



LOS ANGELES | SANTA BARBARA | VENTURA

STARTING THE SCHOOL YEAR SMART

Guidance from the
Archdiocese of Los Angeles
for
On-Campus Instruction
for the
2020-2021 School Year

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***Additions are highlighted in yellow**

Subject to updates as new information is received

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PREFACE

Since 1851, Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles have been part of the cultural, social, and educational fabric of Southern California. During that time, our school ministry has encountered many challenges and overcome them with deep faith and conviction in our Gospel values. The pandemic caused by COVID-19 has been the most disruptive event we have faced as a global society in modern times. For our schools, it represents an existential threat to the sustainability of our mission, particularly for the poor who have suffered most from the impact of the virus. Yet, over these past several months, we have collectively demonstrated who we are during this moment of great crisis. Through our resiliency and commitment to our students and their families, we have shown the very best of ourselves and our ministry. As we prepare to welcome our families back to campus, we will need to use that same resiliency to ensure our school environments maintain a high standard of health and safety for students and staff. This document represents the work of many in our archdiocese and colleagues from around the country. It is rooted in our Catholic tradition of education and represents our unique approach to student formation. We remain in a fluid and dynamic situation, so we must be flexible as public health circumstances change. Thank you for your faith, love, and labor through this extraordinary time. The Department of Catholic Schools is committed to journeying with you into this new school year.

PURPOSE

On June 15, 2020, based on state and county health orders, the Department of Catholic Schools announced that Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles would be returning to campus for in-person instruction in the fall. This was rescinded by the announcement on July 17, 2020 by Governor Newsom that all schools in the state of California are mandated to start the school year via distance learning. Since then, the California Department of Public Health has provided two updates to their “COVID 19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Schools and School Based Programs”: one updated on July 17, 2020 and another updated on August 3, 2020 (clickable link). Consequently, this Revised (August 19, 2020) Starting the School Year Smart guidance is aligned with August 3, 2020 CDPH update, as well as information from Los Angeles, Ventura, and Santa Barbara County.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for starting the 2020-2021 school year with in-person instruction, when allowed, given the current state of public health in our tri-county archdiocese. It provides the most salient information that you need to know about getting students safely on campus and keeping them safe. Planning to reopen campus will require diligent planning efforts and attention to detail on the part of our school leaders, faculties, and staff.

The Department of Catholic Schools maintains consistent and active engagement and discussion with public health in Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Los Angeles County. The content of this guidance document takes into consideration the current public health guidance from the State of California, modified health orders in the three counties we serve, practices from our peers in other dioceses throughout California, and elementary and high school leaders from our archdiocese.

County public health orders continue to be modified as conditions change; we are not exempt from this. Some counties may amplify certain protocols and procedures for schools more than others due to local spikes of cases. Schools must be prepared to adapt to new modifications as they are mandated by public health officials.

The Department of Catholic Schools will continue to update you on future modifications to local county health orders as they pertain to PK-12 schools. However, it is imperative that schools regularly monitor county public health orders as well. The following are links to the three county public health departments in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles:

- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health:
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>
- Ventura County Department of Public Health:
<https://www.venturacountyrecovers.org>
- Santa Barbara Department of Public Health:
<https://publichealthsb.org/health-officer-orders/>

USE OF THE GUIDANCE

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the central priorities of the Department of Catholic Schools has been:

- Protecting the health and safety of students, staff and families
- Supporting the integrity of student learning during the crisis
- Protecting our schools from the consequences of the crisis

This document provides recommendations based on the public health requirements. In addition, the **Appendices** include links to editable templates and tools for planning. Note: The term “staff” is used to refer to all school site employees, regardless of position. This document provides direction to schools on reopening campuses for in-person instruction. It is not a “one-size-fits-all” document; rather, it is a document that honors the varied local contexts of each of our schools. As schools plan for re-opening in the fall, we encourage school leaders to make their plans in collaboration, not isolation. This includes surveying students and parents to gather input regarding scheduling and instruction and including faculty and staff in decision making.

The most significant measures schools will take to maintain a healthy environment will involve the following:

- Maintaining physical distancing throughout campus
- Use of face coverings/shields for staff and students (where feasible)
- Reducing mixing of students to contain potential outbreaks and ensure contact tracing
- Hand washing, limiting sharing personal items/supplies and frequent cleaning of surfaces

As you continue developing **your own site-specific** plans to reopen your campus for the coming 2020-2021 school year, please consider ways to promote the inclusion, compliance, and ownership of the students and their role in adhering to those plans. **These site-specific plans should adhere to CDPH, ADLA, and local county guidelines and principals should be prepared to share them publicly with stakeholders.**

PLANNING FOR MULTIPLE SCENARIOS

Catholic schools should consider how to maximize an on-campus schedule for all students, to the extent possible. In addition, some students may not be able to attend on-campus due to health concerns. For those students, schools are expected to provide a distance learning option.

All the same, while our schools will reopen campus for in-person instruction in the fall, schools must have plans to address the following scenarios:

- The potential of repeated closures of classes, groups, or entire facilities when persons associated with the facility or in the community become ill with COVID-19.

