



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



2020-2021 Addendum to the Parent-Student Handbook Related to the Covid-19 Pandemic

The following document was prepared using the requirements and guidelines published by the Connecticut State Department of Education entitled,

“Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut’s Plan to Learn and Grow Together”

as well as guidance provided by the Office of the Superintendent of the Diocese of Bridgeport in the document entitled,

“We Face It Together: Faith, Academics, Community and Empowerment”.

During the 2020-2021 school year this addendum to the Parent-Student Handbook will supersede the normal handbook for the sections in this addendum. All other policies in the normal handbook that are unrelated to the Covid-19 pandemic remain in place. Therefore it is imperative that parents read both the normal handbook and this addendum and sign the signature page when provided.



Scenario One: Attending School In-Person

1. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND HEALTHY HYGIENE
 - a. Face Masks
 - b. Cleaning Protocols
2. NURSING/HEALTH OFFICE AND SICK STUDENTS
3. PHYSICAL DISTANCING
 - a. Facilities
 - b. Office
 - c. Mass
 - d. Arrival
 - e. Tardy Arrival Procedures
 - f. Busses
 - g. Cohort Grouping
 - h. In the classroom
 - i. Common Areas
 - j. Bathrooms
 - k. Dismissal
 - l. General Information
4. PARENTS, VOLUNTEERS, AND VISITORS
5. LUNCH AND SNACK
6. STUDENT SUPPLIES
7. UNIFORMS
8. PRESCHOOL
 - a. Arrival
 - b. Face Masks
 - c. Items From Home
 - d. Cohort Grouping
 - e. Bathroom
 - f. Lunch and Snack
9. AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM (ASP)
 - a. After School Wellness Policy
 - b. Registration
 - c. Arrival
 - d. Common Spaces
 - e. Supplies
 - f. Snack
 - g. Dismissal



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



- h. Little Lions Preschool After School Program
- 10. SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES
 - a. Physical Well-Being
 - b. Social Emotional Well-Being
 - c. Financial Support

Scenario Two: Sudden School Closure

- 1. ALL CLASS STANDARDS
 - a. St. Mark Little Lions Preschool
 - b. Kindergarten through Grade 3
 - c. Grades 4 and 5
 - d. Middle School

Scenario Three: Temporary Distance Learning Instruction for Quarantined Students



2020-2021 Re-Opening Procedures

Scenario One: Attending School In-Person

We recognize the need for students to attend school in-person to the degree that health conditions allow. As such, we have developed plans to increase the safety of everyone at St. Mark School by changing how we use our space and implementing new practices that allow for personalized learning during times of pandemic.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND HEALTHY HYGIENE

Face Masks

- All adults who enter the building must supply and wear a face mask that covers their nose and mouth.
- Students are asked to supply their own and arrive in a school appropriate face mask (for example inappropriate graphic designs). If desired, a St. Mark uniform mask is available for purchase through Blake's Uniform store.
- Gaiters and masks with valves are not permitted.
- Masks brought from home may not include any graphics or wording that would be contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church, offensive, or insensitive in any manner.
- The principal reserves the right to decide if a mask is or is not acceptable to be worn during the school day.
- Students are required to keep an additional school appropriate face mask in a zip lock baggie (labeled with their name) in their backpack in case of emergency (mask falls on the floor, etc.).
- In case of emergency, the school nurse will have a limited supply of child size disposable masks available.
- Students in grades PK-8 are required to wear face masks at all times when inside the building. (See guidelines specified in the document put out by Diocese of Bridgeport Schools).
- Students in grades PK-8 are required to wear face masks at all times outside when social distancing of 6 feet cannot be maintained during low impact activity. (See guidelines specified in the document put out by Diocese of Bridgeport Schools).
- PK-8 students will have mask breaks when it is safe for all students. The teacher will alert students when this designated time begins and ends.
- School appropriate lanyards or similar devices to hold face masks when not in use will be permitted. Please note: if your student's teacher requested such a device on the classroom supply list for the school year please be sure to provide for your student.



