

Patriots Return Procedures

Aug 3rd, 2020

Dear St. John's Parents,

Last Thursday our government leaders gave schools the go-ahead to have in-person classes. We are so excited to do that. The following is what we are calling "Patriots Return" guidelines.

Out of Christian love for one another, we want to respect everyone's concerns with how to minimize the spread of COVID. Our protocols are intended for the good of our St. John's school family. We pray that these procedures will be something that we can all support. How foolish it would be if we allowed this situation to divide us when we need to be unified. In the kingdom of God, we live by the patient selfless love and humility of our Lord Jesus. We feel that this plan will reduce COVID-19 transmission while balancing the need to maintain a strong education system here at St. John's.

Yes, classes will be different and it will call for a great deal of patience and humility as we seek to understand everyone's concerns. This may be a great opportunity to show others what it means to be one in Christ.

These procedures will detail our plans for the K- 8th in-person start of school on Aug. 31st. Prek will start in-person on Sept 8th. Please note that these plans could change at any time as new information, insights, and regulations are revealed. Our goal is to follow these steps so we can continue to offer in-person instruction.

Cohorts – For the sake of this document, a COHORT is defined as a "classroom of students." Students will stay among their Cohorts (listed here) for the duration of the school day. The changing of instructors/classrooms will be as limited as possible. This is to make any necessary contact tracing much easier for staff to process. Some changes to our Daily schedules will reflect this need to stay among Cohorts/Classrooms.

Student Cohorts

Prekindergarten

Kindergarten

1-2

3-4

5-6

7-8

Arrival – School doors open at 7:10 AM, for the convenience of children who are transported to school by their parents. If you need to get in earlier please let us know. Students are asked to go directly to their classrooms with their masks on. No one is to linger in the entrance/hallway at this time. Please use social distancing as recommended. Please check your child's temperature before they leave home. If it is 100.4 or higher we will call you to pick them up. Teachers will check each student for symptoms (temperature) of COVID-19 when they enter their classrooms.

Masks – Prekindergarten children are not required to wear a face shield or face covering. According to state guidelines we require that K-8 students wear a mask. This is especially true when they enter school in the morning, and again wear them when they leave at 2:15 pm. A face shield may be worn by teachers and students when wearing a mask is problematic or impedes the educational process.

We have ordered clear face shields for all students and teachers. Face coverings may be temporarily removed when engaging in indoor physical activity while staying 6 feet apart. We ask that all student K-8 have at least one mask at school, kept in their desk or backpack, for cases where contact outside the cohort/classroom is unavoidable for an extended time period. Face coverings along with other measures like good hand washing and social distancing work together to slow the spread.

Visitors/Parents – We prefer that parents stay out of the school at this time. An exception would be made for parents of younger students. Visitors into the building will be limited. All visitors/parents are required to wear a mask if entering school for any reason.

Field Trips – At this time, we do not have any field trips scheduled, but we are hopeful that these trips will start up again as the year goes on. We are also unsure of what school-sponsored activities, such as monthly parent-student-staff activities, will be able to be held. This is something that will be determined as time goes on.

Sports – Fall sports - The area Lutheran athletic directors (LALSAC), in consultation with the Luther High athletic director and through the monitoring of their local, county, and state directives, have voted to suspend the start of the fall sports seasons. September 21 (practices) and October 1 (games) have been identified as the potential dates that the fall sports seasons may begin. If these dates prove to be feasible as conditions are monitored, the volleyball and cross country seasons will follow an abbreviated and likely regional schedule as determined by the athletic directors. Additional meetings are planned for the near future to assess the possibility of these activities. Flag football will likely be suspended until spring. Other sports seasons for the year will be assessed as they approach.

Keeping Students Home

Parents are asked to check their child's temperatures and ask them about any new symptoms before they come to school.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include: new onset cough or shortness of breath by themselves OR at least 2 of the following: fever (100.4°F or higher), chills, muscle pain, sore throat, loss of sense of smell or taste, and gastrointestinal symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea. If a person has a new symptom (for example, new loss of smell only) with no other diagnosis to explain it, they should stay home and talk to their health care provider about testing for COVID-19, even if it is the only symptom they are experiencing.

Minnesota Department of Health Decision Tree for people with COVID-19 Symptoms

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/exguide.pdf>

What steps can I take to prevent my student from getting COVID-19?

You can talk with your student about taking everyday steps to prevent getting sick:

- *Help them wash their hands often. Practice washing at home for at least 20 seconds.
- *Help them avoid close contact with people who are sick, even inside your own home.
- *Remind them to stay 6 feet apart from other people. Practice with your child.
- *Cover mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when they are around others.
- * Help your child practice wearing a face covering at home for short periods of time.
- *Teach your students to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.
- *Help your student monitor their health—look for symptoms and take their temperature daily.

For more detailed information about protecting your student from COVID-19

Visit: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html>

We strongly request that as parents you limit your students' social activities, which occur outside of home, school, and church. As their potential contact with COVID-19 could have far-reaching consequences. For example, a whole class or the whole school could be shut down for 14 days.

How long does it take for symptoms to start?

It can take up to 14 days for people with COVID-19 to start showing symptoms. Some people have very mild symptoms, some people become really sick, and some people with COVID-19 don't have any symptoms at all.

What do isolation and quarantine mean?

These are terms that public health scientists use to describe why someone needs to stay home. They are public safety tools that have been around for centuries to stop the spread of germs.

Isolation means keeping sick people away from healthy ones. This usually means that the sick person rests in their own bedroom or area of your home and keeps away from others as best as possible.

Quarantine means separating people who were exposed to a sick person away from others. Because someone can spread COVID-19 before they have symptoms, quarantine stops them from accidentally spreading the virus to other healthy people. Usually, people who are in quarantine stay at home and avoid being around others.

