



**ST. JOSEPH  
SCHOOL  
COCKEYSVILLE  
REOPENING PLAN**

***2020-2021***

(Trimester 2 Update – Nov. 12, 2020)

## UPDATE

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As the second trimester begins, there are updates to provide to families for the continued ability to operate in a safe and healthy manner for the benefit of the entire SJS community. Please know that the original Reopening Plan is still effective. This document simply updates some procedures and information. If there is not an update in this document, the original plan is still effective.

## OVERVIEW

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St. Joseph School continues its commitment to the education of young people which comes to life through academics, faith, community, service, and activities that happen in a community that values each person as a part of a larger global community. We remain dedicated to this promise, even though it may look different due to external factors that have changed the normal campus proceedings.

The St. Joseph School Reopening Plan outlines our plan of continued operation of the school during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our preference is to remain open for the rest of the 2020-2021 school year, and we are committed to doing so, as long as we can do so in a manner that is safe and healthy and with the consideration of the guidance of health care professionals, those advising on COVID-19, and governing regulations.

This plan is subject to change and it is designed to be flexible, in order to address new public health concerns if and when they emerge. Above all our goal is to provide an exceptional St. Joseph experience for your child, while also working to create and maintain a safe and healthy learning environment.

As the following pages will indicate, we plan to take precautions to protect our students, faculty, and staff with the guidance of the Archdiocese of Baltimore and in consideration of the guidance provided by other resources, including state and local health and education agencies and the CDC. We cannot eliminate all health risks in the midst of the pandemic. \*

*\*COVID-19 is extremely contagious and is believed to spread by person-to-person contact; as a result, federal and state health agencies recommend social distancing and other methods to mitigate the risk of contracting the virus. St. Joseph will be implementing preventive protocols, policies, and procedures designed to slow the spread of COVID-19 on the SJS campus for the 2020-2021 school year, and they will be updated in response to new information. Despite protocols and procedures in place to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 on campus, there are inherent risks associated with returning to campus. Those who return to campus acknowledge and voluntarily assume these risks.*

## UPDATED INFORMATION

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### ***Continued Diligence***

Thank you to all the families and faculty who have been communicative with SJS about possible exposure and/or symptoms outside of school. This diligent communication has enabled SJS to remain open and ensure the safety of the entire community. The COVID Decision Aid remains posted on the school website for referral. Please continue to communicate with Nurse Baird regarding any questions or situations related to COVID or other health related concerns.

We ask you to have your child receive the flu shot if you have not already done so this year. We highly encourage every member of the SJS community to get a flu shot, which has been shown to reduce the risk of severe COVID-19 complications.

If your family needs to quarantine, please see this resource from the Archdiocese of Baltimore with information about this process [here](#) to aid your family.

The continuing practicing of social distancing, wearing masks, limiting activities, and proper handwashing has allowed us to remain in school. We applaud the faculty, students, and families for this. Keep up the good work!!

### ***Travel and the Holidays***

With the holiday season upon us, it is essential that all families continue to be steadfast in all the safety measures – limiting gatherings, wearing of masks, social distancing, and proper and frequent handwashing. As reports continue to indicate, family gatherings are a continual spreader and we recognize this is particularly difficult during the holidays.

We ask that you carefully consider your holiday plans and especially reconsider attending large family gatherings and holiday parties as these gatherings continue to be a significant contributor to the spread of COVID. The CDC has issued guidance for a safe Thanksgiving holiday that we encourage you to read [here](#).

Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to limit travel out of the state or country during the school year – even over weekends and breaks. All members of the school community must adhere to any travel advisories, especially as it pertains to quarantine.

**The Archdiocese of Baltimore Department of Schools and St. Joseph School continue to work closely with the Maryland Department of Health, the Baltimore County Health Department, and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention regarding safety guidelines and recommendations during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Maryland Department of Health has issued a public health advisory for out of state travel, which states that Marylanders are strongly advised against traveling to states with positivity rates of 10% or higher. The CDC warns that travel increases your chance of getting and**

spreading COVID-19 and recommends that the best way to protect yourself and others is to stay home.

Within the Archdiocese of Baltimore, we continue to work diligently to mitigate the risks of Covid-19. St. Joseph School has established a policy whereby both students and staff must notify school administration in writing if they intend to travel to a state or country with a positivity rate for COVID-19 of 10% or greater during the period of their stay (see <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/tracker/overview> if the state you are visiting has reached that threshold). In the event that students and/or staff members elect to proceed to visit a state with a positivity rate of 10% or greater, those traveling will be required upon their return to provide evidence of a negative PCR test result for COVID-19. Alternatively, they will have to complete an entire 14-day quarantine beginning the first full day they are back home.

If international is being planned, please contact Mrs. Baird for information about testing and quarantine that will need to be completed prior to the return to school.

## **Remote Learning**

Just a reminder that students who are at home waiting for the results of COVID tests or who need to quarantine due to COVID or for COVID-related reasons are able to attend classes remotely. If a student is out sick for another reason, we want them to rest and recover and therefore do not remote into their classes. A family can decide at any time that they wish to switch from in person to remote learning for their student. If a family makes that choice, the student would need to remain remote until the end of the current trimester, when they could request to return to in person learning.