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



Cleaning Protocols

- We have ordered and will provide adequate supplies including soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissues, sanitizing wipes, and other recommended COVID-19 sanitizing supplies.
- A day porter has been employed to perform cleaning during the school day.
- We employ an Industrial Commercial Cleaning Company to perform nightly cleaning of the school building.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be available at building entrances, in school hallways, classrooms and other common areas.
- Students will wash/sanitize hands before entering the building and classrooms.
- Students will wash/sanitize hands before and after eating snack and lunch.
- School owned Chromebooks will be sanitized between use.
- Any shared instructional manipulatives, classroom library books, or supplies that cannot be individualized will be sanitized between student use.
- Desks and chairs will be sanitized regularly throughout the day.
- Bathrooms will be sanitized regularly throughout the day.
- High touch surfaces will be sanitized regularly including playground equipment between class use.
- Each class will have its own recess toys to use and those toys will not be shared between grades. These items may include balls, hula hoops, Frisbees, etc. Toys from home will not be permitted.

NURSING/HEALTH OFFICE AND SICK STUDENTS

- St. Mark School will comply with the Stratford Department of Public Health guidance for schools.
- The Stratford Health Department Head Nursing guidelines and procedures will be followed.
- The nurse's office will have a separate Symptomatic Space when COVID-19 is suspected.
- Non-emergency trips to the nurse's office will be limited.
- All classrooms will be supplied bandages and gloves.
- Chapstick/lip balm (not makeup) will be permitted for use in the classrooms.
- Parents/guardians are required to have a plan in place prior to the start of school for picking up a student immediately.
- Before sending your child to school each day, we ask that you review the following information to ensure they are healthy and will have a successful day. In the event that your child has any symptoms on this list, please do not send him/her to school. Contact your health care provider and our school nurse for further information and next steps.



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



- A temperature of 100 degrees or greater without fever reducing medication such as Tylenol, Motrin, Advil or Cold Medication for at least 24 hours
- Cough and Sore throat
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing
- Muscle pain
- Chills
- Headache
- Changes in taste or smell
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Facilities

- Preschool will utilize the preschool room as well as former Kindergarten classroom
- Kindergarten has moved to the former grade 4 classroom
- Grade 4 has moved to the Innovation Zone
- Grade 5 has moved to the former grade 6 classroom
- Grade 6 has moved to the former grade 5 classroom
- Grade 7 has moved to the former grade 8 classroom
- Grade 8 has moved to the former grade 7 classroom (lab)
- All classrooms and office areas within the school building have been set up following the Diocesan requirements to maximize social distancing.
- All student desks/chairs facing will be facing the same direction.
- All unnecessary rugs, furniture and other items that cannot be easily sanitized have been removed from the classrooms.
- Floor markings have been installed in the classrooms and main hallway to illustrate to students social/physical distancing.
- Plexiglass barriers have been placed on the reception counter of the Main Office.
- Signage has been posted related to good hygiene protocol and the requirement of face masks in all areas of the school.
- St. Mark School student use of the cafeteria is suspended at this time.



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



Office

- Prayers and announcements will be done by office staff to limit the traffic in the office and the number of people using the PA system.
- A staff member will collect classroom mail from a designated spot outside the classroom.
- Office desks and tables are for office staff only.
- The conference room and faculty room will be available for teacher/staff use during prep periods.

Mass

- To begin the year, students will not attend an in-person Mass that is open to the public.
- If students attend an in-person Mass, social distancing protocols will be followed.

