



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

PLANNING AHEAD TASK FORCE UPDATE

Dear Catholic School Families,

We pray that your summer is off to a wonderful start! We hope that you and your family are able to take time to relax and unwind, especially after a challenging school year.

When the decision was made to close schools statewide on March 12th, Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore quickly and seamlessly transitioned to continuous learning. Remote instruction was implemented for all students across the Archdiocese, beginning on March 16th. Students did not miss a day of instruction and continued to remain academically engaged and challenged throughout the balance of the school year. This was accomplished due to the commitment and planning performed by our dedicated educators and administrators.

As we look ahead to the 2020-21 school year, a Planning Ahead Task Force for Catholic Schools has been established. The goal is to develop a comprehensive plan to ensure the safe return of our faculty and staff on August 24th and students on August 31st, with contingency plans should a virus surge occur requiring a period of distance learning.

The task force is comprised of five sub-committees:

- **Social Distancing, Facilities, and Operations**
- **Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Student Support Services**
- **Classroom Technology**
- **COVID - 19 Response Protocols**
- **Strategic Communications and Emerging Opportunities**

The sub-committees include healthcare professionals, counselors, educators, school leaders, parents, and experts in various applicable fields. These committees will offer guidance to complement recommendations from the CDC and state / local officials. Their work is aimed to ensure that Archdiocese of Baltimore Catholic Schools are fully prepared to start the new school year on August 31st.

The reopening framework is scheduled to be in place by July 24, 2020. This timeline may shift as state and local government policy and guidance evolve. We are committed to keeping our school families informed as we develop the reopening plan and we will provide a bi-weekly update on the work of this important task force throughout the summer. Thank you for your continued support and commitment to a Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Have a blessed summer!

Yours in Christ,

Dr. Donna Hargens
Superintendent of Catholic Schools

James Sellinger
Chancellor of Education



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The objectives of the Planning Ahead Task Force committees are outlined below. Updates will be provided on the work of each committee throughout the summer in the form of bi-weekly update communications.

CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY

The Classroom Technology Committee is focused on creating flexible delivery of instruction in order to consistently provide a high quality educational experience regardless of the learning mode (in-person, remote, or hybrid).

TASKS:

- Create a professional development plan to enable educators to optimize technology (devices, tools, applications) to deliver a consistent student experience via a hybrid or remote environment.
- Develop plans and cost estimates to upgrade technology infrastructure to ensure that teachers can simultaneously present in-person and remote classroom lessons if needed.

CURRICULUM, PEDAGOGY, AND STUDENT SUPPORT

The Curriculum, Pedagogy and Student Support Committee will establish an academic and student support framework for potential transitions to and from hybrid and remote learning for the 2020-2021 academic year.

TASKS:

- Devise plans for all scenarios and make appropriate adjustments to the AOB curriculum, including instructional strategies and professional development. Other areas to be addressed are the AOB approach to social emotional learning, special education, and other essential academic and student support programs.
- Provide guidance to principals as they develop school-specific plans and strategies to ensure Catholic identity and faith formation remain central to the student experience.

SOCIAL DISTANCING, FACILITIES, AND OPERATIONS

The Social Distancing, Operations and Facilities Committee reviews federal, state, and local guidelines to create standards and protocol for AOB schools. Collaboratively, this team will develop clear guidelines to address the various aspects of students returning to campus in the fall.

TASKS:

- Take appropriate measures to safeguard the health of all school communities, consistent with guidance from local and state public health officials.
- Develop models, plans and actions needed for conducting various school functions (i.e. Pick-up/Drop-off, Lunch, Recess, Before/After Care).
- Develop protocols for social distancing and the sanitization of facilities.



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COVID-19 RESPONSE

The COVID-19 Response Committee will establish proper conditions for a safe return of students, faculty, and staff to in-person instruction for the start of the 2020-2021 school year. This includes preventative measures and techniques at all school facilities as part of daily operations to limit the potential spread of COVID-19. They will also establish procedures and protocols for school personnel in the event that a member of the school community exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 or tests positive for infection.

TASKS:

- Develop written guidance for students and all community members to follow as they return to campuses.
- Determine and communicate necessary pre-conditions for personal health in returning to campus.
- Secure appropriate PPE for use on campus.
- Develop plans and identify resources to quarantine a student or staff member exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.
- Develop protocols for responding to possible community spread within a school.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

The Strategic Communications and Emerging Opportunities Committee will provide timely updates on the work of the Planning Ahead effort while identifying opportunities for AOB schools to pursue as the COVID-19 pandemic paves the way for adjustments to the education landscape.

TASKS:

- Develop Planning Ahead Task Force communications plan.
- Ensure consistency in school communications.
- Provide updates on the work of each task force committee.
- Recommend and prioritize opportunities for the Department of Catholic Schools to consider.
- Develop recruitment and retention strategies for AOB schools.
- Explore virtual recruitment opportunities.

PLANNING AHEAD TASK FORCE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS FEEDBACK

The Department of Catholic Schools would like to hear from you! Your input will provide valuable feedback, as we work to develop a comprehensive reopening plan. Please click on the link below to share your thoughts and/or concerns with the committees of the Planning Ahead Task Force.

https://survey.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3r4CKRYeBlrGVgx