

September 2, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome back! We are truly blessed to have the opportunity to reopen our campus to in-person instruction. As educators and life-long learners, we are constantly reflecting and collaborating on ways to help our school during this pandemic. Clear and consistent communication is vital to the success of our school remaining open during this unique time. Please continue to read all communication from our school, especially regarding updates about maintaining a safe and healthy school environment.

As I mentioned at the Back to School Mass last Friday, although we are now open for in-person instruction, please remember that we are *still* in a pandemic. As we have experienced during this unique time, the only constant thing has been change. Therefore, in order for our school to remain open, we must *continue* following safe and healthy practices, especially while on campus, as outlined in our School Reopening Plan. Here are a few important reminders I wanted to clarify:

**Clarification on Face Coverings in the Classrooms:**

In previous communication, I have stated that students may remove mask coverings when seated behind the plexiglass shields at their desks in the classroom. Yes, this is true if all the desks maintained at least six foot distance from other desks. However, to accommodate our growing class sizes, the desks are not 6 feet apart. The reason why we decided to invest in plexiglass desk shields was to be able to maximize classroom capacity and increase student enrollment. Anytime students are seated at their desk behind the plexiglass shields, they may remove their mask for short breather breaks. However, students must put them back on for the safety of our entire school community for the majority of the school day while in the classroom. The plexiglass desk shield is not a replacement for mask coverings. We have invested in various safety equipment as additional help to stop the spread and keep our *whole* school community safe, but we also need help from the students and parents. The plexiglass desk shields have enabled our school to accommodate more students in each classroom, as the square footage and various configurations in our classrooms would have limited the classroom capacity to approximately ten student desks and a teacher desk with at least six feet of distance between each. Additionally, our school would not have been able to survive financially with that limited and low student enrollment due to school [reopening guidelines](#) from California Department of Public Health and the California Department of Education. Our teachers plan on taking learning outside more frequently this school year so that students will have opportunities for learning experiences with increased ventilation. The use of mask coverings is optional during outdoor learning as long as *at least* six feet of social distancing is maintained. Please communicate with your teacher or the school office if you would like to donate a pop-up tent canopy for outdoor learning.

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In partnership with the Diocese of San Diego Office for Schools, as well as local and state health agencies, Holy Trinity School is fully committed to maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment as outlined in our School Reopening Plans. If after review of the “Face Coverings” guidelines in our plans, and you still have concerns regarding our school policy regarding mask coverings, please communicate with your child’s teacher, as distance learning may be a viable option for your family.

### **School Waiver Update:**

Over the summer, we developed reopening plans to ensure that we do everything possible to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment for our students, teachers, and staff. I submitted our completed School Reopening Plan to the county and state for approval, as well as applied for a waiver to re-open school to in-person instruction on campus for TK-6 elementary education. Fortunately, our waiver application and reopening plans were approved before the process was suspended last Monday. Since we have already reopened school for kindergarten through eighth grade, this means that if San Diego county gets placed back on the state’s monitoring list, we do not automatically have to close, under state guidelines because our waiver was approved.

The threshold for closing schools depends on the number of COVID-19 cases and percentage of teachers, students and or/staff who test positive — and on guidance from our local health agency. The state guidelines state that if a teacher or student in a classroom tests positive, those exposed — likely the entire class — should be sent home and the classroom closed for cleaning and disinfection.

The state guidelines say school closure “may be appropriate” when there are multiple cases in multiple cohorts/classes at the school, or when cases within a 14-day period hit at least 5% of the total number of teachers, students and staff, depending on the size and physical layout of the school. A school district should close if 25% of its schools have closed due to COVID-19 within 14 days. Therefore, we must continue to follow and maintain the healthy guidance and safety procedures as detailed and explained in our school reopening plans in order to remain open for in-person instruction on campus.

### **Afternoon Carline Pick-up Procedures**

With your continued patience and cooperation at our first carline pick-up yesterday, we were able to complete the first pick-up procedure within the thirty minutes that we had initially planned for. As time goes on, and all members of our school community get more accustomed to the new routine, we know this process will move much faster. Please review the updated attached map and explanation video to help our Holy Trinity School staff keep this procedure more efficient and safe for everyone involved.



# SCHOOL REOPENING

*Update*

*September 2, 2020*

We appreciate your flexibility and understanding as we navigate through these ever-changing conditions. Please stay connected with the most current information about important updates on our school website. I am very hopeful we will get through this challenging time together and be able to keep our school open because God is good...all the time!

All the Best,  
Mrs. Marentez