 chapel and a 5 - 8 chapel. Students will remain in their cohorts, and chapel families will not occur this year.

Q: How will extracurricular activities be impacted this year?

A: Our plan provides guidance on specific extracurricular activities. Highlights of this guidance include (by activity):

- **Athletics:** We reference Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) guidelines for general athletics information. We are specifically awaiting further information from our league, the North Suburban Lutheran Athletic Association (NSLAA). More information will be provided to parents as it is known.
- **Band:** The current plan is to provide Beginning Band as well as Advanced Band, with guidelines, including students must be physically distant, and special regular cleaning procedures will be implemented. Additional details will be shared as plans are finalized.
- **Choir:** We are currently planning on holding middle school choir as well as music classes for grades K-5 (by individual grade level) in the sanctuary, to allow for safe distancing.
- **Skit/Drama:** This was to be held in the fall and may be rescheduled to the spring. Additional information will be shared as it becomes available.
- **Other Activities:** For other activities (e.g., chess, TGA golf, etc.), St. John must meet specific health and safety requirements. If such requirements cannot be met, these activities will be conducted virtually or canceled.

Q. Is there a virtual learning option?

A. St. John Lutheran School recently shared information about a webcam instruction learning option for the 2020-2021 school year, for K - 8, as an option for parents not ready for their children to return to campus.

Q. What if we have to go to remote learning?

A. Should the state shift to Phase 3, or should we need to be at remote learning this year for a period of time, remote learning would apply for K - 8 students, with an enhanced technology and instruction plan from the spring. Preschool and Young 5's follow different guidelines under LARA and might be able to be opened under Phase 3 (details would be provided to parents if the state shifts to Phase 3). Additional Chromebooks have been purchased allowing for our 1:1 Chromebook technology in the Middle School to also be 1:1 Chromebook Technology for K - 5 as well. Expectations, live teaching lessons and teaching of specials will all be a part of remote learning if we go into Phase 3. Look for more information in future communications as planning continues.

TUITION AND FEES

Q: Will tuition and fees be adjusted?

A: While this school year may look different, our school will continue to provide a rigorous academic experience while supporting the moral and spiritual development of each student. In addition, St. John Lutheran School depends upon tuition revenue to pay our employees who do this work and to support other school-related expenses, as salaries and benefits are the majority of our budget.

Q. Is there a pandemic tuition policy?

A. The current Family Handbook and Preschool Handbook details the enrollment, tuition and withdrawal policies. These current policies are in affect and any questions or concerns may be shared with Admissions or the Principal. If more than 50% of the scheduled school days for the month are in remote learning, a 10% credit discount of the student's net tuition for the month will be provided to families.

Q. Will other school costs change?

A: Lunch prices, care room fees, athletic participation will remain unchanged, with no increase for 2020-2021. Free and reduced lunch will continue to be offered to families who qualify.

Q: I am having difficulty paying tuition, as my own workplace has been impacted by COVID-19. What do I do?

A: We know that some families may have difficulties paying tuition due to the loss of pay during workplace closures, and we are ready to support those in need of assistance. If this is happening to you, please contact Admissions for more information. We encourage families with a K - 8 student to submit an application to TADS.com for tuition assistance, throughout the school year. We will do our very best to work with you.

GENERAL FAQ

Q. Is the dress code still in effect?

A. At this time, we are planning on the dress code as usual. The dress code helps provide a consistent look among the students, keeping the focus on academics. During this time of uncertainty and change, having a consistent attire can actually bring continuity for the students. We do recognize the financial impact of purchasing dress code items. We encourage parents to utilize the 'Plaid Exchange', purchasing gently used uniform items for nominal prices. Some of our vendors offer lower price point items as well. Casual days will be offered as well as Casual for a Cause days. Students may also continue to wear school approved spirit wear attire.

Q. Will Preschool/Young 5's remain open even if the state is in Phase 1, 2, or 3?

A. If a school operates a preschool that is licensed by child care licensing, the school has the option to have those classrooms remain open to provide care to young children during the pandemic. (Note: In Phase 3, enrollment in this type of child care would likely be limited by executive order, such as only for children of essential workers).

Q. Will there be Parent Network events, class parties, or other school assemblies?

A. We will review parent network events, special events, class parties, and school assemblies based on state guidelines and requirements. Updates will be provided frequently.

Q. Will bussing still be available?

A. For the 2020-2021 school year, RCS is still planning to make free bus transportation available for students living in the RCS district. However, per a recent update from the district, RCS will *not* be providing transportation during the time that RCS will be having remote learning only, currently in effect through October 1. Specific bus transportation guidelines and routes will be shared as soon as they are provided by the RCS bus transportation company. (Note: If you already contacted the Main Office in June with your bus transportation request, you do not need to do so again).

Q. Will classes be located in the portable classrooms?

A. Yes, we will still be using the portable classrooms for the 2020-2021 school year. As 5th grade is too large for the portable classrooms, we will be adjusting the classes that will be located in the portables this year.

Q. What about air circulation of the classrooms?

A. Our facilities manager is reviewing all air exchanges, to ensure they are working with peak performance and to ensure proper ventilation and air circulation. Teachers are also encouraged to open windows when possible. This includes the portable classrooms.

Q. Will students be able to use lockers or cubbies?

A. The plan for lockers and cubbies is being reviewed to be able to best provide students with personal item storage while also allowing for distancing to occur. Gym locker usage is also being reviewed. Details will be provided as the school year gets closer.

Q. What about the bathroom sinks and drinking fountains?

A. New sinks have been purchased and are being installed in the upper grade bathrooms (located closest to the gym), replacing the outdated existing sinks and providing proper water flow for efficient handwashing. Water bottle filling stations will be provided throughout the campus. (Drinking fountain spigots will be removed). The elementary restrooms (located on the west end) and the portable classroom restrooms provide acceptable water flow and have up-to-date plumbing.

This information is prepared based on guidance and information available from the Center for Disease Control, The Oakland County Health Department, Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools (MANS), and the Michigan District-Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.