



# We Belong Together

St. John the Evangelist Catholic School

Return to School Plan

August 2020

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## ***Background***

Sars-CoV-2, commonly known as COVID-19, is the virus which causes the novel coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19). At the beginning of July 2020, there are 2.7 million confirmed cases and more than 129,000 deaths due to the virus in the United States with more than 90,000 confirmed cases in Georgia<sup>1</sup>. However, children younger than 18 represent 6 percent of documented cases in our state<sup>2</sup>. Children are more likely to have mild or asymptomatic illness and much lower rates of hospitalization, critical illness, and death than adults<sup>3,4,5</sup>. Additionally, a growing body of evidence suggests that children do not spread the virus to the same degree as adults, either to peers or their adult caregivers including parents and teachers<sup>6,7,8,9</sup>.

It is reasonable to assume that the virus that causes COVID-19 will remain in circulation until a vaccine is developed and widely disseminated. A vaccine is not likely to be developed and/or widely used until sometime in 2021. Teaching prevention behaviors and reinforcing appropriate behaviors will be important strategies in slowing the spread of this disease.

St. John the Evangelist School is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for students and employees. While it is impossible to eliminate all risks of COVID-19 infection, the benefits of in-person instruction outweigh the risks, provided the school consistently implements the appropriate risk mitigation strategies outlined in this plan. The American Academy of Pediatrics strongly advocates for students being physically present in schools this Fall<sup>10</sup>.

**The following plan outlines various layers of infection prevention to decrease the risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus and other common infections.** These protocols are based upon the best information available to the Task Force at this time, which is supported by research and advice from professionals. The layers include masking, disinfecting, hand hygiene, and physical distancing.

*“COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. It is thought that the virus may spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose or mouth, causing infection. Therefore, personal prevention practices (such as hand washing and staying home when sick) and environmental cleaning and disinfection are important principles ... Fortunately, there are a number of actions school administrators can take to help lower the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread during school sessions and activities.” (CDC.gov website - May 19, 2020 guideline)*

## ***SJE Task Force Members***

A local Task Force was formed to accomplish the creation of a Reopening Plan for SJE. **We are extremely grateful for the time, expertise and vision shared by these men and women.**

The SJE Task Force Members are:

Bernadette Boisis, *Principal*  
Dea Carlson, *Business Manager*  
Megan Davis, *Admin. Team*  
Terry Edwards, *Teacher*  
Venus Price, *ESP Director*  
Zachary Price, *Facilities Manager*  
Karen Rorabaugh, *Communications/Admin. Assistant*  
Ashley Ward, *Enrollment & Advancement Director*  
Kristi Wilczynski, *Teacher*  
Monica Woodson, *Enrollment & Advancement/Office Assistant*

Felix Amoa-Bonsu, M.D., *Swift Health*  
Luis Bonilla, III, *SJE Advisory Council Chair*  
Stephanie Madson, Ph.D., *U.S. Forest Service / Emergency Management*  
Chiatne McFarland, M.D., *Piedmont Fayette*  
Kimiko Sanders, MPA, *Public Health Policy Advisor*

The protocols we have established reflect current recommendations from health officials, the Archdiocesan Task Force, and our SJE Task Force, and are based on research from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). **Please note: Should recommendations or government directives change, our plans will be adapted to reflect these changes.**



Our school day will have a slightly different look as we strive to limit contact while still delivering the excellent instruction and vibrant faith formation for which SJE is known. This plan includes the modifications we expect to follow as we open school in August.

### ***Arrival Procedures***

Our **daily screening procedures** will include temperature checks and a digital symptom assessment for students and employees prior to entering the building. Students must wear masks/face coverings during their symptom screening, upon exiting the car, upon entry to the school building, and in accordance with face mask procedures. Do not drive away until your child has been checked and approved to enter the school. **The following self-monitoring questions will be answered digitally before accessing the school building:**

1. *Have you experienced any of the following symptoms in the last 48 hours **without** the use of medications?*
  - **Loss of Taste/Smell**
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - Sore throat
  - Diarrhea
  - Vomiting
  - Congestion
  - Muscle Aches
  - Fever (temperature  $>100^{\circ}$  F)

If yes to any of the above, is this related to any known medical or chronic condition (i.e. allergies)? **For any known medical or chronic condition, a Doctor's note is required.**

2. *Within the past 10 days, have you received a positive nasal swab test result for an active COVID-19 infection?*

