

Dear
Parents/Guardian,

The Office of Catholic Schools works in collaboration with the Florida Catholic Conference of Bishops, the Florida Department of Education and the Governor's Office. Outside of an order from the Governor that would require school closures again, the decision has been made to reopen all Catholic school buildings with in-person instruction for the 2020-2021 school year.

Schools will use guidelines from the CDC, Florida Department of Education, local health departments, and the Office of Catholic Schools to develop plans that are specific to the unique configurations of their facilities. There will also be a digital option for parents who do not wish to send their child physically to school, as classes will be securely livestreamed for in-home participation as needed. The digital option will allow the students to view their teacher throughout the entire school day and would require the same amount of time as if they were physically in school. If a student is digitally attending school because of concerns of exposure then that same intent would follow and digital students would not be able to participate in clubs, sports, or other activities that would require in-person participation. The greatest single expense in a school is salaries so tuition will be the same regardless of the option chosen for your child because the expenses will not change.

There will be some modifications to the regular school day and limiting of outside visitors into the classrooms as we implement best strategic practices to create a safe and healthy environment. Principals will be working over the next several weeks as they redesign daily schedules, student traffic movement, cleaning protocols, purchase necessary equipment and supplies, and to develop other steps for a healthy and productive learning environment. These school plans will be fluid and change as the experts provide ongoing guidance to school communities across the country.

I would ask your patience and cooperation as we move forward with a wide array of perspectives within our communities on what should occur. As community of faith, we place our trust in God knowing that this time of difficulty will pass, even if it disrupts the familiar for a short period of time. We pray that God bless those who are caring for our sick, those who have lost jobs, and for the wisdom of our scientists to find a cure.

*Henry P. Fortier Secretary for Education/
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