



**Notre Dame Catholic School**  
**Return to School Plan**  
**\*Updates denoted in red**

**Notre Dame Catholic School** will be welcoming students and staff back to campus this fall while putting students and staff safety first. Students and staff will return with in-school classes with near-normal operations using health measures. The information contained in this document is subject to change at any given time pending COVID-19 and the most appropriate information provided. Any changes made to this document will be communicated to our staff, students, families, and community. This document and changes made are based upon the IN-CLASS document provided by the Superintendent of Schools for Indiana, the Indiana Department of Education, and in accordance with the guidelines of the Catholic Diocese of Gary.

**Diocesan Statement for all Catholic Schools**

*“Coronavirus and COVID-19 Warning: The risk of exposure to coronavirus exists anywhere that people (and even pets) are present, especially in larger groups. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the virus spreads easily between people and can cause severe illness and even death. The risk is higher for certain people. Risk factors include being 65 years of age or older or having serious underlying medical conditions. By attending a Diocese of Gary School, you voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to viruses, including the coronavirus that causes COVID-19. Enhanced health and safety measures have been recommended to protect each of us. You must follow all posted instructions while attending a Diocese of Gary School.”*

**General Building Maintenance and Sanitation**

- A thorough cleaning of the school facilities will be completed prior to the start of the school year.
- School facilities will be cleaned at the end of each school day or before the next school day begins.
- NDCS will utilize industrial sanitizing equipment to help facilitate sanitation needs.
- High-touch or high contact surfaces such as bathroom facilities, desks, entryways, doorknobs and door handles will be sanitized regularly throughout the day.

- Procedures and visual aids for hand hygiene will be placed in visible areas around the school.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be placed in entrances and exits around the school including classrooms.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be maintained and filled on a regular basis.
- Everyone will be required to sanitize their hands upon entering and exiting a room or area.
- Teachers and staff sanitizing protocol will be established specific to their rooms and needs.
- Equipment considered to be high-touch and high contact surfaces such as water fountains, lockers, and microwave ovens will be discontinued for use.
- Minimal use of auxiliary space, common rooms or areas where students have close contact with others.

### **Prevention**

- The priority for preventing the spread of disease in the school setting is to insist that sick employees and students stay home. Additionally, students and employees should remain home if someone in the household has COVID-19 symptoms or is being tested for COVID-19. Please inform the school principal, Natasha Magnuson immediately if this is the case: nmagnuson@notredameparish.net
- For asymptomatic persons, the three most important mitigation strategies include reasonable social distancing, handwashing and sanitizing, and face coverings.
- Hand washing/sanitizing and avoiding touching your face, eyes, nose, or mouth are also important steps a person can take to avoid becoming sick or spreading germs to others.

### **Screening**

- Parents and families of Notre Dame students and staff should self-screen every day prior to the start of school. Please see the below for information regarding the symptoms of COVID-19. Students and employees exhibiting symptoms are prohibited from coming to school, and if they do come to school, will be sent home immediately.
- Students or staff who test positive for COVID-19, please make the main office aware and follow the guidelines provided below before returning to school.
- Attendance will be handled on a case-by-case basis to ensure the safety and health of our students and staff.

### **Symptoms Impacting Consideration for Exclusion from School**

The following are COVID-19 related symptoms:

- A fever of 100.4° F or greater
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain

- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Students and employees should be excluded from school if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19 based on CDC Guidance that is not otherwise explained.

### **Return to School After Exclusion**

Once a student or employee is excluded from the school environment, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the CDC. Currently those guidelines are:

#### **Untested**

Persons who have not received a test proving or disproving the presence of COVID-19 but experience symptoms may return if the following four conditions are met:

- They have not had a fever for at least 72 24 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers); and
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved); and
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.
- The state website has a list of over 200 testing facilities, their location, and hours of operation. This list is updated frequently.

#### **Tested Positive- Symptomatic**

Persons who experienced symptoms and have been tested for COVID-19 may return to school if the following conditions are met:

- The individual no longer has a fever (without the use medicine that reduces fevers); and
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved); and
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared; or
- The individual has received two negative tests at least 24 hours apart.

