***IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SCHOOL***

**RETURN-TO-SCHOOL**

**PLAN**

*IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19*

*2020- 2021*



A Commitment to Christ … A Commitment to Excellence

**Wisdom from our Pastor, Fr. John Antony**

We've often heard the phrase, "Don't reinvent the wheel!" But sometimes we must reinvent the wheel, especially when we find ourselves not in a car on the open road but in a ship on the open seas of a pandemic. This "Return to School Plan" you are reading is a thorough reworking of every aspect of life and learning at Immaculate Conception School. It touches students and staff, classrooms and cafeteria, drop-off and drinking water, recess and restrooms. In short, it reinvents the wheel of elementary education! As you begin to see the sweep and scope of this plan, I pray you will feel peace and even enthusiasm to return to school at Immaculate Conception this fall. Ultimately, we know the Captain of our ship is Jesus Christ. He invites us to set sail with him, as he did his first apostles, saying: "Put out into deep water, and lower your nets for a catch" (Lk. 5:4).

## **MISSION OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SCHOOL**

Immaculate Conception Catholic School, following the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, develops the whole child, instills Gospel values, inspires a love of learning, and promotes academic excellence in a diverse nurturing community.

**A MESSAGE FROM MRS. B**

Dear I.C. Families,

As I write this message, a sense of excitement rushes through me at the thought of your children returning to school in August! I have missed them dearly and can’t wait to see their beautiful smiling faces! I know they are anxious to see their friends and learn, play, and laugh with them!!

It has never been so obvious than during this time of COVID-19 isolation how necessary social and emotional interaction is to us as human beings. I am so thankful for the continued instruction and contact our teachers made with your children during AMI days and appreciative of the efforts of our parents to make that time as painless and productive as possible. However, one clear truth shone forth- **nothing** can replace personal and face-to-face interaction for our elementary students and staff.

This plan explains the steps that will be implemented beginning August 12 to do our best to prevent the spread of COVID-19. I encourage you to read carefully and do your part to support our efforts. Also, please be assured that I.C. School will continue to carry out our mission and be the “nurturing community” that you know so well. As always, your children will know and feel that our staff and I love them and that they are special in only the way that God can make.

Mrs. B

**INTRODUCTION**

This plan is to aid Immaculate Conception School in navigating the reestablishment of on-site instruction **if school begins with social distancing requirements in place or if a time comes during the year when it is required**. The goal is for employees, students, and families to feel safe and to reduce the impact of COVID-19 conditions upon returning to on-site school instruction. The guidelines referenced in this plan are based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH), and Governor Hutchinson. Our school plan will be updated as needed based on information provided by the CDC and applicable federal, state and local agencies.

## **EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT SAFETY**

### **VISITOR RESTRICTIONS** I.C. School will not be able to allow normal visitation on our campuses until permission is given by the Governor of Arkansas. Only school staff, necessary workers, and students are allowed on campus until normal operations are allowed. Even after opening, visitors may be restricted from entering school buildings based on current guidelines.

A visitor is defined as parents, volunteers, or other non-essential persons. If a visitor requests admission to school buildings, they must:

* Ring doorbell and be recognized by school personnel
* Wear a mask
* Sanitize at dispensers inside entry doors
* Sign in at office where each person’s temperature will be taken and recorded and screened for symptoms of the COVID-19 virus. (Please see list below for COVID-19 symptoms under “Employee Screening and Protocols”)

Other restrictions:

* All “homemade” student lunches MUST be brought by the students when they arrive at school. Lunches may NOT be brought to school after student arrival
* Parents or other family members/friends will not be able to join a student for lunch
* Parents or other family members/friends will not be allowed to bring or send birthday treats to school
* Parents may only pick up their child during the school day for medical or dental appointments and must follow above listed procedures

### **EMPLOYEE SCREENING AND PROTOCOLS**

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the potential risk of exposure to our employees and students, employees will be required to complete a daily screening upon arrival that includes a temperature reading and screening for symptoms related to COVID-19 including:

* Cough
* Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
* Chills
* Repeated shaking with chills
* Muscle pain
* Headache
* Sore throat
* Loss of taste or smell
* Diarrhea
* Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
* Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19

Daily screenings of employees will be recorded and maintained in the medical component of RenWeb application. All screening information will be kept confidential.

Any employee over the age of 65 or with any underlying health issues is required to supply a “work” permission from their PCP or sign a COVID-19 waiver.