Arrival

- Arrival will utilize multiple entrances to the school building dependent on grade level.
- We strongly encourage you to drop your student off at their designated drop off location, however, we understand there are circumstances where students in grades K-2 will need assistance from parents to get out of their vehicle. Parents will be permitted in these circumstances to walk their student to the “goodbye zone” to await further instruction to cross. Parents will not be permitted to cross with the students. Adults must wear face masks exiting their vehicle and in the “goodbye zone.”
- “Goodbye zone” students in grades K-2 will enter through the K-4 entrance.
- St. Mark School will follow Stratford Public Schools to partner with the Durham Bus Company to ensure that protocols outlined by the State Department of Education for the determined transmission risk are identified and implemented.
- Buses and vans will unload at the Parish Center doors.
- Grades K-4 will enter through the doors next to Grade 1.
- Grades 5-8 will enter through the School Main Office Entrance.
- Student and faculty/staff temperatures will be checked upon arrival.
- If a student’s temperature reads above 100 degrees upon arrival, the student will be immediately escorted to the nurse’s office.
 - The nurse will take a second temperature reading (according to CDC guidelines) to account for an environmental false reading.
 - If the second temperature reading is above 100 degrees, the nurse will follow CDC and local health department guidelines for notifying a parent and pickup.



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



Tardy Arrival Procedures

- Students who arrive late to school must use the blue awning door where they will be greeted by a staff member.
- The student's temperature will be taken and they will be issued a tardy slip.
- Parents will not be permitted within the school building when dropping off students who are late.

Buses

- St. Mark School will follow Stratford Public Schools to partner with the Durham Bus Company to ensure that protocols outlined by the State Department of Education for the determined transmission risk are identified and implemented.
- St. Mark School will follow the Stratford Public School guidelines related to bussing, social distancing, and the wearing of face masks.
- Parents are encouraged, if possible, to drive students to school at least at the beginning of the school year.

Cohort Grouping

- Each grade level is considered a “cohort” which means that the students in this class will remain together.
- A daily contact tracing log will be kept outside each classroom door.
- This procedure follows the published guidelines and will assist with any necessary contact tracing during the school year.
- Middle School teachers and the teachers of the “special subjects” of Music, Art, Innovation and Spanish will move into each cohort to teach their classes.
- Music Instruction may include reading and writing music, hand clapping and snapping, and studying musicians, etc.
- Humming will be permitted.
- Face masks will be worn when students are singing.
- When singing, all students will face in the same direction.
- Indoor singing will be limited to 30 minutes followed by at least 20 minutes of non-singing time to allow the roof exhaust fan system to provide appropriate air circulation.
- Hand instruments such as rhythm sticks, shakers, percussion instruments, and other shared items will be used only when the teacher has the time and ability to clean and disinfect each instrument using approved cleaners after each use.
- There will be no clustering of students in close singing groups.
- A minimum indoor physical distance of 9x6 feet between each singer/student will be maintained.



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



- Larger cohorts that preclude appropriate distancing will meet in a larger area (e.g. gym, etc.) for music class.
- Use of any outdoor space for singing will meet mandated student distancing requirements of a physical distance of at least 6 feet.
- Students will not be traveling to change classes this year until further notice.
- Physical Education classes will be held as a cohort outdoors, weather permitting, and in the Gym during inclement weather.
- Cohorts will utilize outdoor spaces when possible.
- Any Art supplies provided for special projects by the school will be sanitized in between class use.

In the classroom

- Students will be required to sanitize their hands upon entering the classroom.
- Students will report directly to their desks in the morning.
- The classroom teacher will implement COVID-19 classroom procedures for students to hang up coats and personal belongings allowing for physical distancing during those times.
- Desks will be spaced 6 feet apart when feasible and not less than 4 feet apart.
- Students are required to wear face masks in the school building at all times unless directed by their teacher that they may remove them for a break.
- When in small groups, it will be mandatory for students to wear face masks.
- Teachers will have the ability to use outdoor spaces when possible to conduct lessons.
- During outdoor lessons, students will be appropriately socially distanced.

Common Areas

- Common areas at St. Mark School include church, hallways, bathrooms, gym, main office, faculty room, and playground.
- Student movement will be limited throughout the building.
- Students will be required to wear a face mask while inside the school building.
- Socially distanced markings will be placed on floors outside of bathrooms, in the hallways, at water filling stations, and in doorways.

Bathrooms

- Social distancing protocols will be mandated for rest rooms.



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



- In order to adhere to social distancing, the number of students allowed in the bathroom will be limited.
- A building-wide procedure will be implemented in order to control the number of students in the bathroom at one time while maintaining social distancing. These procedures will be taught, modeled, and reviewed regularly by classroom teachers.

Dismissal

- Parents must notify the school office of any early dismissal prior to arriving at the school building, as parents will not be permitted inside the building.
- Students who need to be picked up early will be dismissed outside of the Main Office door. The office will dismiss students to their parents at the door and the office will sign the students out.
- St. Mark School will follow Stratford Public Schools to partner with the Durham Bus Company to ensure that protocols outlined by the State Department of Education for the determined transmission risk are identified and implemented.
- Bus students will be dismissed first out the Parish Center doors.
- After School students will be dismissed after bus students have cleared the hallways into the gym.
- Upon exiting your vehicle to pick up your children, adults are required to have a face mask on at all times.
- Walkers grades K-4 will exit through the doors next to Grade 1.
- Walkers grades 5-8 will exit through the School's Main Office Entrance.
- We will continue the dismissal plan from years past, where we will dismiss oldest to youngest students by grade.
- Students will be dismissed to their parents, who are expected to wait using social distancing guidelines.
- **Due to cleaning protocols, students will not be permitted back into the building after dismissal from school.**

General Information

- Assemblies will be suspended until further notice.
- Field trips are suspended until further notice.
- After school extracurricular activities (zumba, art, strings, robotics, etc.) will be suspended until further notice.
- In person parent meetings will be suspended until further notice.
- Supply drop off will be addressed in a different communication to parents.
- Back to School Night will be addressed in a different communication to parents.



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



- Parent/Teacher Fall Conferences will be addressed in a different communication to parents.
- Students and parents may not congregate on school grounds after dismissal until further notice.
- Students will not be permitted on playground equipment after dismissal until further notice.

PARENTS, VOLUNTEERS, AND VISITORS

- Emergency personnel will always be permitted to enter St. Mark School.
- St. Mark School will suspend all volunteering opportunities until further notice.
- Class celebrations for grades K - 8 will be held on Halloween, Christmas, and end of year. Any additional celebrations will be at the discretion of the classroom teacher with the approval of the Principal.
- Class celebrations will take place without the help of volunteers with party goods supplied and planned by the room parents.
- Parents who need to submit paperwork, drop off forgotten items, etc. are asked to place these items in the bins outside of the main entrance to school. We will be checking these bins frequently during the school day.
- **At least for the start of the 2020-2021 school year** no parents or other visitors will be permitted to enter the school building before, during, and after school hours without the permission of the principal.
- In extreme circumstances, if a parent or visitor is given permission to enter the school building they must sign in, be wearing a face mask, use the touchless hand sanitizer tower installed within the front foyer and be required to have their temperature taken.

LUNCH AND SNACK

- Students will be eating lunch in classrooms until further notice.
- The milk program will be suspended until further notice.
- The lunch program is dependent on Sodexo and Stratford Public Schools.
- Hot lunch is suspended until further notice. We are waiting on details from Sodexo for a bagged lunch option to begin.
- Students will be required to bring lunch from home in either a brown paper bag or a washable lunch box that must be sanitized at home each day after school.
- Unfortunately, food **may not** be dropped off during the school day for any reason. (This includes fast food, water bottles, and hot meals.)
- Students/staff may not drink directly from the fountains.



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



- All students will bring a reusable/disposable water bottle that is to be sanitized daily at home.
- Students may use the fountain for refilling water bottles only.
- Students must bring snacks from home.
- Teachers in grades 1-8 will not be permitted to touch food to open packaging. Kindergarten package opening will be at the discretion of the teacher. Disposable gloves will be used to open packaging.
- Students must be able to independently open all food containers, packaging and water bottles.
- Please do not send any of these items to school unless you know your child can independently open.

STUDENT SUPPLIES

- Students will not share materials or supplies. Please check in with your student regularly to confirm they have the supplies they need. This will assist us in eliminating lending and borrowing between students.
- Students will have their own pencils, markers, scissors, and glue sticks, etc. in a labeled container. (Grade specific student supply list will be provided and sent home.)
- Student supplies are to remain in the classroom and not transported home or the After School Program.
- Classroom libraries and shared books will utilize a 72-hour sitting rule similar to that of many public libraries.
- Classroom teacher specific student supply lists are for classroom use.
- Parents are asked to provide separate classroom and art supplies. See Art supply list provided by Art teacher.
- Any Art supplies provided for special projects by the school will be sanitized in between class use.

UNIFORMS

- In accordance with the Diocesan Re-Opening Plan for 2020-21, ties are classified as a non-essential uniform item for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Boys will be permitted to wear uniform polos (long or short sleeved) throughout the course of the 2020-2021 school year.
- All students grade K-8 must be able to independently put their shoes and sneakers on and tie them.
- Velcro or slip-on shoes or sneakers (for gym) are preferred in the event a student cannot tie their own shoes.



PRESCHOOL

Arrival

- Arrival and dismissal will take place at the entrance directly in front of the playground.
- Arrival for students with siblings in grades K-8 will begin at 7:30 am.
- Arrival for students without a sibling in grades K-8 will begin at 7:45am.
- Upon arrival and exiting vehicles, parents and students will be required to wear a face mask.
- Student temperatures will be checked upon arrival.
- Parents will not be permitted in the classroom for arrival. Teachers and classroom aides will be in the classroom to help students transition into their morning routine.
- All students will wash or sanitize hands upon arriving to the classroom.

Face Masks

- Students are asked to supply their own school appropriate face mask. If desired, a St. Mark uniform mask is available for purchase through Blake's Uniform store.
- Students are required to supply a spare face mask to be kept in a zip lock baggie (labeled with their name) in their backpack in case of emergency (mask falls on the floor, etc.).
- Students in preschool will be required to wear facemasks when inside the school building.
- When moving through the school building, preschoolers will be required to wear masks.
- School appropriate lanyards or similar devices to hold masks when not in use will be permitted.

Items From Home

- Student supplies (crayons, markers, glue, etc.) will be stored in an individual plastic shoe box (6 quart) labeled with the student's name.
- Extra clothes from home will be required to be in a plastic Ziploc baggie labeled with the student's name.
- Optional nap/rest items (small blanket, small item of comfort, etc.) are required to be sent to school in a plastic locking Rubbermaid style 16 quart container (approximately 17"L x 11"W x 6"H) for individual use.
- Nap/rest items will be sent home to be washed weekly.
- All students must be able to independently put their shoes and sneakers on.
- Velcro or slip-on shoes or sneakers are preferred in the event a student cannot tie their own shoes.



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



Cohort Grouping

- Each group of students is considered a “cohort” which means that the students will remain in their group together all day.
- Students will be grouped into cohorts for choice time, lunch, circle time, etc.
- Cohorts will have their own space in the classroom to learn and play.
- Cohort space will have their own learning areas including imaginary play, table toys, art, manipulatives, etc.
- Cohorts will rotate classroom space on a monthly rotation.
- Students will wash/sanitize hands prior to using any toys or manipulatives that are shared.
- Students will wash/sanitize hands between activities.
- Preschool teachers have the option to use the additional preschool classroom as a flexible space for organized activities, play, nap time, lunch, etc.
- Students will remain in their cohorts when playing outside and/or using the playground equipment.
- High touch areas on the playground will be sanitized between use.

Bathroom

- Preschool students will have access to the single use bathroom inside the classroom.
- Additionally, students will have access to the single use bathroom inside the flexible preschool classroom.
- Preschool bathrooms will be sanitized periodically throughout the day.
- In case of an accident, preschool students must be able to verbalize and independently change soiled clothing items with assistance from the school nurse.

Lunch and Snack

- The milk program will be suspended until further notice.
- The lunch program is dependent on Sodexo and Stratford Public Schools.
- Hot lunch is suspended until further notice. We are waiting on details from Sodexo for a bagged lunch option to begin.
- Students will be required to bring lunch from home in either a brown paper bag or a washable lunch box that must be sanitized at home each day after school.
- Unfortunately, food **may not** be dropped off during the school day for any reason. (This includes fast food, water bottles, and hot meals.)
- Students/staff may not drink directly from the fountains.
- All students will bring a reusable/disposable water bottle that is to be sanitized daily at home.



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



- Students must bring snacks from home.
- Preschool students will wash/sanitize hands before and after lunch and snack.
- Preschool students will be taught to open lunch and snack containers, packages, drinks, etc.
- Teachers will wear disposable gloves if assistance is needed to open food items.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM (ASP)

After School Wellness Policy

- Staff will wear face masks at all times.
- Parents/guardians are required to have a plan in place prior to the start of school for picking up their student immediately from the ASP in case of emergency/illness.
- In the event your child does not feel well in the ASP, you will receive a call asking you to pick up your child immediately. If you work in an area where arrival within 15 minutes is not possible, please have advanced arrangements in place.
- In the event that a child does not feel well, they will be isolated until picked up.

Registration

- The ASP can no longer accept daily drop ins.
- Students must be registered for the days they will attend at the beginning of the month.
- If the student is not registered for a particular day they will not be permitted to attend.

Arrival

- All students will sanitize hands upon arriving at the ASP.
- Students must have face masks for use when social distancing is not possible.
- Students changing from their uniforms to their play clothes will be at the discretion of the parent, however; it is preferable that students remain in their school uniform.

Common Spaces

- Students will be socially distanced at tables in the gym during homework and snack time.
- Tables and chairs will be sanitized between each child's use.



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



- Weather permitting, students will play outside as much as possible.
- Students will wash/sanitize hands between activities and switching between any toys and games.
- All surfaces that are frequently touched, will be sanitized daily.
- If participating in a high activity (i.e. Soccer, relay races, hula hooping, jumping rope) a mask will not be required for children.
- If participating in a low activity (i.e. sitting in the grass with friends and talking or playing chalk) masks will be required. If students are socially distanced, masks are not required.
- After School will follow the schools guidelines for bathroom use.

Supplies

- Due to cleaning protocols, once students are dismissed from their classroom at the end of the school day, they will not be permitted back into the classroom from the ASP.
- Students will be provided a bag containing individual supplies.
- Parents who wish to send in homework supplies (pencils, crayons, erasers, scissors, etc.) for use during ASP may do so in a gallon Ziploc bag labeled with the student's name. These will not be returned home until the end of the school year.
- Students will not be allowed to share pens, pencils, markers, etc.
- Outdoor equipment will be sanitized at the end of each day.
- No toys or electronics from home will be allowed at this time. (To be revisited as the school year progresses.)
- As per our school cell phone policy, cell phones are to remain in a student's backpack during ASP.
- Toys that cannot be sanitized will not be used.
- ASP will have their own outdoor toys and games such as balls, frisbees, etc.

Snack

- Students will wash/sanitize hands before and after eating snack.
- Students are asked to bring a snack from home in a brown bag or Ziploc bag separate from their lunch. Please use disposable utensils and containers.
- Students must be able to open snacks independently.
- Staff will not be able to assist in opening snacks in students K-8.

Dismissal

- Parent pick up will take place outside of the Parish Center doors.
- Parents are not permitted to enter the building.



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



- After School staff will sign out students.
- Students will not be permitted back into the building after dismissal from ASP.

Little Lions Preschool After School Program

- Little Lions Preschool After School Program will remain its own entity in the preschool classroom until 4:30 pm and will also utilize outdoors.
- Preschool After School pick will be at the preschool playground door until 4:30 pm.
- At 4:30 pm remaining Preschoolers will join the regular ASP and follow the guidelines set in place.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

As published in the Diocesan Re-Opening Plan 2020-21 (beginning on page 10) regarding available support to students and families the following information in italics is copied here.

We understand that these challenging times have brought new fears around the mental and physical health of young people as well as significant financial concerns for parents. In the coming weeks you will receive more information regarding each of the following initiatives which we hope will provide you and your family support and additional comfort as you send your child back to school.

As Catholic educators we, in our effort to form, inform, and transform the young people with whom we work, understand that education, especially faith based education, requires a commitment to the whole student— mind, body and soul. Further, we recognize the commitment you make in sending your child to one of our schools and the trust you place in us. As such, we offer the following supports for our students and families.

Physical Well-Being

We are pleased to announce our new school-based telehealth partnership with MyCatholicDoctor, a leader in the telehealth industry offering medical care that is in line with the teachings of the Catholic church. With Parent consent, MyCatholicDoctor can provide in-school telehealth visits that include the school nurse, the child and the parent. The parents see the child and the whole exam. Then the parent, the school, and the pediatrician have a conversation about how best to meet the needs of the child. Their team of faithful healthcare professionals provide comprehensive pediatric examinations and treatment, using state-of-the art equipment, including a virtual care stethoscope to listen to heart and lung sounds, and a video otoscope to look at ears and throat.



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



Their pediatricians can:

- *Order lab tests at Quest Diagnostics or your lab of choice*
- *Order x-rays and other imaging studies at your local imaging center or hospital*
- *Prescribe medications to your pharmacy of choice*
- *Coordinate care with the family's primary care physician*

St. Mark School will be participating in this telehealth program with MyCatholicDoctor and more information will be forthcoming.

Social Emotional Well-Being

Recognizing that this has been a potentially stressful year for students and that some students may experience some level of anxiety as they return to school, we are developing a social-emotional wellness plan that ensures that every student at every school has access to a qualified and licensed social worker.

This social worker can provide counseling to students and support to families as needed and will enable us to provide student and parent access to a 24 hour call line as well as a cache of resources to help families through this crisis. We hope to have this program in operation by mid-August so that we can help any family who needs support in the transition back to school.

St. Mark School will be participating in this emotional health service and more information will be forthcoming.

Financial Support

Recognizing the very real financial implications that this pandemic has had on families and in response to the overwhelming number of requests made on the parent survey, we are happy to announce the COVID-19 Hardship Fund.

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, Foundations in Education is privileged to announce the COVID-19 Emergency Tuition Assistance Fund for K-8 families suffering from the negative economic impact of the pandemic.

As a result of this very generous gift, K-8 families who have experienced the following COVID-related hardships are eligible to apply.

- Loss of job
- Loss of income



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



- COVID-related medical costs
- Other unanticipated financial hardship resulting from COVID-19 pandemic

For more information on the application process, please contact Evelyn Lesko, St. Mark School bookkeeper.

Scenario Two: Sudden School Closure

St. Mark School will comply with the Stratford Department of Public Health guidance for schools.

As published in the Diocesan Re-Opening Plan 2020-21 (beginning on page 8):

It is possible that at some point a class, our entire school, or all schools in the state of Connecticut may need to return to distance learning for a period of time with a plan that ensures high- quality distance learning for all students across our school.

- *Decisions regarding closure will be made in collaboration among the Principal, the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools, and local health officials.*
- *Under the leadership of the Diocesan Office of the Superintendent, key structures and strategies that lead to distance learning success have been identified.*
- *These structures and strategies included below reflect our commitment to your child as an individual and includes small-group personalized instruction. If the class or our school needs to close, your students will attend school from home in accordance with our schools distance-learning attendance and behavior policies.*
- *If you need assistance to secure access to a Chromebook during times of possible closure, please let the principal know now so we can plan accordingly.*

ALL CLASS STANDARDS

- *St. Mark School will use an online Learning Management System (LMS) such as Google Classroom or Seesaw as directed by the principal to plan and share lessons and communicate with students and families.*



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



- *We will use synchronous distance learning technologies, such as Zoom or Google Meet to engage students learning at home at least four days each week with real-time video instruction between students and teachers.*
- *We will communicate in advance, a schedule that includes live sessions and assignments.*
- *Teachers will curate or create and share with students curriculum-aligned digital learning resources, lessons, and activities such as online videos to review curricular content teachers were not able to cover during live sessions.*

St. Mark Little Lions Preschool

- *Synchronous, live whole group instruction will occur daily (at least four days each week) and will be aligned to the curriculum.*
- *Each student will receive small-group differentiated instruction at least twice weekly.*
- *Live sessions for specials (e.g. art, music, P.E.) will occur as directed by the principal.*

Kindergarten through Grade 3

- *Synchronous, live whole group instruction will occur daily (at least four days each week) and will cover Religion; phonics; reading; writing; and math and will make connections to science and social studies.*
- *Each student will receive small-group differentiated instruction at least twice weekly to include English/language arts, reading, and math.*
- *Live sessions for specials (e.g. art, Spanish, music, P.E.) will occur as directed by the principal.*

Grades 4 and 5

- *Synchronous, live whole group instruction will occur daily (at least four days each week) and will cover: Religion; English/language arts; math; science; and social studies.*
- *Each student will receive small-group differentiated instruction at least twice weekly to include English/language arts, and math.*
- *Live sessions for specials (e.g. art, Spanish, music, P.E.) will occur as directed by the principal.*

Middle School

- *Synchronous, live whole group instruction will occur at least twice each week for each departmentalized content area (e.g. Math, English/language arts, Science, Social Studies, and Religion).*



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



- *Each student will receive small-group differentiated instruction at least twice weekly to include English/language arts and math.*
- *Students may receive small group instruction in other content areas as needed, at the discretion of the principal and/or teacher.*
- *Live sessions for specials (e.g. art, Spanish, music, P.E.) will occur as directed by the principal.*

Scenario Three: Temporary at Home Instruction for Quarantined Students

Students who need to quarantine due to COVID-19 will receive temporary at home instruction while their classmates are attending in person instruction and will continue to be a part of their school and class communities.

Students will continue to receive some instruction (live and recorded) from their teachers. Quarantined students who are receiving temporary at home instruction will be assigned a diocesan learning support teacher (who may or may not be a St. Mark teacher) and will coordinate the student's educational needs with the school and the parent as well as provide academic support.

Temporary at home instruction is arranged through the school principal and is coordinated at the diocesan level. Although the teacher's primary focus will remain with the children present in the classroom, students at home will receive academic support from a Diocesan distance learning support teacher to provide personalized attention to their learning needs.

PRESCHOOL THROUGH GRADE 8

Students will continue to receive some direct instruction, assignments, and feedback from their classroom teacher(s).



ST. MARK SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



- Teachers will use a learning management system (LMS, e.g. Google Classroom, SeeSaw) to provide lessons, assignments, give feedback, and communicate with students and families
- Students will turn assignments in through the LMS.
- Teachers will use synchronous and/or asynchronous learning technologies to provide students temporarily learning from home access to instructional materials aligned with the sequence and pacing of students learning in-person. These may include some live-streaming classes and/or providing some pre-recorded lessons.
- Diocesan distance learning support staff will coordinate with our classroom teachers to join the classroom teachers' LMS and stay abreast of upcoming assignments.
- Diocesan distance learning support staff will make regular contact with students and families, including phone calls.
- Students will receive age/grade-level small group or 1-1 instruction from their diocesan distance learning support staff twice per week.