

# St. Gabriel School Responsible Restart Guidelines FAQ



*This FAQ will be updated on a weekly basis every Friday. New questions or changes will be in **RED**. This document will be sent out in the Bear Necessities email. Please refer to the below information to stay up to date with the latest information.*

## **Why Are We Starting the School Year on August 31st?**

As we continue to look at what is best for our families and schools in the midst of COVID-19's impact on our education system, we will continue to make adjustments to our reopening to ensure a responsible and safe start of the school year. With that in mind, this past week we received communication from the Lake County Board of Health that stated they would strongly recommend a distance learning approach if our Ohio Public Health COVID-19 Advisory System reached a level of RED. Thankfully, Lake County is still at an ORANGE level and the data looks favorable that we will remain in ORANGE.

In order to better prepare for a successful start to the school year, we have decided to push back the start of the school year to our first day being Monday, August 31st. In the meantime, we will continue to plan for an opening of school that includes students choosing either the at-home distance model, or in-person model for the first quarter. Teachers will continue their in-service professional development and technology training as scheduled, and we will send our weekly updates to keep you informed on what decisions are being made.

## **What if COVID-19 cases increase from now until the beginning of school?**

Unfortunately, we are living in an uncertain time. Our plans today are for what we know today. Governor DeWine could announce new mandates at any time that could reshape all that we are planning at the moment. Our school procedures and guidelines will remain fluid as we move closer to the start of the school. Although we have spent a large amount of time and energy preparing our plan, we will make adjustments as needed to make sure our students are safe.

## **Can a Student Choose Virtual Learning at Any Time?**

Families can choose the distance at-home option at any point in the school year. The only condition with that decision is the student would need to stay at home for the rest of the quarter. For example, if you want to keep one of your students out for the winter, you could choose to do this at any time and the start of the fourth quarter would be the earliest time he/she could return.

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**If a child tests positive for COVID, what is the plan/process for quarantine for that student me any they were in class with?**

If a student tests positive for COVID-19, the school would contact Lake County Board of Health and they would advise us on what precautions to take. They would approach each instance on a case-by-case basis. Anyone with a temperature higher than 100 degrees F will immediately be isolated until they can be sent home and disinfecting procedures will be conducted immediately.

**Why are temperature checks being done at home and not at school?**

Educating students has always been and will continue to be a partnership between parents and the school. We must trust that parents know their students the best and they should know if they are feeling under the weather. Temperature checks will still happen at school as needed. We will also continue to consult with our task force and other professionals to see if our plan is medically in line with other schools/practices and updated recommendations by the AAP, and our local Lake County Health District. Keeping all testing as confidential and reliable as possible remains a top priority.

**If I Withdraw My Student Before/During the 1st Quarter, Can I Send Them to SGS in the 2nd Quarter?**

If you withdraw your student, you would need to reapply to the school to return. We would have to consider the timing, current situation, and the other situational concerns. We would need to see what would be best for the student and the school when making that decision.

**Has the RCDL been practiced in a live situation to see how it works?**

We have tested this equipment in real-time to ensure that it meets our needs as a school and is easy to operate. There will be adjustments that will need to be made, however, we are confident in the abilities of our teachers to learn and adapt with our students. We will continue to do our best to optimize the efficiency of the technology for both students and teachers.

**How will remote learning work for families with multiple students?**

Our hope is that we will be doing a combination of both live streaming and recorded lessons. Our current discussions are focusing on how we will best meet the needs of all our families. There is great benefit in older students to be in class, live to hear and participate with their classmates. We do recognize that a staggered schedule and recorded lessons need to be a part of the equation as well. Students will be viewing the core instruction from teachers and the amount of time in front of the computer will be adjusted according to the appropriate developmental needs. Families will be given schedules from individual teachers for when that instruction will take place.

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### **How will students that are remote learning at home participate in MAP testing?**

Students will be given options on a time to come to school and take the MAP test in a separate classroom that will be set up for proper social distancing.

### **Will all students be given a device for the upcoming school year?**

Yes. All students K through 8th grade will be given a device for distance learning that they will keep as long as they choose that option.

### **How will books and other learning materials be distributed to students who are remote learning at home?**

There will be a distribution day when families can pick up all the necessary materials for the first quarter of the school year. Further pick up days may be scheduled as needed.

### **Will there be any sort of restriction on what types of facemasks the kids wear? I.e. certain colors or prints or designs?**

There will be a lot of flexibility when it comes to designs/styles of masks. We ask that you avoid designs that are inappropriate or overly distracting. PTU will offering some of our own St. Gabriel masks for purchase.

### **What if my doctor provides a note to exempt my student from wearing a mask?**

Students will be excused from the requirement to wear a face covering for medical reasons with a note from their primary care physician.

### **Can junior high students wear polo shirts instead of ties?**

Yes. Junior high boys will be able to wear their polo shirts for the 2020-2021 school year. We will be starting the year with shorts as an option as well as they are part of our "warm weather" dress code, and that has been extended through October.

### **When will we know what class sizes are going to be and how will that impact social distancing?**

Class sizes have been published, but they are still subject to change. They will include the number of students in-home and at school. We are currently setting up classrooms as if all students are returning to school, and each room has at least three feet between students. Initial responses have indicated that class sizes for each grade level will be lower than a typical school year because of the at-home distance learning option. We will increase distancing as much as possible with these new class sizes.

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### **How will our students' social emotional well being be cared for whether they are at home or in school?**

Our teachers and staff will focus on building relationships with students through face-to-face check ins and other communications throughout the school year. We will use the context of our Catholic faith to ensure that the social, emotional, and mental well being is always at the heart of our practices. Professional development and other resources will be made available to teachers as we navigate these uncertain times.

### **How will dismissal and arrival be changed to keep the safety procedures intact, but also allow for social distancing?**

This is another area where we need more information on how many students will be in-person and how many will be at home for the first quarter. We do know that parents are not permitted to enter the school building, so we will build our plan around that change once we have all the relevant information collected.

### **Why Are Junior High Students Taking More Physical Education and Art Classes?**

The older students will have Physical Education and Art twice a week to help get them moving and flex their creativity. Both of these classes can be safe with the proper accommodations. Learning and growing as a student holistically has always been our mission and both physical education and art are important to a student's development.

### **Why Are the Older Students Not Taking Computer Classes?**

We have found that by the time our students enter junior high, they have had ample experience with computers. Since we moved to a 1-to-1 technology school, teachers have been integrating computer use in their lessons and assignments. Moreover, our students spend a lot of time in front of screens. Having a computer class on top of all of the Chromebook use and personal recreational use did not seem like a good use of time and resources.

### **Will Junior High still have electives?**

For at least the first quarter, we will not be offering electives. We want to keep the students in their cohorts as much as possible and the electives last year had many students mixing together, which in a typical school year was a great benefit. With social distancing taking a priority, we want to focus the first quarter on ensuring our students are getting enough support in their core courses and that teachers have ample time to meet with students. We anticipate that the structure of our school day will also be adjusted to ensure proper sanitizing and cleaning practices. This could shorten the WIN period at the end of the day.

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### **Free/Reduced Lunch Compensation**

Families that typically receive a free/reduced lunch will get a dollar amount each quarter to cover costs for a daily lunch. We are finalizing the details and we will let families know as soon as we have everything together.

### **What if my family travels out of the state of Ohio at any point before or during the school year?**

We require that our families follow the self-quarantine guidelines provided by Governor DeWine and the state of Ohio when returning from trips to locations that require these measures.

### **If a teacher chooses to take his/her class outside, how will students at home participate?**

The teacher would give directions to the students at home and they would be given the option of going outside of their home to complete the assignment. Outside lessons would not be streamed to the students learning at home. Teachers will be working on finding practical ways to include our distance learning students in any way possible.

### **How and where will students be eating lunch?**

All students are expected to bring their own lunches. A reusable lunch box or brown bag is acceptable. Students in grades 1 to 8 will be eating lunch by grade level in Brady Hall. There will be three students per eight foot table spaced apart. Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten will be eating lunch in their classrooms. Students will not have to wear masks while eating their lunch. Lunch will not be provided, except for Pizza Wednesdays.

### **How and where will recess take place and will students need to wear masks during recess?**

Students will be outside at recess unless there is inclement weather. One grade level will be outside at recess at a time. Masks will be optional while outside at recess, but students will need to still be mindful of taking precautions. The purpose of recess is to interact with their peers and be able to move around freely. We do not want to restrict the flow of oxygen during physical activity. If students are standing around talking to each other, the expectation would be that they adhere to proper social distancing.

### **What would indoor recess look like for the students?**

The expectation would be that students will be in their seats with an activity. Students will be able to take mask breaks if needed.

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### **If my student is distance learning at home, how will we turn in work for that student?**

When possible students will turn in their work via email or other electronic means. Anything that needs to be turned in on paper will be dropped off weekly outside the main office. A schedule will be established by the teachers and shared with parents at a later time.