Why does my student need to stay at home?

Your student should stay home if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or if a household member has symptoms, have been tested for COVID-19 (while waiting for results) or have been exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19. By keeping ill students, and students who have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others, we can stop the spread of the virus. It is possible for people who do not have symptoms to spread the virus to others.

How St. John's plans to react to Covid-19 exposures-

To better understand how St. John's will react to times when students or faculty are exposed to or test positive for the Covid-19 virus, we have put together some different scenarios that we hope you find easy to understand, and that will answer questions before they are asked. Again, these are only **POSSIBLE SCENARIOS**. We cannot anticipate every scenario. We lovingly encourage St. John's parents to follow the guidelines listed below.

Scenario A: Eli and his siblings stay home.

Eli wakes up with symptoms of COVID.

- a. Eli and his siblings stay home.
- b. A consult with medical professional is held. They determine a test is not necessary.
- c. Eli follows medical advice.

From MDH: For people with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 without a medical evaluation (e.g., monitoring symptoms at home) Stay home at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND until no fever for at least 3 days without medication AND improvement of other symptoms. Siblings and household members also stay home for 14 days.

Scenario B: Symptomatic student with negative test results.

Jane wakes up with a fever/symptoms of COVID-19.

- a. Jane and all her siblings are to stay home!
- b. Jane requests a COVID-19 test.
- c. A Negative test result is realized.

FROM MDH: Negative test result but symptoms with no other diagnosis: Stay home at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND until no fever for at least 3 days without medication AND improvement of other symptoms. Siblings and household members also stay home for 14 days.

Scenario C: Symptomatic student with a positive test result.

John wakes up with a fever/symptoms of COVID-19.

- a. John and all his siblings must stay home from school.
- b. Request for COVID-19 test.
- c. Positive test result is realized.
- d. Cohort/Classroom will be notified of a positive case.
- e. All family members should be tested.

From MDH: Positive test result: Stay home at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND until no fever for at least 3 days without medication AND improvement of other symptoms. Siblings and household members also stay home for 14 days.

Scenario D: Multiple students (and/or staff) with positive test results.

Gertrude (4th grader) has a known positive case and Billy (4th grader) also tests positive.

- a. If 2 or more students in the same cohort/classroom test positive, that will be considered an outbreak.
AS A RESULT, the entire school cohort/classroom (3rd-4th grades) will need to Quarantine for 14 days and tests should be requested for all.

Scenario E – Student develops **symptoms while at school**

Calvin (2nd grader) develops a fever/symptoms during morning recess.

- a. Calvin will be removed from his Cohort/Classroom and placed in our designated isolation room along with his siblings.
- b. Parents will be called and student(s) will need to be picked up ASAP.
- c. Request for COVID-19 test will be made.
- d. Appropriate steps as indicated in the previous scenarios will apply pending the test results.

Scenario F - Teacher shows signs of COVID

- a. Teacher contacts a medical professional. If no test is needed then the teacher would need to be symptom free for 72 hours before returning to the classroom. We would either have a substitute in the room or do distance learning until the teacher returns.
- b. If the teacher is positive we would either find a sub or do distance learning for the classroom for 14 days. The rest of the school would have in-person class as normal.

TESTING Currently Winona Health does not require an appointment or a referral.

If a student shows signs of COVID and the parent refuses to test then the child will not be permitted to attend school until the 14 day period is over.

What if a teacher or staff members shows signs of COVID?

If a teacher shows signs they would need to follow the same protocol as students.

Parents Reporting Absentees

We will no longer be awarding perfect or exceptional attendance. When students are absent from school, parents will need to report to the office the reason for the absence as well as all symptoms if the absence is related to an illness. This will help (Winona County) us track any COVID-19 cases that do arise among our student body.

Please refer to the list of symptoms mentioned in this document.

Teachers are currently working to develop alternate plans for at-home/online learning resources as a result of the scenarios that are laid out above. **Students will be expected to continue their studies while they are quarantined unless they are too ill to do so.**

Privacy – One point we need to stress is PRIVACY!!! Students like to talk and spread information without knowing the complete story. Please do not spread any unknown or unconfirmed information.

This is especially true with the use of social media. Please refrain from posting what should remain private matters online as it usually results in unnecessary stress being added to an already stressful condition.

How things be different at school?

Teachers will take temperatures as soon as student enters the classroom.

Teachers will be using a checklist to make sure frequently touched surfaces are sanitized.

Desks in the classroom will be spread out and all face one direction.

Bathroom and recess times are established to separate cohorts and reduce hallway congestion.

We will use wipes, sprays, or sanitizers for school common areas.

Physical Education equipment will be used within the cohort and will be sanitized after use.

Recess will be held only with cohort groups.

Efforts will be made to maintain social distancing and sanitize equipment and toys.

After School Care will be provided in the classroom of the cohort.

We will wash hands regularly.

The only water fountain in use will be the touchless water bottle filling station in the hallway.

What St. John's will provide -

We have ordered clear face shields for all students and teachers.

What Parents provide -

Individual bottles of sanitizer to be kept at the child's desk.

Individual mask to be used when in common areas. (washed or disposed of regularly)

Water fountains will not be available so individual water bottles are advised

Any significant and pertinent information will be shared in a timely manner with all those who need to know as soon as possible and will come directly from the school office. We will be as transparent as possible! There is no way that we can address every possible scenario that may arise. So, we ask that you consider that our mandates come from the MDH, and the Winona County Health Department. and that any changes that will directly affect our school and our families will be communicated in a timely manner. We ask for your flexibility as we make our plans for the beginning of this school year together.

God's Blessings,

St. John's YDC and Faculty