- The possibility of support staff and students who are at higher risk for severe illness or who cannot safely distance from household contacts at higher risk, by providing options such as telework, virtual learning, or independent study.
- The possibility of students, teachers, and staff who reside in higher COVID-19 transmission areas who should not commute to lower transmission areas by providing opportunities for telework, virtual learning, independent study, and other options as feasible to reduce travel to schools in lower COVID-19 transmission areas and vice versa.
- The likelihood of extended and/or repeated absences of students or faculty/staff due to sickness or self-isolation/quarantine.
- The likelihood of faculty/staff who have a child or dependent who is sick.
- The possibility of faculty/staff who have a child whose school is closed or is on an alternating day schedule and must remain home to care for children.

This means that schools must have plans in place to offer both in-person instruction and distance learning concurrently. Please see the Academic Planning section for more guidance.

ACADEMIC PLANNING

Faculty and staff should work collaboratively to determine how each school can best provide both in-person instruction and distance learning concurrently. In addition to preparing for multiple scenarios, it is important to note:

- Schools have reported that approximately 10% to 20% of parents are not comfortable sending their children back to school due to the risk of contracting or spreading the virus. Therefore, schools are expected to develop a distance learning option for those families.
- Schools should have a distance learning plan prepared in case a positive case is identified within your school community that would require either the entire school or a specific cohort to quarantine.

To make this manageable, it is advisable that teachers continue to use their LMS (i.e., Google Classroom, SeeSaw, Schoology, Canvas) to organize their lessons, which students can access and use both in and out of the classroom. This limits additional work on the teacher for absent students and students who choose to participate in distance learning, while also streamlining any possible transition to distance learning.

Resources for support in distance learning and preparing for fall instruction can be found at <http://archla.org/AcademicExcellence>.

Instructional Days and Attendance

The minimum instructional day requirement is still important for the 2020-2021 Academic Year. Per the ADLA Handbook, a “minimum day” consists of no fewer than 180 minutes of content engagement through a variety of strategies and a “day in session” is defined as one in which all teachers and students are on campus (or engaged in distance learning) for at least a minimum day of instruction. So long as these parameters are met, any further, specific timeframe for an instructional day is a school site decision based on the needs of the students and the community. As schedules are considered by school sites, be mindful of the best use of student learning minutes, whether synchronous/asynchronous and in-person/remote. [For reference, please see the instructional time requirements in the ADLA Administrative handbook, section 13.3.6.](#) (link)

It is important that schools track student attendance, whether students are on or off campus. If students are off-campus, consider a variety of ways to ensure that students are engaging with content as well as instructors, and use them to drive the methods of recording attendance at your school site. Given the potential for prolonged absence due to illness, schools may need to make temporary adjustments to attendance policies for the 2020-2021 Academic Year in their school handbook, including those related to grading and reporting.

Student Video during Remote Synchronous Instruction

It is important to remember that students are attending class from their homes. As such, if it is an expectation that students have their video turned on, alternatives should be available (i.e., replaced with a school-appropriate picture) in the event that the video cannot be turned-on due to low-bandwidth or home environment.

FEDERAL FOOD SERVICE

If your school provides federal meals, please contact Mrs. Lilia Chavez, Director of Externally Funded Programs, at LSChavez@la-archdiocese.org with any questions and to ensure plans for food service are in place.

PHYSICAL / SOCIAL DISTANCING

Physical Distancing in the Classroom

CDPH guidance on physical distancing states, *“Maximize space between seating and desks. Distance teacher and other staff desks at least six feet away from student desks. Consider ways to establish separation of students through other means if practicable, such as, six feet between desks, where practicable, partitions between desks, markings on classroom floors to promote distancing or arranging desks in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact”* (p. 12).

Distancing between the teacher desk and students must be at least six feet. Distancing between student desks should be six feet to the extent possible. If six feet is not possible, then the minimum distance must be no less than four feet. Classrooms with less than six feet between desks must use other mitigation techniques such as partitions or screens between desks. Additional functions of the classroom environment should include:

- Markings (i.e., masking or painters tape) on classroom floors to promote distancing
- Desk arrangements to minimize contact (i.e., configuration of desks in a checkerboard style and facing the same direction)
- Increased ventilation (i.e., opening windows and doors)

Catholic schools do not want to undo 30 years of progress in moving away from lecture models of education toward student-centered, collaborative learning. However, restrictions for in-person instruction in the classroom make the latter a challenge. Schools should consider ways that students can collaborate digitally, whether in the classroom or at home.

To accommodate physical distancing requirements, some schools may need to consider creative approaches to allow for a smaller number of students in a classroom at a given time. This may include the flexible use of staff, rotations, and non-classroom spaces.

Use of Other Spaces for Instruction

To maximize physical distance, schools should consider how outdoor spaces can be utilized as classrooms (i.e., fields, lunch tables) as well as building spaces that are not typically used for classroom instruction (i.e., parish centers, convents, churches, auditoriums, gyms, multi-purpose rooms). For outdoor spaces, ensure that necessary precautions such as shading and sunscreen are put into place to avoid prolonged exposure to sun and heat.

