

June 20, 2020

Dear Saint Peter Catholic School Family,

I hope you are all well and enjoying your summer. I know there is much angst about plans regarding returning to school for the 2020-21 Academic year. I am putting this update together with the intentions of providing you all confidence that we are working very hard on preparing and planning for 2020-21.

First, school will start as scheduled one way or another. The absolute number one goal for the start of the 2020-21 school year is face-to-face instruction in our physical classrooms. Seeing the students and parents at the end of the school year for a few moments as you picked up belongings and dropped off school materials was one of many reminders over the last couple of months of just how much we miss being together as a family. However, keep in mind that there are many factors that are out of our control. Regardless, we have developed and are fine tuning plans for the three major possibilities.

We are still operating with the following documented goals under the circumstances:

1. Provide at least some semblance of normalcy, balance, and routine for our students while mitigating, to the extent possible, health risks to all.
2. Reduce/avoid additional hardship and stress to the extent possible.
3. Deliver the best possible education under the circumstances such that our students can matriculate on schedule.

What are we doing already?

- Closely following mandates and guidance from the Diocese of Raleigh, State Health and Human Services, NC State Administration, NCDPI, CDC and local Health and Human Services. We should have more guidance from these organizations the first week or two of July.
- Minimized class sizes and “mixing” of groups to the greatest extent possible.
- Purchasing specialized disinfecting equipment and modifying our daily cleaning routines.
- Purchased equipment and created systems for monitoring and tracing student/staff health as it relates to Covid-19.
- Improving and implementing the systems and remote learning tools used to finish up 2019-20. This way students/staff that are at risk or must be under quarantine can continue to participate in classes remotely and asynchronously with in-person classes. With systems in place, if we should be required to switch to some remote learning model everything will be ready to “flip the switch” instantly.

As a smaller school, we have luxuries our brother and sister educators in larger systems do not have, including the ability to pivot and adjust course quickly. While still difficult, it is much easier for us to stay in touch, support, and monitor each student and family for well being, progress, and success.

Three possible scenarios with associated plans:

**Best case** we return to school in the building as scheduled. This seems most likely at the moment, but again, things are changing by the hour. Many adjustments are likely even in this best case. Some may include but are not limited to:

- Temperature check and quick screening at entry ... drop off will be modified.
- Limited number of “visitors” in the building. That is, students and staff only in the building unless by verified appointment.
- Extraordinary cleaning and disinfecting
- We won’t have large groups for lunch. Potentially classroom or outdoor lunch.
- Postpone any large assemblies and field trips.
- Weekly Mass ... as the Bishop and our Pastors direct.
- Mitigation and “quarantine” policy will be in place for those that have been exposed, tested positive for Covid-19 or have been traveling.
- Tools used for remote learning will be incorporated into day-to-day in person classes such that people at risk or under quarantine may continue to participate remotely.
- We will add or remove adjustments depending on the situation at the start of the school year.

**Intermediate case** we start the school year under “limited density” requirements.

- Example: only allowed half the student body at the time.
- In this case students will likely rotate half live and half remote asynchronously over some designated period of time. For example, Group A attends live classes while Group B attends remotely and after a week or two switch. As stated in the best case scenario the tools and processes for such will already be in place.

**Worst case** we start 2020-21 the way we finished last year ... remotely. While this seems the least likely case, we will still be prepared with a contingency plan for it.

- Tweak/modify what was in place the last 11 weeks of 2019-20 based on analysis and evaluation by faculty and staff.
- Encourage everyone to do all you can at home to prepare: Internet, devices, work spaces etc.

Some other **unanticipated case**:

- Examples: Start and Stop, slightly delayed live start.

- We will quickly adjust and be ready! As mentioned above we will have all tools in place to quickly pivot should the necessity arise.

What are we asking of our SPCS family?

- Patience, understanding, and support.
- Productive and constructive input.
- Stay focused on what we CAN do rather than what we CANNOT do.
- Plan for the best but please be prepared for the worst:
  - Is your internet sufficient?
  - Devices in working order?
  - Proper work spaces for your students?
  - Prepare for how the less likely cases might affect adult's schedules.

Once again it will take all of us working together collaboratively to realize the three goals above. I am absolutely confident that we can do this together.

Sincerely,

Principal Alexander  
Saint Peter Catholic School