



St. Francis de Sales School

Reopening Plan FAQ

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

A: Gathering as a school community is an integral part of Catholic education. We will reopen our school to students this fall only if we are in Phase 4 or Phase 5 as described in the document *MI Safe Schools: Michigan’s 2020-2021 Return to School Roadmap*. This means that all students will be welcome to return to classes for face-to-face instruction. We have developed an in-depth plan that addresses numerous aspects of the reopening process, and how schools will function once reopened.

Q: Will students be safe when school is reopened?

A: Safety is always our top priority at St. Francis. In constructing our reopening plan, we have closely studied guidance from federal and state authorities and will follow all CDC guidelines in the event we are open.

Q: Who decides when a school has met the requirements to reopen? When will this happen?

A: Our plan includes specific requirements from the State of Michigan that outlines what schools must meet in order to reopen. Schools must complete a checklist and submit it to the state for review. In completing this document, St. Francis has formed a “Reopening Team,” to discuss the Health and Safety of our students and staff when we reopen. The team is helping the principal think through the school’s specific reopening strategy and complete the checklist of requirements. The State of Michigan will determine if/when schools are ready to reopen.

Q: Will all students be allowed to return to school at the same time?

A: Yes. Our plan provides for the return of all students for full-day instruction.

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

A: In following the document *MI Safe Schools: Michigan’s 2020-2021 Return to School Roadmap*, all students, staff and visitors will be required to wear face coverings while in common areas throughout the school. Examples of common areas include the following: hallways, school office, restrooms, gym, etc.

All students will not be required to wear facial coverings in their classrooms when in phase 5, unless (1) students do not remain with their cohort class throughout the school day (2) come into close contact with students in another class and (3) are unable to remain physically distant from one another (at least six feet). All students and staff will be required to wear facial coverings if the region is in phase 4 (see Plan for Reopening).



St. Francis de Sales School

Reopening Plan FAQ

Q: Will visitors need to wear masks at school?

All visitors will wear facial coverings when in the building, unless face coverings cannot be medically tolerated as documented through written and signed verification by a physician.

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

A: We will provide each child with at least two reusable masks. We are recommending that every child have at least 5 masks including the two school provided masks. This will ensure each mask can be cleaned after each use and will provide a cushion if a mask is lost. 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 plenty of extra masks to school with their child. For reusable masks, masks should be cleaned after every use and students should send at least one extra reusable mask to school.

Q: Can face shields be used instead of masks?

A: The CDC states, "It is not known if face shields provide any benefit as source control to protect others from the spray of respiratory particles. CDC does not recommend use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings." If a child or parent chooses to wear a face shield, he/she will still be required to wear a mask in common areas unless they have a doctor's note detailing a medical condition that encumbers the individual.

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 and to refrain from touching their faces.

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

A: Yes, when students are in the school building, they should remain as far apart as possible, especially if they are in the classroom.



St. Francis de Sales School

Reopening Plan FAQ

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

A: Yes. A high fever is a key symptom of COVID-19. Parents should take their child's temperature every day before their child is taken to school. If your child has a fever of over 100.4°F, your child should be kept home from school. You should contact your child's doctor and the school's 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 the school office.

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

A: Drop off and pick up procedures will not change drastically during this time. Students will use various entrances and exits to minimize contact between student cohorts. Students will be asked not to congregate near school doors. The school office will communicate specific drop off and pick up procedures to you ahead of the start of school (See SFDS Plan for Reopening).

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

These two tasks are:

- Students should wash their hands with soap or use hand sanitizer.
- Students will be asked if they are feeling well. Temperatures will be taken for each student that complains of COVID-19 symptoms. If a student has a temperature above 100.4°F he/she will be immediately quarantined, and parents will be notified for students.

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 of our school building. Generally speaking, the school will be cleaned very frequently, with a particular focus on high-traffic areas and common surfaces. Windows and/or vents will be opened to maximize air flow. Barriers will be installed in most common areas.



St. Francis de Sales School

Reopening Plan FAQ

Q: How will lunch take place when school reopens?

A: If the cafeteria is used and six feet of distance between students is not possible, meal times will be staggered and physical barriers will be used. Serving and cafeteria staff will use barrier protection including gloves, face shields, and masks. It is possible for classrooms or outdoor areas to be used for students to eat meals at school.

Q: What about recess?

A: St. Francis may still conduct recess, but defined safety requirements must be followed. For example, cohorts must be spread out from one another. If recess is outdoors, masks may be removed, but students will stay at least six feet apart.

Q: Can I still volunteer at school?