Physical Distancing Outside the Classroom

Schools must make plans to reduce congregating of students, especially in hallways, recess and lunch areas, and outside the classrooms. This includes before and after school, recess, lunch, and other transitions. Procedures need to be established and communicated to parents and students. Floor markings and signage should also be used.

High schools should eliminate the use of lockers to avoid congregating and close contact of students. Depending on how cohorts are created, this may also be applicable for some junior-high grade-levels in terms of the retrieval of materials from homerooms in between schedule blocks.

At this time, outdoor assemblies and large gatherings of any type are not allowed (including weekly student assemblies). Schools will be informed if this changes.

Physical Alterations to Campus

Schools should make physical alterations to classrooms, hallways, pathways, and common spaces as appropriate to support physical distancing. These are temporary alterations that include signage, taping pathways, clear plastic barriers, etc. Please reference the checklists linked in Appendix B.

WEARING FACE COVERINGS (MASKS & FACE SHIELDS)

The August 3 update to the CDPH guidance includes a newly titled section 3, “Face Coverings” that should be read and reviewed carefully. It states that, “*Schools should review the [CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#) (clickable link) and any applicable local health department guidance and incorporate face-covering use for students and workers into their COVID-19 prevention plan. Some flexibility may be needed for younger children consistent with child development recommendations.*”

Students

While at one time state and public health guidance allowed for flexibility with regards to students wear face coverings, updated guidance is more specific and firm per the following chart:

Age	Face Covering Requirement	
Under 2 years old	No	
2 years old – 2 nd grade	<p>Strongly Encouraged <i>Face coverings are strongly encouraged if they can be worn properly. A face shield is an acceptable alternative for children in this cohort who cannot wear them properly.</i></p>	<p>For LA County – Yes, unless exempt <i>All students over age 2 are required to wear cloth face coverings at all times while on school property except while eating, drinking or carrying out other activities that preclude use of face coverings.</i></p>
3 rd grade – High School	Yes, unless exempt	

Note: Alternative protective strategies may be adopted to accommodate students who are on Individualized Education or 504 Plans and who cannot use or tolerate cloth face coverings.

Staff

For staff, the CDPH guidelines state that, “*All staff must use face coverings in accordance with CDPH guidelines unless Cal/OSHA standards require respiratory protection*” (p. 8). It also states that, “*In limited situations where a face coverings cannot be used for pedagogical or developmental reasons, (i.e. communicating or assisting young children or those with special needs) a face shield can be used instead of a cloth face covering while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others, to the extent practicable. Staff must return to wearing a face covering outside of the classroom*” (p. 8). Thus, all staff are required to wear face coverings.

Visitors

Visitors and all other adults must wear face coverings on campus at all times.

COHORTING OF STUDENTS

CDPH guidance states: *“To reduce possibilities for infection, students must remain in the same space and in cohorts as small and consistent as practicable, including for recess and lunch. Keep the same students and teacher or staff with each group, to the greatest extent practicable”* (p. 12). It also states to *“[m]inimize movement of students and teachers or staff as much as practicable. For example, consider ways to keep teachers with one group of students for the whole day. In secondary schools or in situations where students have individualized schedules, plan for ways to reduce mixing among cohorts and to minimize contact”* (p. 12). Schools must cohort students into smaller groups and keep them together to the extent possible. In addition to limiting the spread of the coronavirus, the point of cohorting students is to make contact tracing easier in case a student or teacher tests positive for COVID-19. By cohorting students, schools might be able to limit the impact on in-person instruction by only quarantining the cohort, rather than the entire school.

For elementary schools, self-contained grade levels make for natural cohort groupings. Elementary leaders may wish to consider whether an entire junior high makes up a cohort (typically grades 6, 7 and 8); however, keep in mind that should a positive case be identified and quarantine be mandated by public health officials, it would affect that larger group of students.

For high schools, keeping students in the same space in consistent small groups will be a challenge. Schools should be creative in finding ways to keep students from intermingling as much as possible. This might mean that you cohort students by grade level and do not mix students between grades. High schools may want to consider having groups of students remain in a classroom and having the teacher rotate classrooms. This will take creative scheduling and potentially some in-classroom hybrid learning approaches.

Specialty teachers may travel to and from classrooms to teach various cohorts or grade levels of students. In such cases, these educators should be particularly mindful of modeling and ensuring healthy hygiene practices.

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Health Screening (at home)

Parents are strongly advised to monitor for symptoms at home and must be reminded to keep children who are sick at home until they are fever and vomit free (without medication) for 3 days. Daily health checks will be performed on-site consisting of temperature check and health screening and students will be monitored for signs of illness throughout the day.

Health Checks (at school)

Before entering campus, all students (or guardians on behalf of students) must respond to a brief health screening. If a student (or guardian on behalf of the student) responds with an affirmative to any of the screening questions, he/she must not enter the school building. Screening must include questions concerning cough, shortness of breath, fever, and any other abnormal symptoms the student may be experiencing.

These questions should be laminated on a card for staff to use daily. To facilitate expeditious entry to campus in the morning, schools are advised to stagger the start day allowing for ample time to conduct screenings and temperature checks upon campus entry, including planning for multiple entrances to campus where possible. Schools may also consider using screening apps or Google Forms that students/parents can complete prior to arriving on campus.

Temperature Checks

Before entering campus, all students must have their temperature checked via no-touch thermal scan thermometers (for information on how to acquire these thermometers, please see the “Personal Protective Equipment & Other Supplies” section in this document). If a student has a fever, he/she must not enter the school building. Temperature checks should be included with health screenings (see prior statement).

Immunizations

The State of California has not changed its requirements for childhood immunizations. As a result, all schools must continue to require vaccination records from parents or guardians. Please visit <https://www.shotsforschool.org> for more information. In addition, the CDPH strongly recommends faculty, staff, and students get their influenza immunizations in the autumn. This helps to decrease the occurrence of illnesses with symptoms similar to COVID-19.

WHEN A STAFF MEMBER, STUDENT, OR VISITOR BECOMES SICK OR PRESENTS SYMPTOMS

Monitor faculty, staff, and students throughout the day for signs of illness. Students, faculty, and staff with a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, who show coughing, fatigue or shortness of breath, or who display other COVID-19 symptoms should be sent home.

Any students, faculty, or staff exhibiting symptoms should immediately be required to wear a face covering and be required to wait in an isolation area until they can be transported home or to a healthcare facility, as soon as practicable. Schools should work with nurses and other healthcare providers to identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19.

Schools should revise handbook policies regarding absences to be more flexible and forgivable under COVID-19.

Schools are encouraged to have contingency plans for multiple teachers and/or staff who may be absent at the same time due to personal illness, illness in the household, self-isolation, etc.

Handling a Positive Case of COVID-19

Each school must assign a COVID-19 point person who is responsible for:

- establishing and enforcing all COVID-19 safety protocols,
- ensuring that staff and students receive education about COVID-19, and
- serving as a liaison to the Department of Public Health in the event of an outbreak on campus.

As stated above, schools must have a plan in place for isolating a student or employee if they exhibit symptoms. A plan must also be in place for disinfecting all affected areas afterwards. Local public health agencies will provide more specific protocols and sample communications in the coming weeks.

If you have a positive case of COVID-19, please follow all county public health procedures and complete the **ADLA COVID-19 Report Form & Instructions** to report it to the Archdiocese. Schools located in Los Angeles County must following the County's [Exposure Management Plan](#) (clickable link).

If you are contacted by the health department or any other entity with the directive to partially or completely close, please contact your Assistant Superintendent for guidance and support.

Considerations for Partial or Full School Closure

In the instance that a school experiences multiple positive cases in a 14-day period, they made need to, in consultation with the Archdiocese and local health officials, consider a partial or full school closure. Please refer to the [COVID-19 and Reopening Framework from K-12 Schools in California](#) (clickable link) document for additional details.

HYGIENE, CLEANING, AND DISINFECTION

Students and staff should be trained and reminded on a frequent basis on proper hygiene, cleaning, physical distancing protocols, etc. Schools may want to consider ways for students to have a leadership role in compliance and educating the

community about healthy practices. To ensure student compliance to all health and safety requirements, schools should consider including them in the school handbook along with graduated consequences for failure to adhere to rules.

Ensuring Proper Hygiene

Schools must develop a clear plan and schedule to ensure that students and staff wash their hands and wipe down high use items and areas at regular intervals. The plan should include the use of restrooms at designated times, including that no more students will be admitted into a restroom at a time than there are sinks in the restrooms.

Students and staff must be given frequent opportunities to wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap, rubbing thoroughly after application and using paper towels (or single-use cloth towels) to dry hands thoroughly. Hand dryers should not be used. Frequently scheduled mandatory handwashing breaks or opportunities (especially for younger students) should occur at minimum:

- before and after eating
- after using the restroom
- after outdoor play
- before and after any group activity.

Staff are instructed to model and monitor frequent and proper handwashing, especially in lower grades where bathroom time is an opportunity to reinforce healthy habits. Handwashing is the preferred method for maintaining proper hygiene. Approved hand sanitizers can be used as a substitute when handwashing is not possible. Please note that the FDA has published a [List of Harmful Hand Sanitizers](#) (clickable link) that should not be used, as they contain dangerous ingredients. Schools must avoid using hand sanitizers that appear on this list.

Cleaning & Disinfecting

Prior to reopening campus, schools must have been completely cleaned and disinfected. Upon reopening, schools are required to maintain safety by continuously cleaning and disinfecting per the chart below. These cleaning steps are to protect students and staff and reduce the risk of the spread of infection. Schools are expected to create a plan to ensure these maintenance expectations are being met. The plan should include back-up persons in the case of an absence. This written plan should be shared with parents and community stakeholders.

All cleaning supplies must be in compliance with the approved disinfectants.