### **Will students who are distance learning get supplies for the related arts (Art, PE, Spanish, etc.) classes?**

Yes. Students will receive supplies if needed to complete a distance learning assignment. Those assignments may not be the same as the assignments the students in school will be receiving.

### **If a student or employee in the school contracts COVID-19, how will the school communicate that to parents?**

Parents will be notified via email if there is a case of COVID-19 in the school. This notification would include the grade level and appropriate dates. Lake County Board of Health will advise the school on what other details will need to be included and if any further follow-up will be needed with specific families.

### **If my student is sick, will he/she be in the same area as a student that is suspected of having COVID-19?**

No. Students that are injured or displaying other symptoms not common with COVID-19 will go to the clinic as they have in years past. Students suspected of having COVID-19 symptoms will go to a separate isolation room to be examined and, if necessary, they will stay in that room until being picked up from school.

### **When will families need to make the decision to distance learn for the 2nd Quarter?**

A separate communication will go out to families two weeks prior to the start of the second quarter. All families will have the option of keeping their students home at any time, but their students will need to stay distance learning until the end of the quarter. Students that are distancing learning will have the option to return to school at the start of each quarter.

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**Will students be allowed to participate in after school activities..such as CYO, Girl Scouts..etc if they choose distance learning?**

Yes. All students will be allowed to participate in the various extracurricular activities as long as those activities are able to continue. St. Gabriel School will not be hosting any after school activities in its classrooms until further notice.

**Will we follow Mentor/Riverside SD closing like w/snow days?**

No. If Mentor decides to go distance learning, we will not automatically do the same. We will be making that decision independent of any public school system.

**What happens if the Lake county is red when school starts would school be online? If so, is it the same format either google classroom or would the instruction and teaching platform be different?**

We will not automatically go to distance learning if Lake County reaches the Red designation. We would continue to reach out to our families, and listen to guidance by the different governing bodies to plot our next steps. Distance learning would look different from this past spring if all students are distance learning at home. Teachers would be coming to school and providing that virtual instruction each day.

**If Lake county fluctuated from red to orange, would the kids be in school and then online back and forth?**

Not necessarily. Students, parents and teachers need consistency. If we were to go to a distance model, we would set a start and end date that could be updated as needed. For example, say our students start in person instruction in-school and then we get to Red mid-October, we may make the decision to go remote until after Thanksgiving. If we went back to Orange in early November, we would still stay in school until after Thanksgiving. If we still are Red by mid-November, we may extend that at-home learning until after Christmas. I hope that makes sense.

**Will students use their lockers this year?**

Yes. Students will be able to use their lockers each day. They will visit their lockers in a staggered fashion to make sure they observe proper social distancing.

**If a student is sick from school, do the siblings of that student also need to stay home?**

No. Siblings of sick students do not need to stay home if they do not present symptoms of COVID-19.

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**If a student has a confirmed case of COVID-19, do their siblings need to stay home as well?**

Yes. If any family members that live with each other contract COVID-19, the students need to quarantine at home for fourteen days.

**What would the re-enrollment process be for a family that decides to withdraw their student during the first semester of the 2020-2021 school year?**

If a family decides to withdraw at any point during the 2020-21 school year to attend another school or participate in homeschooling, they would need to reapply to St. Gabriel school as a transfer student. Their application will be considered as in a typical school year and acceptance will be based on the timing, records, and our ability to meet that student's needs.

**Is financial aid available to families throughout the 2020-21 school year?**

Yes. Please contact the school if you have any questions about financial need at any point in the school year. St. Gabriel School is committed to working with families as best we can during this ongoing situation.

**What is the policy on disclosure, tracking and transparency regarding Covid cases at the school?**

If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in our school, administration would contact the Lake County Board of Health immediately. They would gather all pertinent information, and advise school administration about who to contact in our community, how to contact them, and what further steps to take regarding disclosure, contact tracing, and all other COVID-19 related communication and protocols.

**Will students be wearing masks during Physical Education class?**

Students will not wear masks during any activity where there is an elevated heart rate. Students will be permitted to take off their masks during PE when they are taking part in physical activity. Students will be expected to stay socially distant as much as possible and there will be procedures put into place to help them continue their safe habits.

**Can I use Cub Care service sporadically throughout the year?**

Anyone interested in using Cub Care at any point during the year must officially register for Cub Care. Due to possible high demand and our ability to supervise students, we may be putting a cap on the number of students in each room. This service may not be available throughout the year for families that only need it a few times each month or fewer.