



August 27, 2020

Hello St. Mary's Families,

This has been a summer with an ever changing landscape. St. Mary's is preparing for the 2020-2021 school year with excitement. Many changes have been put into place given the criteria that must be met for the Oregon Department of Education. I am happy to say St. Mary's will do a wonderful job no matter the platform of learning or the number of students in our building.

I know there are many questions and my hope is to answer what I can. Please understand that we are not in control of the information, nor the timelines in which they are provided to us. We will send information out as soon as possible to help families plan. What we don't want to do is to send out information one day and then have to counteract that the following day. With all of this said, lets share what we know.

As stated in our last email, in order for St. Mary's to open to in person learning the county must meet a set of criteria: 30 cases in three consecutive weeks, with the week prior to the school year opening having only five cases or less. Over the week of August 9th there were 10 cases reported. The week of August 16th had 5 cases reported and this week, as of Wednesday, August 26th Wasco County has had 1 case. In consultation with the health department, if numbers continue in this pattern we could open on September 8th for in person learning for all grades. We will have to wait for the official numbers to be posted, which would mean that we would not be able to make the official call until Thursday, September 3rd. To meet the needs of our staff and the jobs they must do to pivot from one platform to another the week that St. Mary's opens to in-person learning we will begin with half days and students will be released prior to lunch. This will allow everyone the time to implement the new protocols and procedures that must be followed and ease our students back into the building as they have been away for the past six months. The first few weeks of a normal school year are always difficult, this year will create its own challenges.

When we are able to open to in person learning (on the 8th of September or later), that week will be half days. The schedule will be:

- Pre-School and Pre-Kindergarten: 8-11:20 a.m.
- Kindergarten - 2nd Grade: 7:50-11:50 a.m.
- 3rd Grade - 5th Grade: 7:50-12:00 p.m.
- Middle School: 7:45-12:00 p.m.

Please note the staggered start and release times. The following times will be used throughout the remainder of the school year.

- Pre-School and Pre-Kindergarten will run from: 8:00-11:20 a.m.
- Kindergarten - 2nd will run from: 7:50-2:40 p.m.
- 3rd Grade - 5th Grade will run from: 7:50-2:50 p.m.
- Middle School will run from: 7:45-2:50 p.m.

When in-person learning is approved, Extended Care will be available for PS and PK families from 11:20-5:30 p.m., and for all other families, after their release time, until 5:30 p.m.

St. Mary's is excited to have approval for Pre-School and Pre-Kindergarten to begin on September 8th and have an emergency extended care program to meet the extra ordinary circumstances and needs.

A few of the procedures that will be followed by all of our programs are:

- Temperature checks before entering the building
- Parents must drop students off and are not able to enter the building (sanitation)
- Parents will stay at their car for student pick up
- Masks must be worn for K-8th and highly recommended for preschool and prekindergarten
- Physical Distancing and traffic patterns will be observed
- Classrooms cohorts will remain secure.
- Hand washing procedures will be shared and made as fun as possible.

These same procedures will apply to all of our students as soon as we are able to open for in person learning. It is a very great possibility that we will be opening for in person learning beginning September 8th.

Thank you for your understanding and continued patience as we all work through this ever changing journey towards educating our children. Our teachers are looking forward to meeting with you and your students next week.

Thank you,

Kim Koch

Kim Koch, Principal
St. Mary's Academy