A: Unfortunately, we have been asked to minimize the number of volunteers this year in an effort to mitigate risk. We appreciate and depend on our volunteers greatly! The safety of volunteers being in the building will be looked at on a case-by-case basis.

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

A: Yes. We intend to continue offering before and after school daycare. St. Francis will follow LARA Regulations as well as all CDC guidelines for daycare student and staff safety.

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 it is safe for your child to attend school. If you decide it is unsafe to send your child to school, we are here to help. St. Francis will offer classroom live streaming so your child can still fully participate in class activities from afar.



St. Francis de Sales School

Reopening Plan FAQ

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. Francis may ask you to wait for 10 days until returning your child to school.

Q: What happens if there is a COVID-19 surge in the Upper Peninsula 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 utilizing the live stream capability ensuring your child has direct access to his/her teacher throughout the day.

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 100.4°F), 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 participate in a COVID-19 test. You should alert the school office and not send your child to school.

If the symptoms occur during the school day, your child will be immediately sent to the office and you will be contacted to pick your child up from school.

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 the illness' symptoms 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 school office. You should not send your child to school. If a child is placed in quarantine, he/she would immediately start with a remote learning option that



St. Francis de Sales School

Reopening Plan FAQ

would utilize the live stream capability in each class. If the child is too ill to participate from home, other accommodations will be made.

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:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptom onset and
- At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
- Other symptoms have improved.

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 school office. St. Francis will ask that you keep your child home for at least 10 days. If your family member recovers from COVID-19 (through meeting the criteria in the previous question) AND your child shows no COVID-19 symptoms for the 10-day period, the school may allow your child to return per CDC guidelines and local health department recommendations.

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

A: Should any employee have COVID-19 symptoms or tests 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, your school will work to provide a substitute teacher. If that is not possible, other arrangements will be made.

Q: Will students still change classes?

A: Students will not change physical classrooms this school year. If students would normally rotate classes, the teachers will now rotate to limit the number of individuals in the hallway and minimize the risk of transmission.

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

A: St. Francis will make all parents aware that a student has tested positive for COVID-19. All students in the cohort will be monitored closely for COVID-19 symptoms. It is likely that the entire cohort will be isolated (sent home) for at least 10 days if one or more students test positive for COVID-19. Students will be allowed to complete work virtually while the cohort is away from school.



St. Francis de Sales School

Reopening Plan FAQ

Q: Could my child's school building 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 in the building, resulting in the isolation of multiple classes/cohorts, 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.

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

A: St. Francis will still deliver high-quality instruction in core subjects (religion, language arts, math, science and social studies). Special requirements will be in place for 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 faith-based education.

Q: Will my child's classroom look different?

A: Teachers have been instructed to spread out desks and tables in classrooms as much as possible. In order to maximize floor space, we've asked teachers to remove non-essential furniture and other items. We have also asked that desks and tables be arranged so that they face the front of the room. These steps were taken to minimize risk of any infection in the classroom.

Q: Will students share school supplies?

A: No. We are asking teachers to ensure that students 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). If it is impossible to avoid sharing supplies, such as computers in a computer lab, such supplies must be cleaned after every use.

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

A: Yes. We will ask special subject area teachers to travel to each class' homeroom for instruction whenever possible. If students visit spaces such as the gym, computer lab/library or another common area, the room must be cleaned after every cohort. In addition, if proper social distancing is not possible, students and staff will be required to wear facial coverings.



St. Francis de Sales School

Reopening Plan FAQ

Q: Will students participate in field trips?

A: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools will not participate in in-person field trips while the area is in Phase 4. If in Phase 5, St. Francis will meet specific health and safety requirements. If such requirements cannot be met, these activities will be conducted virtually.

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

A: Yes. It is recommended that these meetings take place virtually via phone or video chat. If an in-person meeting is necessary, face coverings and social distancing will be required at all times.

Q: Will school masses still take place?

A: The Diocese of Marquette and Bishop Doerfler has defined a specific plan for parishes that allows for the celebration of Mass under very specific conditions. Schools will be asked to follow this plan, in close coordination with Fr. Ben, in determining how/whether masses may be celebrated.

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 are awaiting further information from the state regarding athletics. More information will be provided to parents as it is known.

Band: We are awaiting further information from Manistique Area Schools as to whether or not the band program will be open in the fall.

Talent Show, Drama/School Play, Christmas Program: Due to ongoing health concerns, we have been asked to conduct such programs virtually or cancel them for the coming school year. We are planning to still hold as many events as possible during the year. The Christmas Program will happen, but it will most likely be done virtually.

Other Activities: For other activities, St. Francis will meet specific health and safety requirements. If such requirements cannot be met, these activities will be conducted virtually or canceled.