



ST PATRICK CATHOLIC SCHOOL

701 S Church Street, Wentzville, MO 63385
Phone: 636-332-9913

March 17, 2020

Dear St. Patrick School Family!

Happy St. Patrick's Dà 

In response to the COVID-19 virus, your children's teachers have been working diligently at preparing for the next few weeks for distance learning. They have been watching webinars, collaborating and sharing great ideas. We met this morning as a faculty to make sure we were ready to go, and our teachers will be rolling out lessons beginning tomorrow, Wednesday, March 18th. The teachers will have specific instructions for you to help you get started. I have attached our Distance Learning Plan along with some guidelines for your review. We feel these eight guidelines are important and will make this interruption of face-to-face instruction run more smoothly.

For students who need to pick up books from school, the school office will be open tomorrow, Wednesday, from 8:00am – 11:00am and 2:00pm to 5:00pm. If you cannot come during either of those times, please contact me, and I will make arrangements with you.

Some of you have asked how long we will be closed, and the Archdiocese of St. Louis Office of Education and Faith Formation has said we will plan to return on Monday, April 6th; however, this is contingent upon recommendations of the CDC and Health Departments. I will notify you as soon as I can.

Like you, the faculty and staff are in uncharted waters, which means we too, have no experience with this type of situation and are unsure of what is yet to come. But, with that being said, I am so thrilled with our faculty and staff and the hard work and effort they have already put into making this as seamless as possible for you and your children. So while we travel along in the same boat, I ask that you please be patient, keep the lines of communication open, and continue to pray for everyone affected by the COVID-19 virus. You are in my thoughts and prayers.

Be sure to check our Facebook page frequently! We have some fun things planned!

On another note, report cards will be available for viewing at 3:00pm this Friday, March 20th.

Yours in Christ,



Mrs. Jill Gould
Principal



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Distance Learning Plan

General expectations for St. Patrick students.

How can I expect to receive communications?

We will continue communicating with parents in the ways we do now: Renweb, and email. Students should expect to use Google Classroom for assignments. Parents of primary students should access those accounts to help ensure their children know what to do.

Faculty will be working and available to help.

Even though students and teachers will not attend class at St. Patrick School, the faculty and staff are all still working during this time. We will be available to help students and parents as needed via email with designated "Teacher Hours" for messaging from between 8:30am-9:30am and 1:30pm-3:00pm daily.

Faculty	
8:30am-9:30am	Teacher Hours
8:30am Friday	Drop Everything and Pray (Mrs. Gould & Mr. Morrison)
1:30pm-3:00pm	Teacher Hours

Work Expectations:

Grade Level	Expectation of Work
Preschool, Pre-kindergarten	Up to 30 minutes of engagement per day
Primary: Kindergarten-1st & 2nd Grades	1-2 hours of engagement per day
Intermediate: 3rd, 4th & 5th Grades	2-3 hours of engagement per day
Middle School: 6th, 7th & 8th Grades	3-4 hours of engagement per day



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8 Guidelines for St. Patrick's Parents ———

The transition to distance learning may be challenging for families. Parents will need to think differently about how to support their children; how to create structures and routines that allow their children to be successful; and how to monitor and support their children's learning. Some students will thrive with distance learning, while others may struggle. The ten guidelines provided below are intended to help parents think about what they can do to help their children find success in a distance learning environment.

1—Establish routines and expectations

St. Patrick will implement a DLP (Distance Learning Plan) beginning Wednesday, March 18, 2020. We recommend parents establish routines and expectations. St. Patrick School encourages parents to set regular hours for their children's school work. We suggest students begin their studies at 8:30am. Keep normal bedtime routines for younger children and expect the same from your middle school-aged students, too. (Don't let them stay up late and sleep in!) Your children should move regularly and take periodic breaks as they study. It is important that parents set these expectations for how their children will spend their days starting as soon as distance learning is implemented, not several days later after it becomes apparent a child is struggling with the absence of routine.

2—Define the physical space for your child's study

Your child may have a regular place for doing homework under normal circumstances, but this space may or may not be suitable for an extended period of time, as will be the case with the DLP. We encourage families to establish a space/location where their children will learn most of the time. This should be a public/family space, not in a child's bedroom. It should be a place that can be quiet at times and have a strong wireless internet signal, if possible. Above all, it should be a space where parents are present and monitoring their children's learning.

3—Begin and end each day with a check-in

Parents are encouraged to start and finish each day with a simple check-in. In the morning, ask what is your child learning today? What are their learning targets or goals? How will they spend their time? What resources do they require? What support do they need? This brief grounding conversation matters. It allows children to process the instructions they've received from their teachers. It helps them organize themselves and set priorities. Older students may not want to have these check-ins with parents (that's normal!), but they should nevertheless. Parents should establish these check-ins as regular parts of each day. Not all students thrive in a distance learning environment; some struggle with too much independence or lack of structure. These check-in routines need to be established early, before students fall behind or begin to struggle.



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4—Establish times for quiet and reflection

A huge challenge for families with multiple children will be how to manage all of their children's needs, especially when those children are different ages and have different needs. There may be times when siblings need to work in different rooms to avoid distraction. Parents may even experiment with noise-cancelling headphones (no music necessary!) to block out distractions.

5—Monitor communications from your children's teachers

Teachers will communicate with parents through email. The frequency and detail of these communications will be determined by your children's ages, maturity, and their degree of independence. St. Patrick wants parents to contact their children's teachers. Teachers will be checking email regularly, but in addition, will have office hours from 8:30-9:30am and 1:30-3:00pm each day. Parents can email through Renweb as teachers will not be contacting parents via their personal phones.

6—Take an active role in helping your children process and own their learning

In the course of a regular school day at St. Patrick, your son or daughter engages with other students or adults dozens if not hundreds of times. While some of these social interactions will be re-created on virtual platforms, others will not. Human beings learn best when they have opportunities to process their learning with others. Beyond the check-ins recommended at the start and end of each day, parents might be wise to regularly circle back and engage with their children about what they're learning. However, it's important that they do their own work; don't complete assignments for them, even when they are struggling.

7—Monitor your child online (how much time and exposure to content) St. Patrick does not want its students staring at computer screens for 7-8 hours a day. (See Distance Learning Guidelines). Reminder: We are asking parents to be aware that devices normally kept at school DO NOT contain the same content filtering at home that they have at St. Patrick. We rely on the content filtering from our firewall to keep students away from inappropriate websites when they are on our campus. You know what type of content filter you have on your device; however, we recommend you pay close attention to student device activity during this time.

8—Encourage physical activity and/or exercise

Make sure your children remember to move and exercise. This is vitally important to their health, wellbeing, and to their learning. Mrs. Keifer will recommend activities or exercises, but it is important for parents to model and encourage exercise! Think also about how your children can pitch in more around the house with chores or other responsibilities.