#### **Tested Positive- Asymptomatic**

Persons who have not had symptoms but test positive for COVID-19 may return when they have gone 10 calendar days past their test without symptoms and have been preferably released by a healthcare provider. Students may also return if they are approved to do so in writing by the student's health care provider.

#### **Face Coverings**

- Students and staff must wear face coverings in transition, between classes, or when there isn't the possibility of reasonable social distancing.

- Students and staff may wear masks all day, but are only required to wear them in transitions from room to room, between classes, or in any area where reasonable social distancing isn't possible.
- Masks do not need to be worn in class, but will be suggested in situations where there cannot be reasonable social distancing. The teacher will advise each class as to when masks are to be worn.
- Notre Dame face coverings can be purchased or homemade and should be school appropriate.

### **Lunch**

- The gymnasium will have seating options to suit responsible social distancing for lunch periods.
- Classrooms may also be utilized for lunch purposes to maintain responsible social distancing.
- No student workers.
- Home and School will offer lunch items that are pre-packaged prior to arriving at school.

### **In The Classroom and School**

- Students will stay with the same group of staff members as much as possible.
- Middle school students (grades 6-8) will not rotate classes. Middle school teachers will rotate following the academic schedule.
- Open air instruction will be utilized when possible.
- Students will have assigned seats in every class.
- Student desks will be forward facing with reasonable social distancing.
- Student learning materials will be kept in personal containers and will not be shared with others.
- Teachers will oversee daily wipe downs of student desks, tables, and other hard surfaces during the school day.
- Masks do not need to be worn in class, but will be suggested in situations where there cannot be reasonable social distancing, the teacher will advise each class as to when masks are to be worn.
- Students and staff will be required to wear masks while in transition from one place to another. This includes entering and exiting the school building as well as in the hallways and restrooms.
- Students will have limited exposure to materials and activities that are considered high-touch or high contact activities.
- Books and paper materials are not considered high risk for transmission by the CDC.
- Communal spaces such as playgrounds will have staggered use, limited students and will be disinfected when needed.

### **Virtual Learning Days**

- Virtual Learning Days (VLD) may be utilized to mitigate the spread of CORONA-19 as directed by official authorities of Indiana, the Diocese of Gary and/or Notre Dame Catholic School.

### **Access to Campus**

- Students will report to their home room class immediately upon arrival to school. There will be no gatherings in the halls or in the office.
- Drop-off/pick-up procedures will be determined prior to the start of school to support physical distancing except for household members.
- Drop-off/pick-up doors as well as times will be staggered to support physical distancing.
- There will be no visitors, outside of necessary personnel, during the school day.
- Email, phone calls, and Zoom calls will be used for communication needs.
- Families who are dropping-off or picking up students outside of normal school hours will need to report to the main school door for a visibility check and remain outside until their student is ready.

### **Pre-School and Pre-Kindergarten**

- Students will remain with the same small group of students for a 10 day period.
- Students will be assigned materials that they will share on a daily basis.
- Materials that cannot be sanitized will not be used.
- All shared materials will be disinfected prior to the next group utilizing the shared materials.
- Books and paper materials are not considered high risk for transmission by the CDC.
- All students will be closely supervised while using hand sanitizer.
- Face masks will be used as outlined above.
- Face masks will not be used during rest time.

### **Athletics and Physical Education**

- Director of Athletics Joe Bobillo will be providing guidelines to athletic coaches, student-athletes, and families before the start of athletic events in accordance with the PAC.
- Physical education classes will be held outside, while practicing reasonable social distancing, whenever possible.

### **Events On and Off Campus**

- There will be no off campus field trips, service trips, or retreats unless required for medical purposes.
- For scheduled masses, NDCS will follow the guidelines provided by Notre Dame Parish.
- Scheduled events such as plays, performances, banquets, etc. will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
- Prior to an event there will be guidelines and instructions sent and shared with parents, students, and staff. This is an ever evolving situation, so we want to be sure to provide

our students with the best possible opportunities, based on the most updated information and guidance.