Campus Maintenance Procedures, Administrator Reference Guide	
Category	Frequency
Workspace (<i>i.e., classrooms, office</i>)	At the end of each use and day
Appliances (<i>i.e., refrigerators, microwaves</i>)	Daily
Electronic Equipment (<i>i.e., copy machines, shared computers/devices, printers, telephones</i>)	At the end of each use and day
General Used Objects (<i>i.e., handles, light switches</i>)	At least 4 times a day
Student and Teacher Restrooms	Twice a day
Faucets	Twice a day
Common Areas (<i>i.e., Cafeteria, Library, Conference Rooms</i>)	At the end of each use and day

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT & OTHER SUPPLIES

Equipment Availability

Prior to opening, a school must have sufficient protective equipment and keep sufficient stock on hand to comply with California Department of Public Health (CDPH) guidance for students and staff appropriate for each classification or duty, as well as relevant California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) requirements. Schools need to:

- Have a plan for an ongoing supply of protective equipment.
- Purchase a sufficient number of no-touch thermal scan thermometers for symptom screenings.
- Consider the differing requirements of PPE/EPG for the differing populations of students with disabilities (*i.e., for those requiring medical procedures, toileting, lifting and mobility assistance*).

Cleaning Supplies Availability

A school must also have sufficient cleaning supplies on hand to continuously disinfect the school site in accordance with CDPH guidance. This includes a sufficient supply of hand sanitizers, soap, handwashing stations, tissues, no-touch trash cans, and paper towels.

Any school that purchases PPE, cleaning supplies, and other supplies necessary to meet the public health requirements for opening under COVID-19 should keep detailed records and accounting of purchases in the event that schools can be reimbursed using CARES Act funds.

Other Protective Equipment as Appropriate for Work Assignments

For employees engaging in symptom screening, the school should provide surgical masks, face shields, and disposable gloves.

For front office and food service employees, the school should provide face coverings and disposable gloves. Schools must ensure that food service providers have health and safety plans in place and are following all public health orders regarding food preparation, disinfecting, hygiene, and food distribution.

Cal/OSHA requires that PPE be provided and worn to effectively protect employees from the hazards of the cleaning products used and training be provided to staff on the hazards of chemicals.

Classified/Custodial staff engaged in deep cleaning and disinfecting should be equipped with proper PPE for COVID-19 disinfection (disposable gown, gloves, eye protection, and mask or respirator) in addition to PPE as required by product instructions. All products must be kept out of children's reach and stored in a space with restricted access.

For regular surface cleaning, schools should provide gloves appropriate for all cleaning and disinfecting.

Purchasing PPE & Other Supplies

In order to safely reopen for on-campus instruction, school must have secured the following protective equipment and supplies:

Required:

- Hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent ethyl alcohol for staff and children who can safely use hand sanitizer.
- Tissues
- Disinfectant and cleaning supplies
- Gloves
- Soap
- Single use paper towels
- No-touch trash cans
- No-touch thermal thermometers
- Cloth face masks
- Face shields for teacher and young students

Optional Equipment:

- Electrostatic disinfectant sprayers
- No-touch temperature check kiosks or tablets

The Department of Catholic Schools has vetted the following vendors to purchase PPE and supplies, though schools are certainly encouraged to use their own vendors as well:

Kole Imports

Website: <https://www.koleimports.com/la-archdiocese-ppe>

Contact: Danny Kole

Email: Danny@Koleimports.com

Phone: 310-834-0004, et.118

Hale Medical Supply

Website: <http://www.halemedicalsupply.com>

Contact: John Tucker

Email: JTucker@laserplusimaging.com

Phone: 866.804.4418x105

Schools who have more opportunity to secure PPE are encouraged to assist local Catholic schools as appropriate and as they are able, particularly within deaneries and among local colleagues.

LIMIT SHARING

Limit Sharing of Supplies & Materials:

Please consider the following recommendations and examples to limit sharing:

- Keep each child’s belongings separated and in individually labeled storage containers, cubbies or areas. Ensure belongings are taken home each day to be cleaned.
- Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high-touch materials (art supplies, equipment, etc.) to the extent practicable or limit use of supplies and equipment to one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between uses.
- Avoid sharing electronic devices, clothing, toys, books and other games or learning aids as much as practicable.
- Particularly for C3 Ignite Schools, please specifically plan for the regular cleaning of shared iPads and other similar electronic devices in between student use.
- Whenever possible, schools should try to be “paperless” and submit assignments and work digitally to reduce contact exposure.

Limit Sharing of Facilities

Facilities rentals must be limited in the 2020-2021 school year. Los Angeles County specifically forbids the use of school facilities by outside organizations for non-school functions. **This includes all buildings and in-door spaces. Outdoor fields can be rented as long as the third party follows all public health orders and schools use the [Revised Outdoor User Agreement](#) (clickable link).** If indoor spaces are used by the parish or any outside organizations, ensure that all public health guidance is followed regarding physical distancing, hygiene, and cleaning and disinfecting. Schools should develop a checklist for the parish and organizations to follow before and after use of facilities. Schools should engage with the parish regarding use of school facilities for Mass overflow or back up for parishioners.