**Parents/guardians- PLEASE NOTE:**

* Please be proactive and make plans for a caretaker to be able to pick up your child within an hour if they begin to run a fever or show symptoms of COVID-19.
  + Our school staff recognizes how difficult it is to “just drop” everything to come and get your child and that children can have a fever for many different reasons. However, we must isolate any child that has a fever and COVID-19 symptoms and that takes additional supervision and personnel.
* Check your FACTS/RenWeb account to make sure that the correct cellphone numbers are present!!

### **SOCIAL DISTANCING**

Social distancing is an effective way to prevent potential infection. School employees, students, parents, and visitors should practice staying approximately 6 feet and eliminating contact with others when feasible.

Social distancing will be practiced:

* Classes will be separated from other classes during the day
* A schedule for use of cafeteria, restrooms, and play areas will be followed
* Teachers will use mask/face shields as much as possible when instructing and working with groups of children
* Students (older than 10 years old) in 5th and 6th grade may be required to wear masks while in school building
  + Masks have been ordered for students and will be washed and disinfected each evening for use the following day
* Younger students may wear masks at parent requests but are asked to provide the masks
* Desks in classrooms will be spaced out as much as possible and all desks will face the same direction
* There will be no gatherings in large groups, i.e. auditorium
* No more than 2 persons other than office staff will be allowed in the school office at one time

## **SCHOOL DAY PROCEDURES DROP OFF AND PICK UP *Morning drop off Procedures for K-6:* Preferred drop off procedure:** Vehicles will turn corner at So. B and So. 14th streets and pull up vehicles as close to stop sign at So. A as possible

* + Vehicles MUST stay in place until children exiting vehicle have undergone a Covid-19 screening each morning.
  + Drivers will remain in vehicles
  + Screenings will be performed by I.C. School staff
    - The results of the Covid-19 screening will be recorded in RenWeb medical application for each child each day
  + Only after staff have completed Covid-19 screening on each child exiting a vehicle, may vehicles leave school campus in our typical orderly manner
* **Alternate procedure:** Families may park in appropriate places and walk students to front steps
  + Parent/student(s) may only gather at designated places in front of steps
  + A staff member will conduct Covid-19 screening for students
    - The results of the Covid-19 screening will be recorded in RenWeb medical application for each child each day
  + If other families are gathered across corner of So. 14th and B Streets from school entrance, they must wait until a designated place is unoccupied to proceed
* Parents will not be allowed inside of school building during drop off
* Upon arrival students go straight to classroom instead of auditorium
* **7:00- 7:25:** Children may only be dropped off from 7:00- 7:25 if work schedule or other family circumstance of parents requires early drop off.
  + **A Parent** must contact Mrs. B with reason for early drop off. Please email [sblentlinger@icschoolfs.org](mailto:sblentlinger@icschoolfs.org)
* A “staggered” drop off schedule will be suggested and communicated with parents prior to the beginning of school start on August
* **Rain Plan:** Tents will be used if it is raining during morning drop off. Family groups of children will gather under tents as instructed by staff conducting Covid-19 screenings before joining classrooms

**Pickup at 3:15**

* Students leaving at 3:15 will be housed inside of the school building in a “rain” plan organization
* **ALL** families picking up children at the 3:15 dismissal time MUST use the pickup plan by lining up on So B and following protocols to turn right onto So. 14th and allowing students to enter vehicles
* **Parents** will not be able to gather in front of outside steps to wait for children

**ASC**

* Parents must reserve a place for their child for ASC; please email agarcia@icschoolfs.org
* ASC will be held in library, music, art, playground, and auditorium rooms
* Parents must notify a staff member when they arrive to pick up children
  + A name and number will be posted on front door for parent to contact
* Students will be brought to front door after parent contact is made

**Homework Room**

* Homework room will be held in the cafeteria where children will be able to spread out in 6” distances
* Parents must notify a staff member when they arrive to pick up children
  + A name and number will be posted on front door for parent to contact
* Students will be brought to front door after parent contact is made
* Homework room will begin Monday, August 17

**MEAL PERIODS**

* Kindergarten will eat lunch at the tables in the front of the auditorium at 12:15
* 1st grades will go to lunch at 11:00 and 2nd grade at 11:05
* 3rd and 4th will have lunch at 12:45 and will stagger the times that they enter the hallways and cafeteria
* 5th and 6th eat at 12:30 and will stagger the times each class enters the hallways and cafeteria

