



SAINT JAMES CATHOLIC SCHOOL

FAITH + FAMILY + RESPONSIBILITY + RESPECT

525 E. 14th Street + Crete, NE 68333 + 402-826-2318

Dear Parents,

July 30, 2020

Praise God! School is about to begin! I think it has all the potential for being the best and most joyful school year ever. How can this be? Well, with all our current unpleasant world situations it seems likely that true Christians will choose to rely on Jesus more than ever before. As self-reliance decreases and God-reliance increases, grace, peace, and joy flourish. Yes, I do think it will be the best and most joyful year ever!

This past June I sent out our initial St. James Return to School plan noting that it was a flexible working document that would be changed and adapted according to the needs of the current health situation in Saline County and specifically in Crete. (RTS p. 3 paragraph 2) Our diocesan Superintendent, Dr. Matthew Hecker, has directed Catholic School principals to follow their local health director's recommendations regarding safe practices during this time of COVID-19. Therefore, I am in ongoing conversation with Kim Showalter, the director of Public Health Solutions. I also check the Saline county risk dial weekly. Following Public Health Solutions guidance, the following adaptations are now in place for the St. James plan. Please find this plan and new updates on the school website.

The biggest change is with the facemasks. The Health officials have strongly recommend that children wear masks when in their own classrooms. We will, therefore, start off the school year doing just this with great big smiles that can be seen through our eyes. Please know that we will have several "mask breaks" throughout the day. If you would like to talk more about this or if you have special concerns for your child, please feel free to contact me.

On a different note, we will have our **Open House and Picture Day**, with modifications, on Wednesday, August 12. We will send out a sign-up sheet to those who have email addresses. You may also call the school to set up an appointment. (402)-826-2318. Please bring your children's school supplies in a bag labeled with name and grade to the parish hall between 9:00 am and 12:00 pm on Wednesday, August 12. Please place school supply bags on the designated tables. Children may then have their school picture taken. Lifetouch will emailing parents regarding pictures orders. You may also order and pay for pictures this day in the parish hall. After pictures are taken, parents and children may make a brief visit to the classrooms. All parents, and children in Kindergarten through 6th grades, should wear facemasks if desiring to visit the classrooms. Pre-K and Kindergarten parents, please enter and exit the school by the north door. All other parents and children may enter by the south school door. We are looking forward to seeing you soon!

In the Heart of Christ the King,

Sister Mary Alma, C.K.

Face Coverings:

- All children in grades Pre-K through 6th grade are required to have a facemask at school.
- Pre-K children will wear masks in the hallways and other common spaces, but not while in their own classroom or outside.
- Kindergarten through 6th grade children will wear masks in the classrooms, at Mass, and in the hallways. There will be several “mask breaks” throughout the day. Mask breaks will occur outside, or in large rooms such as the gym or parish hall, or in the classroom for a short periods of time (under fifteen minutes) when students are “distanced” from each other.
- Faculty and Staff members will wear facemasks throughout the day. Primary teachers may choose to wear face shields rather than facemasks for short periods of time when teaching Phonics skills.
- Students and teachers in Speech and ELL classes may wear face shields rather than facemasks.
- Children will not need to wear facemasks when outside, at lunch, in PE classes or when “distanced” in large areas such as the parish hall or gym.
- When possible, Music classes will be held in the parish hall or outside with adequate spacing between children. The children will not need to wear masks when Music class is held in these locations.

Mass:

- Children in grades 1-6 will attend daily Mass in the Church and wear masks except when receiving Holy Communion.

Water Bottles:

- Children are to bring their own water bottle to school. Please label the water bottle with the child’s name and grade and fill with water before arriving at school.

Cafeteria:

- The atrium has been moved out of the cafeteria to provide more room for distancing during lunch.
- Lunch will occur in two shifts.

Illness and Screening:

- St. James School will follow the Public Health recommendation for screening, exclusion, and re-admittance of ill students and staff. Please see enclosed page.