Religious Education programs will operate at the discretion of the pastor. We strongly encourage principals to coordinate with pastors as soon as possible on their plans for the resumption of Religious Education programs for the coming school year. Religious Education coordinators should coordinate with the principal and pastor to ensure clear communication and planning for when Religious Education classes are to resume. **In-person instruction and use of classroom space protocols outlined in this document apply to Religious Education classes as well.**

Schools should ensure that they maintain a master list of all external / third party partners that operate on school grounds. Schools should connect with each partner to ensure that it is safe to continue those endeavors. Examples include but are not limited to: food service providers, boy and girl scouts, local Catholic high schools who use Catholic elementary school facilities, external after school programs that operate on school grounds (i.e. chess club, karate, robotics), Knights of Columbus, CYO, etc.

COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Clearly communicate to all staff your plan for returning to in-person instruction and all protocols for maintaining health and safety of all adults and students.

- Schools should communicate preventive and precautionary measures with parents and community stakeholders in writing. Staff should gather for a formal review of that final plan prior to opening school. Consider creative ways to ensure that parents are familiar with the plan and that they are informed of all the great work you are doing to maintain the health and safety of all.
- Utilize the school website, social media, and other methods to communicate health and safety protocols and reminders in both English and Spanish, where necessary.
- Schools should consider ways to engage parents prior to the return to school to help them prepare their children for the return to school, including videos, songs, and other ways to communicate messages in a fun way.

The Appendices includes resources from the CDC regarding messaging and printable signage to display on campus.

Maintain Confidentiality

During the initial stages of the pandemic, some schools displayed pictures of students on various social media platforms, in an effort to acknowledge the “all for one” attitude and recognize the heroic efforts to support students. However, it is important to remember, even if the intentions are laudable, that student confidentiality should not be jeopardized. To this end, confidentiality will be even more important in whatever school configuration is used this fall.

Schools should review and update as necessary confidentiality and media release policies and procedures to reflect the new realities.

Staff should be reminded of confidentiality policies, especially as it relates to student and faculty health status to ensure that this is not inadvertently released.

SCHOOL FINANCES & TUITION

As the economy continues to recover, finance issues will present challenges for Catholic schools. Explicit responses to a variety of scenarios will be needed.

- Schools will need to review tuition collection procedures so that they reflect the current realities of the local schools. Payment due dates may need to be reviewed to be sensitive to family situations.
- Tuition assistance procedures will need to be adjusted to address the reality that some families that have never had to access this service may now be asking for assistance. Additional support may need to be provided to help families access and navigate the process. Along with this, staff reminders for adopting a ministerial approach can be helpful.
- Creative approaches to traditional fundraising activities (like galas, trivia nights, golf tournaments, Bingo, etc.) will need to be utilized if in-person approaches are limited because of local governmental regulations or archdiocesan guidance.

Important Note on Tuition

As instruction, services, and activities traditionally offered in Catholic schools are modified and limited as schools seek to meet all public health requirements, some parents may seek discounts on tuition. Although it is understandable that a parent perceives that they are receiving less for the same amount of tuition, it is important for school leaders to provide tuition assistance rather than tuition discounting and have clear messaging, including the following:

- Tuition is already substantially less than the actual cost to educate.
- There are increased costs of operating due to the health and safety requirements.
- Traditional fundraising that helps make up the gap between tuition and actual cost will be limited due to physical distancing and other public health orders.
- For high schools, auxiliary activities such as retreats, athletics, etc. are often not part of tuition and fees but are funded through additional participation fees. As such, if those activities are not offered or are limited, participation fees will not be charged.

Development & Fundraising

While the economic impact of COVID-19 has affected many, the mission of our schools to support students from all backgrounds remains as important as ever. As with previous economic downturns, a decrease in fundraising revenue from some sources can be anticipated. However, schools should take advantage of new opportunities to cultivate existing and new constituents and be creative in planning as they continue to solicit support. While health guidelines may restrict some traditional events, the use of online giving and virtual meeting platforms have enabled many schools to bring in similar or higher net income due to reduction of some associated costs. Rather than waiting for an indefinite period of time for things to return to "normal," schools should adjust strategies to continue development work in the present while social distancing and other guidelines remain in place.

ATHLETICS AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

As of June 15, 2020, **all ADLA schools, including CYO, may resume athletic physical training and conditioning on-campus immediately** provided schools develop and implement plans that strictly adhere to the guidance from the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) linked below. As such, activity will resume in **CIF PHASE I ONLY** at this time. Any deviation above and beyond PHASE I activity, or non-compliance of required modifications will come with restrictions including and up to an **immediate shutdown of activity**. PHASE I activity in no way extends permission for competition play. **The state has not released guidance on the resumption of competitive athletic programs as of this time.** We will update you as to when we can move to PHASE II. Anticipate this decision to come on or after July 20, 2020.

