

Reopening Guidelines

Saint Timothy Catholic School

Father David Meng, Pastor

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Mrs. Elizabeth Vanderhoof, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

This school is accredited by the Virginia Catholic Education Association whose accreditation process has been approved by the Virginia Council for Private Education as authorized by the Virginia State Board of Education.

Our Mission:

Saint Timothy Catholic School joyfully instills a love of Christ and empowers every child to achieve, lead, and serve with integrity and compassion.

Reopening:

The following plan reflects the COVID-19 conditions as they existed August 16, 2021. This document is not intended to be a final version, and it must be understood that as conditions in the school or in the community at large change, this document will change, as will parent and student responsibilities.

Disclaimer:

Saint Timothy Catholic School reserves the right to alter, change or remove this plan based on the needs of our faith community.



Saint Timothy Catholic School Reopening Plan

Our Purpose:

“To begin is for everyone. To persevere is for saints.”
- St. Josemaria Escriva

Since the successful reopening of schools across our Diocese last fall, it has been the wish of Bishop Burbidge and the Office of Catholic Schools for all Catholic Schools to offer full in-person instruction for the fall of 2021. With His Excellency’s desires motivating our path forward, we have developed a plan for this coming school year that addresses the needs of our faith community, and allows for flexibility in the midst of this pandemic.

There is no question that the past year and a half has taken a toll on your families in very unique ways. Our plan for reopening seeks to address both the social and academic needs of your children, while keeping both their physical and mental health in the forefront of our decision-making.

The success we *did* have last year was due primarily to the diligence shown on your part to keep your children home when they were sick, and the success of *this* school year relies heavily on that to continue. Much of the year ahead—with respect to the pandemic—will be out of our control. What we *can* control, however, is our response. The children are reflections of their parents, their teachers, their siblings, and so on. If we *all* can commit to removing our frustrations and potential anxieties when in the presence of the children, they will have one less cross to carry, and will be in a far more suitable position for a successful school year.

Lastly, I thank you all for your participation in the recent survey we distributed. This survey was by no means a “vote” to see which direction we would go for the year ahead, but rather a barometer to get a feel for the comfort level of our faith community at large. Those results are included below:

- 49.1% of respondents felt that mask-wearing should be a decision left up to the individual family
- 47.2% of respondents felt that masks should be worn by all, regardless of vaccination status
- 3.7% of respondents did not have a preference

On August 12th, Bishop Burbidge released a statement requiring Catholic Schools in the Diocese to implement a mask mandate for everyone within our schools, regardless of their vaccination status. In a spirit of transparency, our initial plan allowed for families to decide whether or not they would send their child(ren) to school in masks. However, in light of the Bishop’s statement, we will implement said mandate in our school until further notice.

The specifics of our reopening are in the subsequent pages of this document and were developed in accordance with the guidance provided by the Office of Catholic Schools, and in collaboration with our administration team and our school pastor, Father Meng.



Cleaning Protocols:



Regular cleaning and sanitizing of high touch surfaces will take place throughout the school day. A more thorough cleaning will take place every evening. Each classroom will be equipped with an EPA approved and child safe germicidal disinfectant spray.

Our dedicated safety team will also continue to perform routine decontamination cleanings, and will ramp up their cleaning efforts as flu season approaches.

Covid-19 Diagnosis Procedure:



In the event that a student or staff member is diagnosed with Covid-19, Saint Timothy Catholic School will report to, and subsequently follow the guidance of, the Fairfax County Health Department. In such an instance where a class quarantine is suggested by the health department, students would transition to at home eLearning until told they may return. In the event of a positive case in our middle school or junior high, for quarantining purposes, we will confidentially inquire with parents about the child's vaccination status.

In the event of a positive case of Covid-19 within the school, we will report the case to the individual class impacted, and will follow up with any pertinent details from the health department.

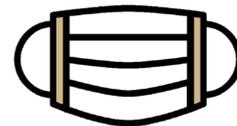
Should we discover that there are connected cases across separate classrooms, we will notify the specific classes impacted, as well as the entire community.