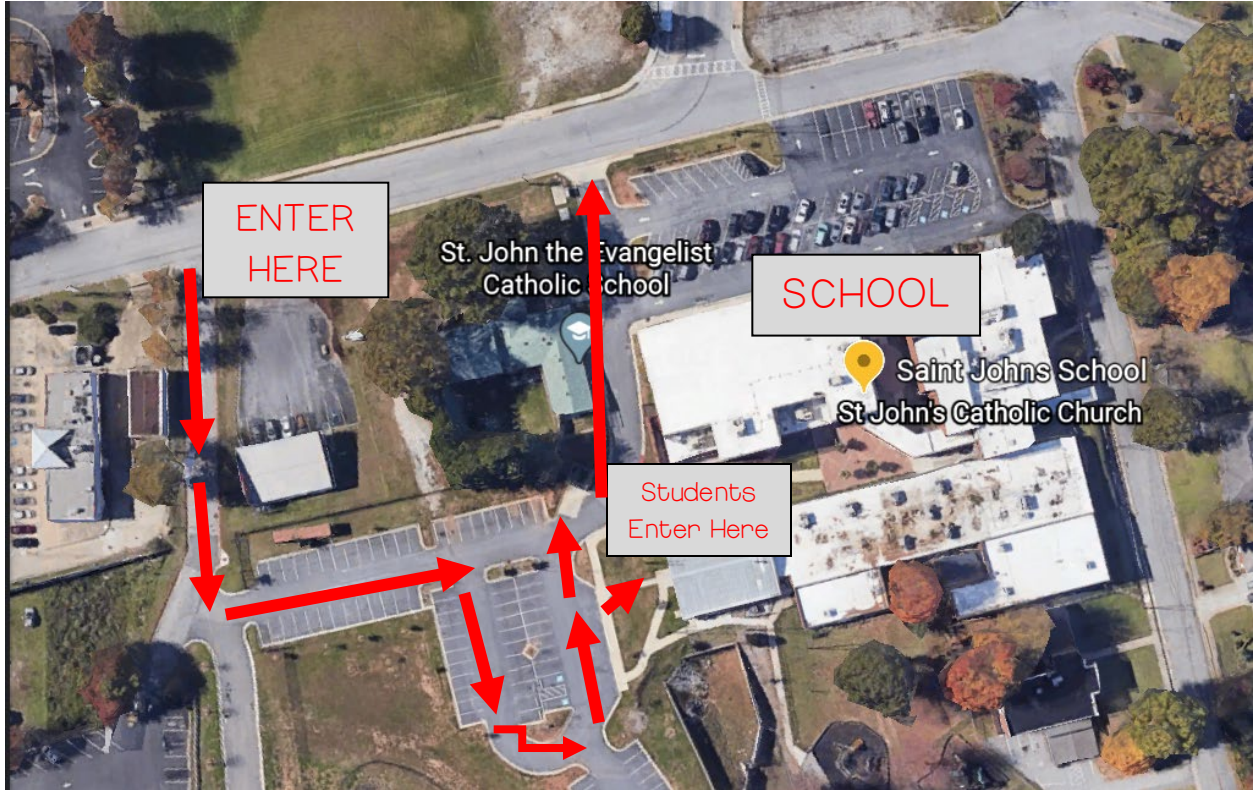
**If yes to any of the above OR if a temperature reads  $\geq 100^{\circ}$  F, the individual is not permitted to enter the school/building.** Temperatures above  $100^{\circ}$  F will be logged and tracked by the school nurse.

Rather than gathering as a school family in the cafeteria each morning, students will report directly to their classrooms upon arrival, where classroom teachers and/or instructional classroom aides will greet them. At this time, for the safety of students and teachers, **parents and visitors will not be allowed to access the school building.** Should a necessary repair to the physical building be needed, vendors will be required to complete a self-monitoring assessment and submit to a temperature check upon arrival to the school.

In an effort to decrease the number of students entering the building simultaneously, only students in PK-5<sup>th</sup> grade will use the traditional carline on Arnold Street. Students in grades 6-8 and their siblings will be dropped off in a carline in the lower teacher parking lot. Parents will turn on the McDonald's access road and enter through the back gate. Students will be screened in their cars and will enter through the back door upon a

successful screening. Parents will exit through the iron gate beside the rectory to return to Sunset Avenue. Any student dropped off after 8:00 a.m. is considered tardy and will use the traditional carline on Arnold Street.

### 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade & Siblings Morning Dropoff 7:40 a.m.-8:00 a.m.



### Pre-K – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Morning Dropoff (Traditional Morning Carline) 7:40 a.m.-8:00 a.m.



