

March 14, 2020

Good afternoon Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic School Families,

As we have been closely monitoring the coronavirus pandemic that has hit our area, nation, and the world, our school will be moving to distance learning beginning on Thursday, March 19 until Friday, March 27. On March 27, we will reassess the current situation to determine any continuation of this distance learning.

Here is the schedule for our school community for the next two weeks:

Tuesday, March 17 will be a teacher work day for our faculty. This will be a professional development day with no classes being held on this day. The school will be open for students to pick up textbooks or other necessary materials on Tuesday from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. To prevent a back-up of students entering the building all at once, I would request you try to use the following schedule for picking up materials:

8:00-11:30: Students Last Name A-L

12:00-3:30: Students Last Name M-Z

There will be a handwashing station at the entrance of the school. I would ask parents and students please use this before heading to their lockers or classrooms to get materials. We would ask students not to use this time to visit with friends or classmates.

Wednesday, March 18 will be a teacher work day. The school will be open from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm for any student who was not able to come to pick up materials on Tuesday.

Thursday, March 19, Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic School will move to distance learning for all students.

Grades K-5 teachers will communicate daily lesson plans via email and using RenWeb, Google Classroom, or other specific platforms they use for their classrooms, utilizing a combination of packets, books, and online learning tools to provide student lessons and activities. Any assessments would be collected upon students returning to the classrooms.

Middle School Teachers will continue curricular instruction via RenWeb, Google Classroom, or other specific platforms. They will post daily lessons and be available to communicate with students and parents through Google Classroom and other distance-learning communication tools.

PreK teachers will email parents weekly with information about thematic plans and resources. Due to the developmental nature of our PreK program, we will offer a weekly overview and daily activities for you and your child to keep your children learning while they are at home.

While we will have the school open on March 17 and 18, teachers and members of the administration will not be holding face to face meetings with parents or members of the community, but will be available to take phone calls or answer emails with any questions you may have about this or any other topics surrounding our normal day-to-day activities.

Friday, March 27, as noted above, we will be monitoring and evaluating information we have to see if additional distance learning days are required.

If a student does not have appropriate technology to receive instruction at their home (examples include any of the following: iPad, Chromebook, laptop, desktop computer, smartphone), please contact Mrs. Iozzo at iozzo@stmm.net between the hours listed or via email to discuss arrangements for technology.

Due to our instruction continuing via distance learning, there are no plans to extend our calendar at the end of the school year or take away any part of our Easter Break.

The health and wellness of our students, families, faculty and staff are our top priority. We will be implementing cleaning procedures following CDC and local health department guidelines so that the building will be ready to reopen when we are allowed to return to school. This weekend and early this week, a deep cleaning of our building is being done, as well as another ahead of our reopening when we are allowed to return to school. We will continue to update you on our estimated date of return as more information becomes available.

With many events being canceled, we are working through how best to distribute refunds and credits. Pre-paid lunches for the upcoming out-of-school days in March will be credited to your account to be applied to the final ordering cycle. (Please note that ordering for April-June Lunch cycle is postponed. We will update you when ordering is open.)

Below is more information about preventing the spread of COVID-19 during this time. There are two widely accepted approaches:

- Personal and environmental hygiene - As described in our previous communications, washing hands, catching sneezes and coughs with tissues or elbows, disinfecting surfaces, and being alert to symptoms in ourselves and others are simple and effective measures.
- Social distancing - It is important to avoid gathering in large groups or settings with a higher likelihood of contact with a person who has been exposed to the virus. Conversations this week with public health officials make it clear that diagnoses will increase dramatically in the coming days as tests become more readily available. Given the personal risks and epidemiological facts involved, we have chosen to take these proactive steps now rather than making reactive decisions later.

We appreciate your patience and cooperation during this rapidly-evolving situation. Our decisions reflect our core commitment to the safety and health of our students, families, faculty and staff. We are guided by our desire to ensure the safety of our community, and to act within reason based on facts, careful deliberation, and the recommendations of our administration, advisory committee, our Pastor, and local and national public health experts. We will be in regular contact with updates.

God bless,

John Mihalyo, Principal

Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic School

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