A Covid-19 diagnosis or exposure should be immediately reported to the school principal and school nurse.



Face Coverings:

In light of the recent message from Bishop Burbidge, we will be implementing a mask mandate for everyone in the building, regardless of vaccination status.



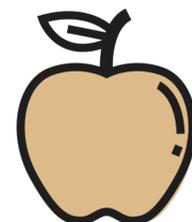
Daily Health Screenings:

Though we will no longer be requiring health screenings prior to arrival, we still recommend that families do their own checks each morning before arriving on campus.



Lunch:

This year we will be welcoming a new vendor into our faith community to deliver to the students their school lunches. Schoolhouse Grill is a local company that works with many other schools in the Diocese. They will partner with all of you to help you give your kids the lunch they desire every day- and pizza will STILL be served on Fridays! Lunch will be served in the cafeteria with up to two grades eating a time. This will allow the grades to remain isolated from one another, while still being able to socialize with their friends. Dividers will be placed in the cafeteria during the lunch period to ensure grade levels are separated and students will join the lunch line one grade at a time.



Recess:

Students will have recess every day prior to lunch. Students from different grades will not mix together during this time. Masks are not required during outdoor recess.



Specials:

We are relieved to announce that specials will be fully in-person this year. Kids will travel to these classes (PE, art, STEM, music, library, and science lab) as they would in a typical school year. Masks are not required when kids are in the midst of exercise or play during PE.



Arrival and Dismissal:

Students may be dropped off between 7:35 and 8:00 every morning. Children are required to thank the driver of the vehicle for the ride to school. Our final period of the day ends around 3:10, so students will begin being dismissed around 3:15. While students are outside awaiting their ride home, they are free to remove their face covering if they wish to do so.

Parents are asked to stay near their vehicles during carpool and especially off of the sidewalks where the kids wait.



Bus Transportation:

Since appropriate physical distance may not be fully maintained, face coverings will be required for the duration of the bus ride to and from school.



After School Activities, Aftercare, and Field Trips:

This year we are happy to bring back clubs, aftercare, and field trips. Because most of our field trips will be to indoor public facilities, masks will be a requirement for attendance on field trips.

Volunteers:

We are happy to welcome volunteers back onto campus this school year. Should a positive case occur where a volunteer was present, we will operate under the assumption that said volunteer is not vaccinated, and will need to remain out of the building until the 14 day window has subsided. If the volunteer wishes to share their vaccination status with the principal voluntarily (he will not ask), then that 14 day window would shift.



Additional Health Precautions:

- On campus learning environments will promote distancing when possible.
- Each classroom will have a seating chart to assist for any potential contact tracing.
- Additional hand sanitizing stations will be implemented throughout the campus.
- Each of the preschool and elementary classrooms, as well as most middle school and high school classrooms, are equipped with a classroom sink. Regular hand washing will be scheduled into the school day.
- The amount of students using a designated restroom will be limited.
- Whole-school assemblies will be scaled back to ensure that our school traditions can continue, but do so in a manner that is health-conscious.
- Water fountains will be accessible, but students will still be encouraged to bring a water bottle from home, labeled with first and last name.
- Air purifying systems will continue to be used throughout the building and windows will be opened, when weather permits, to promote airflow.



Mass and Adoration:

Attending weekly Mass will remain a priority for our students and staff. Students will attend Mass in-person each week on Fridays at 9:00. Additionally, students in grades 5-8 are blessed with the opportunity to attend Adoration with their classmates in our beautiful chapel every week, as part of their regular schedule.



Prayer for the Start of the School Year:

Father in Heaven we thank You and we give
You praise for all of Your graces given to us
throughout these summer months. Please
bestow upon us the courage and the strength to
follow the words of St. Josemaria Escriva as we
persevere through every storm placed in our
path. Help us to see only Your light that You
shine down into our lives, even in the darkest
hours. Challenge us to offer up our sufferings to
all of the Holy Souls in Purgatory, and keep
everything that we do focused on Your eternal
glory. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