## *Dismissal Procedures*

Students will be dismissed directly from their classrooms each afternoon. Each family will receive a yellow carpool sign the first day of school. Please keep it in your car and make additional copies for anyone else who may be picking up your children. Display the family name so that it is visible in the passenger side window or hang it from the rearview mirror. The designated faculty or staff member will call students/carpools by the family name displayed on the sign. Teachers will help students to their cars.

In the event of early dismissal for a scheduled appointment, parents will email the child's teacher and [office@sjecs.net](mailto:office@sjecs.net) no later than 9:00 a.m. on the day of the appointment. Parents will call the school office upon arrival for pickup. A staff member will escort the student to their car. No students will be dismissed between 2:30 p.m. and carline dismissal (1:30 p.m. on Wednesdays).

## *Extended School Program (ESP)*

The extended school program will be available before and after school. Before school care begins at 6:50 a.m. and ends at 7:40 a.m. Students' temperatures will be taken in their cars outside of the Enrichment Center and will enter through the glass doors once they have been cleared. ESP staff will escort the students to their classrooms at 7:40 a.m. Arrivals after 7:40 a.m. will use the regular morning carline procedure (see above).

### **Early Morning ESP Dropoff 6:50 a.m. – 7:40 a.m.**



Students not picked up in afternoon carline by 3:30 p.m. will be checked in to the after-school ESP program. **Enrichment classes (karate, dance, etc.) and Middle School sports will not be offered during ESP until further notice.** Students will have time for a snack, recess,

and homework time until they are picked up by a parent. ESP staff will be stationed in the lobby and will call for students upon a parent's arrival. Parents will wait under the awning until their child is released to them; parents will not enter the school building.

### ***Reporting***

Employees, students, and their families who obtain a positive COVID-19 test result, suspect/present symptoms of a COVID-19 infection, or experience exposure to someone with confirmed COVID-19 in the past 14 days are required to report to the principal, who serves as the COVID-19 Liaison, to allow for proper contact tracing. In compliance with local and state health requirements, positive COVID-19 testing results will be communicated to the appropriate health officials who will advise further action.

Parents of children attending the school will be notified that their child has been exposed to a communicable or infectious disease in a manner that avoids identifying any community member who has been identified with the disease, to the maximum extent appropriate in each particular circumstance (Archdiocesan Infectious Disease Policy).

***\*\*Please note: If a household member tests positive for COVID-19, all individuals living in the household will be required to quarantine for at least 14 days even if asymptomatic.*** (CHOA and in alignment with CDC, California School Plan, modified with guidance from Infectious Disease Specialist at CHOA)

If a child becomes ill while at school, they will be sent to the school nurse. Parents will be called to pick them up from school immediately. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, an emergency contact will be called. Students with a fever of 100 degrees or higher or exhibiting other COVID-19 symptoms will wait in the isolated infirmary area until a parent arrives. Parents will call the school office upon arrival. The student will be escorted out the back door to the teacher parking lot for parent pickup. The school nurse will follow up with the family to determine when the child is able to return to the class setting.

### **Return to School Guidelines with Other Illness (non-COVID-19):**

An individual shall return to school only after:

At least 48 hours fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medications

**AND...**

At least 48 hours vomit and/or diarrhea free without the use of medication

**AND...**

Individual has experienced an improvement in symptoms (e.g. runny nose, sore throat, cough) (CHOA and in alignment with CDC, California School Plan, modified with guidance from Infectious Disease specialists at CHOA)

### **Return to School after Confirmed COVID-19 infection:**

The individual will be required to **quarantine for 14 days**

**AND...**



At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications

**AND...**

If the individual has experienced improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)

**AND...**

At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared or since test date (if asymptomatic)

**AND...**

The individual has not experienced ANY symptoms for 48 hours

**AND...**

The individual has received written guidance from a medical provider, or you are subject to local public health recommendations that supersede this guidance. **A doctor's note is required.**

### ***Promoting Healthy Hygiene***

Employees and students will receive rigorous and routine refresher training as well as visible reminders (signage) on proper hygiene regarding washing hands, avoiding contact with one's eyes, nose and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes.

#### **Handwashing:**

Employees and students will be instructed in proper handwashing techniques with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (1 Hail Mary or the Happy Birthday song twice). If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol may be used. Signage regarding proper handwashing techniques will be posted as reminders.

Students will be prompted to wash hands or use hand sanitizer:

- When entering the school from outside the building (arrival, recess, etc.) and before leaving the classroom (dismissal).
- Before and after eating food
- After using the restroom
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After touching garbage

#### **Respiratory Etiquette:**

Remind employees and students to always cover mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or use the inside of the elbow. Used tissues should be properly discarded and hands washed immediately per handwashing guidelines above. (CDC website, May 2020)

## Hallways / Restrooms

Masks are always required. Hallway routes will be marked as “one way” with tape on the floors and signs on the walls to reduce directional contact. Signage indicates the maximum number of people allowed in the restroom at one time.