The CIF guidance document refers to incorporating state and local health orders where applicable. Because the archdiocese spans three different counties, we have linked below the guidance from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and LA County Department of Public Health (LACDPH). Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties have elected to use the CDPH guidance and did not include additional modifications, while the LACDPH added protocols to the state guidance. While the CIF guidance is developed specifically with high schools in mind, the state and county guidance is designed for public commercial gym and fitness facilities. As a result, please consider the applicability of certain patron and operational requirements, such as the need for a reservation system – this does not apply to schools. You should see the state guidance and county orders as a necessary complement to the CIF guidance, particularly related to health and safety protocols.

Please see the following documents for your reference and planning:

[CIF guidelines for return to physical activity/training](#). (clickable link)

[State of California Guidance – Fitness Facilities](#) (clickable link) (*Applicable to Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties*).

[Los Angeles County Reopening Protocol for Gyms and Fitness Establishments](#) (clickable link) (*Applicable to Los Angeles County*).

Choir, band, and music practices or performances are not permitted on campus.

Schools should refer to the August 3 [CDPH Guidance](#) (p. 13) for additional information on Sports & Extracurricular Activities, as well guidance updates from the local county Schools should also reference their local county's guidance regarding physical distancing and infection control practices for extra-curricular activities, which are forthcoming.

LEGAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES GUIDANCE

Ask all employees to contact you confidentially to inform you if they meet any of the criteria for being allowed to work from home (over 65, underlying health condition, ordered quarantined or own health reasons, or sole caregiver of a minor child or vulnerable adult who cannot receive care from someone else for COVID-19 related reasons – i.e., a shut down order for caregiver or school). The following guidance applies to employees who meet such criteria.

COVID-19 Related Guidance for Return to Work of Employees Age 65 or Over or with Vulnerable Health Conditions

COVID-19 orders have amended or temporarily suspended many areas of law, including a few pertaining to the workplace. This guidance is provided against that backdrop and is subject to change as the COVID-19 environment changes.

Anti-discrimination laws provide that an employer cannot mandate remote work based solely or in part on an employee's age or medical condition. You may ask all employees who are being recalled to work if they have any concerns about

returning to work and, if so, to inform you *confidentially* of the particular concern. In sending out the request for return to work information from the employees, you may inform them of the following policies:

Employees age 65 or older and employees who have an active or unstable pre-existing health condition or who are subject to quarantine or are sole caregivers of a minor child or dependent adult:

- May ask to work remotely or work on site.
 - If an employee prefers to work remotely and is an hourly non-exempt worker, the employee must follow all policies and procedures for timekeeping, rest and meal breaks, overtime, internet access and security, etc.
 - All employees working remotely will be required to respond to regular check ins and reporting on assignments; meet all deadlines and performance expectations.
- Employees who elect to work on site but request accommodations:
 - Must provide a health care provider’s note describing the limitations and possible accommodations needed.
 - The employer will then engage in a documented interactive process with the employee about the accommodation request and, if you reach agreement on the accommodation(s), that agreement will be documented. All accommodation discussions and agreements are filed with the employee’s medical records. Contact Human Resources if you are not familiar with the interactive process, which is also outlined in the [Administrative Handbook at 5.2.3](#). (link)
 - **If no accommodation is possible, the employee may be offered remote work if the position allows. If the position does not allow for remote work, the employee may be furloughed or terminated from employment. Employees who lose their jobs may be eligible for [Pandemic Unemployment Assistance](#) (clickable link) until December 26, 2020.**
- Employees with the following COVID-19 related reasons will be offered remote work if possible:
 - Subject to quarantine by government order or advice of health care provider and not experiencing COVID-19 symptoms but awaiting test results or medical diagnosis.
 - Have a bona fide need to care for an individual subject to quarantine, a dependent adult child or to care for a child (under 18 years of age) whose school or childcare provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19.
- Employees who are sick for any reason should not work.

Note: The decision to allow employees to work remotely cannot arbitrarily favor some individuals over others. The remote work decision has to be objective and job based. Employees holding similar jobs must be treated equally unless documented work performance issues justify making a distinction between similarly situated employees.

Up to July 5, 2020, employees who work at a work site and contract COVID-19 are presumed to have contracted the illness at work, subject to the employer’s available defenses. They are covered by Workers Compensation. [This Order is subject to modification by the Governor.] The employee should be provided the proper [Workers Compensation](#) (clickable link) claim forms that are submitted to York, the archdiocesan Workers Compensation insurance carrier.

Employees may not be asked to sign waivers from actual or potential workplace hazards such as contracting COVID-19. Such waivers are illegal.

Guidance for Those Concerned About Returning to the Workplace During In-Person Instruction

These guidelines are based on the following assumptions:

1. You have made a good faith business judgment based on the available government orders and public health directives that work should resume in the workplace and should not continue remotely. This judgment has taken into account the cost/benefit of in-person presence with co-workers, ability to interact directly with the public, access to necessary equipment and information, and any other pertinent factors for conducting your business,

including the degree of risk of exposure to COVID-19 that remains in your community. You have informed your constituencies of your decision and the reasons for it.

2. The workplace meets the applicable standards for maintaining the health and safety of all who are present – employees, volunteers, students, parents, parishioners, visitors, contractors. In other words, sanitation, personal protection and social distancing measures are in place.