**CAFETERIA ARRANGEMENT FOR BREAKFAST AND LUNCH**

* Tables in auditorium will set up so that one kindergarten class can eat lunch on stage and other below on floor area
* Tables in cafeteria, without the kindergarten, will be spaced apart and each class will have designated tables so that class groups can be seated 6’ from other classes
* The water station in the cafeteria will not be available. Students will bring a bring a water bottle to cafeteria is they wish to have water with lunch
* Salad bar will not be available. Pre-made salads may be ordered by students/staff for lunch
* Lunches brought from home MUST arrive with students at drop off. Parents or other adults MAY NOT bring lunches to school after the day has begun
  + Parents are urged to thoroughly wash and sanitize lunch boxes each night
* Parents or other family members/friends will not be able to join a student for lunch
* Parents or other family members/friends will not be allowed to bring or send birthday treats to school
* All tables and chairs will be disinfected between lunch periods by adult staff only and adult staff
* Adult staff will scrape plates instead of students
* Tableware will be prewrapped
* Cafeteria staff will wear masks and gloves when serving food and children are present
* Breakfast will follow above procedures but all K-6 students will eat breakfast in the cafeteria at designated tables for each grade
  + Please note: Often students like to “wait” for their friends to arrive at school before going to breakfast. Because of the need to keep as few students in the cafeteria, students must go to breakfast after they arrive at school and check in with their teacher
* Ice cream purchases will begin in September and 6th students selling ice cream will wear masks and gloves.
  + Classes will remain separated during this process
* An additional part-time staff person will be hired to assist with additional disinfecting duties in cafeteria, restrooms, and buildings

**WATER FOUNTAIN AND RESTROOMS**

* The spigots on water fountains will be covered and children will be able to use water fountains to refill their water bottles only
* An additional part-time staff person will be hired to assist with additional disinfecting duties in cafeteria, restrooms, and buildings
* Parents are urged to thoroughly wash and sanitize reusable water bottles each night

## **CLASSROOM ARRANGEMENTS**

* Students will be kept in their classrooms as much as possible. 5th and 6th grade teachers will change each period instead of students
* Specials will go to classrooms, if feasible. If classes move to the rooms of specials: art, music, library, P.E., enough time will be allotted in the schedules for those rooms to be disinfected before another class arrives.
* Teachers will arrange desks and tables as far apart as they are able
* Teachers will wear masks or face shields as much as possible
  + Please note that it is very difficult to effectively instruct in OG and phonics and in some other areas. Children need to be able to view the mouth of the teacher
* Desks will be arranged so students do not face each other
* Students in 5th and 6th grade may be required to wear masks while in school building
  + Masks will be provided for students and will be washed and disinfected each evening for use the following day
* If the number of students in a classroom at a time is limited to 10 -12, the Catholic schools in Fort Smith will consider alternate school scheduling – such as, A and B days. Half class comes on A days and half on B days, alternate one day of the week, with off day group completing remote lessons from home or some other arrangement

## **RECESS**

* Kindergarten will have morning recess 10:00- 10:30 and lunch recess 1:30-2:00
* 1st grade will have recess before lunch 10:30- 11:00 and will also take a recess in the afternoon when other classes are not on the playground
* 3rd and 4th grade recesses will remain at 12:10- 12:40 and grades will alternate days between field and playground
* 5th and 6th grade recesses will remain at 1:05- 1:20 and grades will alternate days between field and playground

**DELIVERY OF INSTRUCTION**

**On-site Instruction**

* Will begin Wednesday, August 12, from 8:00- 3:15, with ASC until 5:30
* COVID-19 protocols will be in place
* Students will be expected to be present each day in class except due to illness, quarantine, or other excused absence
* During any absences, student will be expected to complete missed work

**Virtual Instruction**

* Students with underlying-health issues will be permitted to receive on-line/virtual learning and will be off campus for the semester
  + Parents must notify Mrs. Blentlinger, principal, by July 24 with a written request for virtual learning stating reason and health concerns. Request should be emailed to sblentlinger@icschoolfs.org
  + Upon approval of request, a meeting with parent, teacher, and principal will be scheduled face-to-face or through virtual means
* There will be academic, attendance, and behavior standards a student must adhere for virtual instruction