### Adequate Supplies:

The school supports healthy hygiene behaviors by providing adequate supplies including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, and no-touch trash cans. (CDC website, May 2020)

### Cleaning and Disinfection:

Frequently touched surfaces (e.g. light switches, door handles, sink handles) within the school will be cleaned and disinfected, using approved disinfectants, at least between uses as much as possible. The school has developed enhanced cleaning schedules for routine cleaning and disinfection of classrooms and common areas, to include an electrostatic disinfection mist/fog (EPA approved) to be used nightly after cleaning.

### Ventilation:

We are installing HEPA air purification devices within all existing centralized HVAC systems where possible. In addition, portable classroom air purifiers will be added to classrooms when necessary.

### Shared Objects:

The use of shared objects will be limited whenever possible or disinfected between uses. Adequate supplies will be available to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible. Each child’s belongings will be separated from others’ and in individually labeled containers, cubbies and/or other areas. The 1:1 technology program will eliminate the need for shared devices. Other toys, books, games and learning aids will be used by one group of children at a time to allow for cleaning and disinfection between use.

## Face Coverings/Masks

*“Teaching children challenge and having to do thing differently makes us stronger. When we wash our hands, we protect ourselves. When we wear masks, we protect other people.”* Dr. Avril Beckford, *Chief of Pediatrics for Wellstar Health System*

Wearing cloth face coverings reduces the chance of transmitting the virus through the spray of spit or respiratory droplets (AAP, 2020). While masks may be uncomfortable, they are not dangerous to wear for long periods of time. Developmentally appropriate communication to students regarding wearing masks will be prioritized to provide reassurance and reduce anxiety among students. It is recommended that parents help their children become accustomed to wearing a face mask prior to the start of the school year.

**All students, faculty and staff are required to wear a face mask in common areas (hallway, restroom, etc.) and in classrooms (to the extent that it does not interfere with instruction).**

Masks may be removed when physical distance is able to be consistently maintained, when outdoors for PE/recess, and when eating/drinking.

The following information should be considered regarding masks:

- Masks may have patterns or designs, yet they should be clean, appropriate for school and reflective of our values/beliefs.
- Students should have a spare face mask in their backpacks each day.
- Protective shields may be worn in addition to a cloth face covering/mask. Shields may not be worn in lieu of a face covering/mask.
- Masks should be laundered at home (See [here](#) for mask washing/drying guidelines from CDC.gov).
- Individuals should wash or sanitize hands before putting on face coverings/masks.
- Masks should fit snugly against the sides of the face, secure over nose, mouth and under chin.
- Make sure individuals can breathe easily.

### ***Physical Distancing***

There is strong evidence of the effectiveness of distancing measures in reducing virus transmission. Classroom spaces will be restructured to allow for three to six feet between students. Desks will face in one direction in order to limit face-to-face student interactions.

- The 1<sup>st</sup> grade classroom will be relocated to the cafeteria.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes will be split into multiple cohorts/classrooms to accommodate adequate distancing.
- The 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom will be housed in the Art room, 7<sup>th</sup> grade in the Media Center, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade in the Science Lab.
- Pre-K and Kindergarten will use their existing classrooms and utilize overflow spaces for small group work.

In 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades, where students have multiple teachers, the teachers will rotate between the classrooms. Students will remain in cohorts to allow for appropriate contact tracing. The classroom teacher and instructional aide will move between the cohorts to ensure equitable access to instruction. Students in the classroom with the instructional aide will participate in the in-person instruction with the teacher and the other half of the class via live streaming with Google Meet and camera equipment.

Special area teachers (Music, Art, Spanish, Technology, and Media) will teach in the students' regular classroom areas rather than having students travel to their classrooms. Physical Education will occur outside, weather permitting, or in the gym with proper social distancing and appropriate activities.

### ***Food Service***

Students will eat lunch in the classrooms or outdoors to avoid the use of a common area by various cohorts. Prior to eating meals, desks/tables will be cleared and sanitized. Students are encouraged to bring their own lunches from home. Families will be notified of any active food allergies in their child's cohort to ensure the safety of all students.

Individually boxed cold meals will be available for purchase through Piccadilly. Students will order lunches a week in advance (for the following week) should they wish to purchase boxed lunches. Milk will also be available for purchase. The school will send notification when ice cream and chip sales resume.