If you decide to require testing before the start of on-site teaching and/or continued testing, you may ask for viral but not antibody testing of employees if required by business necessity. See these FAQs:

https://www.dfeh.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2020/03/DFEH-Employment-Information-on-COVID-19-FAQ_ENG.pdf

The school has to pay for the test itself and for the time employees spend being tested. If possible, arrange for testing during the school day in a disciplined, controlled manner so that you do not run into overtime issues for non-exempt staff. Note that preschool teachers are not classified as exempt employees; the exemption starts with kindergarten.

3. *Intentionally left blank – see (a) below:
 - (a) You have asked all employees to contact you confidentially to inform you if they meet any of the criteria for receiving reasonable accommodations (over 65, underlying health condition that puts employee at high risk, ordered quarantined or own health reasons, or sole caregiver of a minor child or vulnerable adult who cannot receive care from someone else for COVID-19 related reasons – i.e., a shut down order for caregiver or school).
 - (b) Those who meet the criteria of 3(a) have provided you with the required supporting documentation.
 - (c) You have reached a reasonable accommodation with the employees who meet 3(a) and 3(b) that may include continued remote work or sick leave or family medical leave that is provided either under customary policies or through special pandemic-related regulations and/or assistance.
4. If the employee does not meet any of the criteria of (3) and expresses fear of returning to work, the following options are available:
 - (a) The employee can seek medical help and provide you with a health care provider’s note describing the employee’s work restrictions. You can then enter into a discussion about reasonable accommodations (see 3 above)
 - (b) You can consider whether the employee’s job allows for continued remote work. However, be very careful in making this decision so that it does not constitute and cannot be perceived as favoritism. The decision to allow employees to work remotely cannot arbitrarily favor some individuals over others. The remote work decision has to be objective and job based. Employees holding similar jobs must be treated equally unless documented work performance issues justify making a distinction between similarly situated employees. Prepare a remote work agreement with a set end date (subject to modification) that sets job expectations and does not turn into a “termination for cause” agreement. Emphasize that employment remains “at will.” For employees with written agreements, consult DCS and/or the Legal Department.
 - (c) Remind the employee of the availability of the Employee Assistance Program which can provide counseling: <http://handbook.la-archdiocese.org/chapter-5/section-5-7/topic-5-7-8>. (link)
 - (d) The employee can take paid vacation time off. Do not allow the employee to take paid sick time off if the employee is not actually sick.

- (e) The employee can be placed on an unpaid leave of absence, with continued benefits according to customary policies. However, if the employee applies for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), you must inform the EDD that a job is ready and waiting for the employee, who may then be considered ineligible for PUA.
- (f) If, despite being offered options 4(a)-(e) or after all these options are exhausted, the employee continues to refuse to return to work, that refusal is a voluntary quit. All benefits are terminated. If the employee applies for PUA, you must inform the EDD that the employee voluntarily quit, which may make the employee ineligible for PUA.

Guidance for Teachers Conducting Distance Learning on Campus

Teachers are permitted to conduct their distance learning lessons in their respective classrooms so long as they follow all of the prescribed health protocols and social distancing requirements while on-campus. The decision to require teachers to report to campus daily to conduct distance learning from their classrooms is at the principal's discretion. We encourage principals to be flexible with their staff, particularly those with child care needs or health considerations who may not be able to conduct lessons on-campus.

If needed, teachers may bring their children to campus while they conduct their distance learning lessons. There are no public health restrictions on such a practice so long as the employee and child(ren) maintain all required public health protocols (i.e. masks, distance, etc.) and stay with their parent while on-campus. Schools are permitted to organize childcare to for the children of employees as well. Principals should be flexible with all employees with childcare needs and make accommodations where feasible. In both cases, principals should be pastoral and seek solutions for employees with children.

Waiver of Liability

Archdiocesan and parish schools will not be utilizing waivers of liability for students or employees.

APPENDIX A: SIGNAGE AND MESSAGES

Signs should be posted in highly visible locations (i.e., school entrances, restrooms). The following provides *links* to signage:

- [Signs](#) (clickable link) from the CDC
- Signs that [promote everyday protective measures](#) (clickable link)
- Signs that describe how to [stop the spread](#) (clickable link) of germs
- Signs promoting [proper washing of hands](#) (clickable link)
- Signs promoting [proper wearing of cloth face covering](#) (clickable link)

Messages on reducing the spread of COVID-19 should be regularly communicated both on and off campus. The following provides links to messaging resources:

- [Public service announcements](#) (clickable link) on reducing the spread of COVID-19 that can be used on PA systems.
- Example [videos](#) (clickable link) about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and families
- Sample toolkits for [social media](#) (clickable link)
- CDC print and digital resources on CDC's [communications resources](#) (clickable link)_main page.

APPENDIX B: PLANNING CHECKLISTS

The following checklists are provided in this shared folder (archla.org/ADLAFall2020PlanningChecklists):

- CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance for Schools & School-Based Programs Checklist
- Classroom Physical Design Checklist
- Classroom Maintenance Checklist
- Campus Physical Distancing Checklist