## **Student Arrival and Dismissal**

Students are to be on campus and in their homeroom by 8:10 a.m. when the late bell rings. Please drop your student off in time to have their Wellness Check verified and to be in class by this time. Students are not permitted to arrive to school late. If a student needs to leave school for an appointment, they are to remain out of school for the remainder of the day and return the next school day. Please remember that students need to be signed out prior to 2:45 p.m. for any early dismissal.

## **Forgotten Items**

If your student forgets something at home, we ask that you do not drop off the forgotten item at school. Please know that your students can bring the item in the next school day. If your student forgets his/her lunch, we will provide them something to eat.

## **Opportunities to be Outside**

Students will continue to have breaks, recess, and physical education class outside even as the colder weather arrives. Please make sure that your student has appropriate outerwear (coats, gloves, and hats) to be outside during the day. Please make sure you label all of their belongings in case they are lost or misplaced so they can be returned to your child.

## **Inclement Weather**

As the weather changes and inclement weather becomes more of a possibility, know that SJS will continue to follow Baltimore County Public Schools (if they have students on campus). If Baltimore County will not be making a call for inclement weather, the Archdiocese will advise SJS about the potential delay or closing for inclement weather. Please know that SJS will continue to use the emergency notification system (Swift K12) through PowerSchool (Student Information System) for text and email notification of inclement weather and emergency closings or delays.

## **Water Bottles:**

The water bottle filling stations have all been installed and are operational. All students are to bring their own reusable water bottle to school each day which they can refill as needed throughout the day. Students remaining hydrated is important so please send all students with a labeled water bottle each day.

## **Daily Screenings**

Students, faculty, and staff must continue to adhere to a daily symptom checker every morning before coming to campus through the protocol developed by the Archdiocese. The additional question added to the Wellness Survey helps us to continue to ensure the health and safety of all. Please reach out to Nurse Baird if you have questions about the Wellness Survey. Just a reminder that if the Wellness Survey for your child is not received, they will be supervised in the courtyard until it is received, and they can be admitted to class.

## **Clubs and Activities**

The Administrative Cabinet has revisited clubs as we approach the end of the first trimester. Due to the continued need to maintain cohorts for the safety of all students the decision has been to not begin clubs and activities at this point. The Administrative Cabinet will revisit this discussion in the new year.

## **Field Trips**

We continue to have a ban on in person field trips as we continue to monitor the guidelines for the safety of all. We will continue to evaluate this situation. Teachers continue to creative in ways to engage students through outside resources.

## **School Mass and Prayer Experiences**

The ability to attend school mass with one group of students in church, in their cohorts, and the rest of the school viewing the livestream in school has worked well for this fall. We will continue to use this model for mass and prayer services for the remainder of this school year.

## **Buddy Activities**

An important tradition for the students at SJS has been Buddy Activities throughout the year. This year, the Buddy program started with a pen pal activity. This will continue with a chance to

“meet” their buddies before Christmas. We are pleased that this has been something our in person and remote learners can all be part of at SJS.

## **Catholic Schools Week Mass**

Typically, SJS has had two masses to celebrate Catholic Schools Week – one over the weekend to start the week and then a school-wide mass on Friday to conclude the week. This year, there will be two masses, but we recognize they will look different. On Saturday, January 30<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. the mass will be livestreamed, so we invite all to join us (in person if you sign up through the parish in advance or virtually). Then we will have our Friday end of the week mass for the school community at 10:30 a.m. We invite everyone to attend the Friday mass virtually.

## **Lunch**

We continue to offer Graul’s Lunch service on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Mrs. Susette DuBois is looking for one or two individuals that could commit to helping one day a week for the remainder of the year to support her as this program continues. Please reach out to Mrs. DuBois if you are interested in finding out more about this.

# **EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION**

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As we all continue to navigate this situation, we know that we all want the same thing and are all committed to working together for this. We will stand on the mission statement of SJS and the strong community to be able to walk this journey together. We know that the success we have experienced this fall is due almost entirely to the desire and commitment to work together. We want to thank everyone for their partnership and collaboration to make this happen. This year we will rely on your flexibility and patience as we continue to work together to meet the challenges before us.

We recognize that for every decision we make in our best judgement, there may be many alternatives that we could have selected and that there is support for all of them. Please know that we do not make any of these decisions lightly or without consideration. We hope that you will be confident in the choices we make as part of a plan to mitigate risk and to reasonably protect the health and safety of our entire school community while offering the strong academic program you have come to expect from SJS.

## **THANK YOU!**

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As we all continue through the 2020-2021 school year, we recognize the ongoing challenges for each person, family, and community. The pandemic and its impact on everyone are constantly shifting, creating uncertainty and unknown conditions. It is likely that we will continue to face uncertainty and change throughout the winter and into the spring. While these may be challenging times, we look to you, our families, to work collaboratively with us as we chart the course for the school year. Most importantly, we want to make certain that all our students are being taken care of and their health and well-being, spiritually, physically and emotionally, are addressed.