Drinking fountains will be closed. Students are encouraged to bring at least one filled refillable water bottle from home each day. Water bottles should only contain plain water (not flavored/enhanced water or sports drinks). Water bottles should be plastic or stainless steel (no glass) and should have a sip-top to avoid spills. Bottled water will be available.

### ***Gatherings/Field Trips***

Morning assembly and other student assemblies will be conducted virtually to allow students to watch from their classrooms. Teachers will pursue virtual activities and events in lieu of field trips.

Students will attend mass virtually from their classrooms every Friday at 8:30 a.m. Other prayer services and spiritual celebrations will also occur virtually until further notice.

### ***Home Learning***

All faculty are entering the 2020-21 school year with the expectation that they may encounter higher levels of individual student absenteeism and thereby need a more streamlined home learning support system. Explicit instruction will be provided for students during the first few days of school regarding finding lessons in Google Classroom, how to join class remotely if necessary, and how to best reach out for help. Parents will receive a training overview during our virtual Back to School nights in August.

All students will be issued a 1:1 school device (Chromebooks for students in 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades and iPads for students in Pre-K and Kindergarten) for use in the 2020-21 school year. In the event active home learning becomes necessary due to illness/quarantine or a temporary school closure, a school-issued device will support a smooth transition to active home learning. Regular live/synchronous instruction can occur on the traditional schedule when all students have a school-issued device. A schoolwide 1:1 program also reduces the spread of germs by eliminating the sharing of devices throughout the school day.

Parents are provided the option of choosing active home learning for their child(ren). Families who choose remote learning must make a commitment to partner with the school in the delivery of instruction and course requirements to ensure a high-quality educational experience consistent with in-person learning. Students are expected to wear school uniforms at home to demonstrate their full presence in the virtual classroom. Expectations for work quality and submission, as well as grading policies, will align to and be consistent with in-person expectations.

Students participating in home learning will have electronic access to the classroom and will participate in the in-person instruction with the teacher and the class via live streaming with Google Meet and camera equipment. Cameras have been ordered which will follow the teacher in the classroom and allow students at home to hear, interact and participate

in the classroom learning. Attendance via the school issued Chromebook while the teacher is instructing will be required to earn credit for attendance in the class.

Families who request home learning for their students will need to commit to this as a delivery method of instruction for the entire quarter. Parents who elected to participate in active home learning who wish to resume in-person school attendance for their child at the start of the new quarter will make an appointment with the principal to discuss the transition plan. Should a student require a change from in-person to at-home learning during the quarter due to medical concerns, parents should contact the principal immediately. (If a quarantine is necessary for a family who chooses in-person learning, students in that family will convert to remote learning for the period of the quarantine.)



## Helpful Links

### Face Mask Guidance

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Cloth-Face-Coverings-for-Children-During-COVID-19.aspx>

### Considerations About the Return to School

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Return-to-School-During-COVID-19.aspx>

## Resources

1. "The COVID Tracking Project." The COVID Tracking Project, The Atlantic Monthly Group LLC, covidtracking.com/.
2. "COVID-19 Status Report." Georgia Department of Public Health Daily Status Report, Georgia Department of Public Health, 6 June 2020, dph.georgia.gov/covid-19-daily-status-report.
3. Souza, Tiago H., et al. "Clinical Manifestations of Children with COVID-19: a Systematic Review." *Pediatric Pulmonology*, Mar. 2020, doi:10.1002/ppul.24885.
4. Gudbjartsson DF, Helgason A, Jonsson H, et al. Spread of SARS-CoV-2 in the Icelandic Population. *N Engl J Med* 20:NEJMoa2006100. doi:10.1056/NEJMoa2006100
5. Shekerdemian, Lara S., et al. "Characteristics and Outcomes of Children With Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Infection Admitted to US and Canadian Pediatric Intensive Care Units." *JAMA Pediatrics*, 11 May 2020, doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2020.1948.
6. Van der Hoek, Wim, et al. "The Role of Children in the Transmission of SARS-CoV-2." *Ned Magazine Medical*, vol. 2020, no. 164, 3 June 2020.
7. Ludvigsson, Jonas F. "Children Are Unlikely to Be the Main Drivers of the COVID-19 Pandemic – a Systematic Review." *Acta Paediatrica*, 19 May 2020, doi:10.1111/apa.15371.
8. Posfay-Barbe, Klara M., et al. "COVID-19 in Children and the Dynamics of Infection in Families." *Pediatrics*, 26 May 2020, doi:10.1542/peds.2020-1576.
9. Lee, Benjamin and William V. Raszka. "COVID-19 Transmission and Children: The Child Is Not to Blame." *Pediatrics*, 26 May 2020, doi:10.1542/peds.2020-004879.