**Students who are quarantined**

* In the event a student or students must be quarantined due to COVID-19, a tutor will assist student(s) with school lessons until the quarantined time has ended
* There will be academic, attendance, and behavior standards a student must adhere for virtual instruction

**AMI**

* In the event of an extended school closing, as occurred in spring 2020, all students will participate in AMI instruction according to a pre-determined class schedule via Google platforms.
* There will be academic, attendance, and behavior standards a student must adhere for virtual instruction

## **DISINFECTION PROTOCOLS**

Listed are the protocols that have been taken and will be made to prevent the spread of COVID-19

* A new chemical system is being installed that uses SAO, Stabilized Aqueous Ozone, solution. This solution is combined with water and will be used to mop floors and disinfect all areas of our school and surfaces in classrooms. It will be placed in spray bottles and fogging machines.
  + SAO solution is effective in eliminating >99.99% of the Coronavirus and other viruses as well
  + Is safer for humans, pets, and on all surfaces
  + Has a one minutes dwell time after application
  + Earned the “green Seal” certification meeting GS-37 and GS-53 performance standards
  + Mrs. B has more information in school office, if desired
* Each classroom, office space, and entrance has a disinfectant station with a disinfectant dispenser, disinfectant wipes, gloves, and SAO spray bottles
* All classrooms will be disinfected four times a day
* All rooms will be deeply cleaned each day
* All rooms will be disinfected after each class of students leaves a “specials” room
* An additional part-time staff person will be hired to assist with additional disinfecting duties in cafeteria, restrooms, and buildings

## **HANDLING A SUSPECTED COVID19 CASE**

If an employee or student becomes ill on campus/district, he/she will immediately report to the **school’s isolation room**.

Once the employee or student arrives at the isolation room, they will be immediately provided with an unused mask and gloves. This is to help protect other employees and students and prevent the spread of the potential virus.

* The nurse and others attending the suspected infected person, will also wear a protective mask and gloves while working with the suspected infected person.
* The nurse/administrator will direct the ill employee to leave work or call the parent of the student to be picked up and go home.
  + Students who are ill should be picked up at school by an authorized adult within one hour
* The nurse/administrator must identify persons who may have come in contact with the suspected infected person. *Unless required by the local health authority, the name of the employee should not be provided.*
* Employees will be informed that they may have been in contact with a suspected employee and to carry out self-screening every morning, and based on the results, contact the administration.
* The isolation area and suspected employee’s or student’s work area/classroom must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, in addition to all other common surfaces recently touched by the employee or student
* The nurse/administrator may call the local health authority and seek advice
  + Nurse Shelby will be present four days a week from 8:00- 12:00

### **GUIDANCE IF EXPOSED**

If you or someone you’ve been in contact with has been exposed to the virus, our first concern is for your health and safety and those around you. In this rapidly changing situation, healthcare providers should have the most up-to-date information from the CDC.

Please do the following:

1. Quarantine yourself in a specific room away from others in your home
2. Contact your healthcare provider and school administrator to let them know you have been exposed to COVID-19, then follow their instructions.
3. Your administrator will contact the Office of Catholic Schools to determine appropriate next steps.
4. In case of an emergency, call 911 and let them know you have been exposed to COVID19, then follow their instructions.

### **HEALTH PROTOCOL**

* If an employee/student becomes ill at school or exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 at school, they will be asked to leave and be tested for COVID-19 at an appropriate health center.
* Employee/student returning to work from an approved medical leave should contact administration.
* Employee/student will be asked to submit a healthcare provider’s note to the principal that they are COVID-19 free before returning to school.

## **HANDLING A CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE**

I.C. School may need to implement short-term closure procedures if an infected person has been in the school building. In the event an employee or student is confirmed to have COVID-19, the following may occur:

* Local health officials and the Office of Catholic Schools will be notified
* Students and staff may be dismissed for 2 – 5 days to allow local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school and make recommendations for the continuation of school
* All school based extracurricular activities and events during the closure
* Discourage staff, students, and their families from gathering or socializing anywhere
* Communicate with staff, parents, and students:
  + Coordinate communication with local health officials and the Superintendent
  + Plan to include messages to counter potential stigma and discrimination
  + Maintain confidentiality of the student or staff member
* Clean and disinfect thoroughly
  + Close off areas used by the individuals with COVID-19
  + Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in affected area.
  + If possible wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting