

S.F. FRANCIS

of the Lakes Catholic School
OUR CHILDREN. OUR FAITH. OUR FUTURE.

July 15, 2020

Dear Parents of St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School,

As the summer begins to wind down, we turn our thoughts to the upcoming 2020-2021 school year. We are planning to return to school in our traditional manner: face to face! We all look forward to seeing one another again. Along with the many changes, as you probably have heard, we will be saying farewell to Fr. Tony Wroblewski and welcoming Fr. Ryan Moravitz to our parish and school officially as of July 15. Additional exciting news is the welcoming of Bishop-elect Malloy to our Diocese! He will soon be arriving in the diocese as he prepares for his ordination on October 1. Together let us welcome him as he begins his leadership as our shepherd in the Diocese of Duluth.

I hope you have been enjoying these beautiful summer days which give us all an opportunity to relax and refresh before the fall schedule begins. Perhaps you are experiencing the blessing of your family and the time you have had to spend with them. Maybe this is the silver lining in a time of so much uncertainty in our world. The Domestic Church is alive and well! Enjoy your time together.

Before discussing the fall plans, I want to thank you for the wonderful care and work you have done to help educate your children by working with and cooperating with the staff at St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School during the past school year. I know it wasn't easy for you to take on this task, but you have cooperated with us and we are grateful.

The school along with guidance from the Diocese of Duluth is working on guidelines to begin school together in the fall. Using the guidance and action plan templates provided to us, we are in the process of establishing new protocols to maintain the health, safety, and Catholic identity of our school. Though much uncertainty lies ahead, there are a few things we know for sure. We are constantly evaluating our circumstances and adapting to changes in an on-going basis. Plans cannot guarantee the absence of COVID-19 cases in our school; however, the implementation of this guidance does allow us to mitigate and God-willing, lessen the likelihood of exposure to our students, staff, and community.

Together with Christ at the center, our school will continue to be a place of spiritual, academic, social, and emotional development for our students. During the past year we learned that a meaningful Catholic education, especially for the youngest learners, is less effective when physically separated from their peers and teachers. At the heart of Catholic schools is relationship and community--relationships with Jesus Christ, classmates, and teachers. Those relationships blossom and develop most profoundly when our community members can interact, learn and pray together. The following is an overview of the main components of the plan.



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Operational Practices: training and communication with staff and stakeholders, entrance and dismissal protocols, traffic patterns, health checks, physical distancing in school, communication and signage, attendance practices, procedures to accommodate student coursework, reporting of illnesses, preparedness for temporary closure

Health and Well-being: cleanliness and disinfecting processes, use of playgrounds, lunchrooms, gyms, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, face coverings, drinking fountains, ventilation etc.

Curriculum and Instruction: curriculum planning, assessments and planning for learning gaps, grading, supporting unique academic, social and emotional needs, set norms about student expectations, plan for supporting the family and student through collaboration etc.

Creating and Maintaining Community: develop plans for orienting new students and families, connect with local public health officials etc.

Of course, the plan is pending any drastic health and safety issues in our communities. Please keep in mind that St. Francis will be directly affected by the decisions of the Brainerd Public School District regarding student bus transportation and food services since we currently hold a contract with them for these two services. Special Education and Speech services will also look different as well since BPS is the residential public-school district that is obligated to provide these services to St. Francis students. Governor Walz is going to release more information regarding public schools by July 27th. At this time, I ask you for your continued patience. There are still many questions and much to be determined and we will keep you informed as information becomes available to us.

These plans will help us navigate the start of the school year. God instructs us to “be not afraid”. Catholic schools are not only rooted in faith but are led by the Spirit-we have a collective mission to bring our students, families, and staff closer to Christ even during challenging times. Our work is more important now than ever.

I look forward to serving you and your children this coming fall. It’s going to be a great school year!

Sincerely in Christ,



Jennifer Nagel, Principal

