



St. Michael Catholic High School
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July 17, 2020

Dear parents, students and faculty,

We are made for each other. We flourish when we are a community— when we learn, pray, laugh, challenge each other, celebrate victories and grieve over losses—and in so doing, lead each other to holiness. Our mission, to form “scholars, leaders and disciples of Jesus Christ,” is not achieved by the transmission of a curriculum as much as through the creation and nurturing of relationships between teachers, coaches, students and our families.

For these reasons, St. Michael will open again on August 12. Safety will be a high priority. Our goal is to protect every member of our community by minimizing virus transmission from student to student. We are adopting precautions that are known to reduce the potential for transmission, and we are asking for everyone’s support and good cheer in abiding by these protocols.

At the same time, we recognize that students and families are anxious about returning, and some students may have physical or emotional reasons to be more cautious. Our plan respects that, giving families a home option through “concurrent classrooms.” Our intent is to serve all of our families to the best of our ability.

I am grateful for the guidance of the AAP, the CDC, the State of Alabama Health Department and the Archdiocese of Mobile in helping us shape this plan. Thanks also to our administrative team, the faculty and the Advisory Council for their leadership and assistance.

This is only a draft! We invite you to share your thoughts and recommendations for the “final” plan by [clicking HERE](#). We will publish the final plan on August 7, but it is likely our plans will continue to evolve until a vaccine is found and Covid19 is behind us. Until then, anticipate changes as we go, caused by new national, state and local health guidelines, archdi-ocesan directives, or feedback on ways to do things better.

May God give us optimism, flexibility and a healthy amount of good humor as we embrace the year ahead!
Onward and Upward!

Sincerely,

FAUSTIN N. WEBER
Principal
St. Michael Catholic High School

COVID19 PLANNING

2020-2021 ACADEMIC YEAR

St. Michael Catholic High School

Draft Document, July 13, 2020 (final to be published August 7, 2020)

I. Five Principles Underlying our Plan:

- 1) That we prioritize the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff;
 - 2) That we continue to provide a first tier college preparatory education for our students;
 - 3) That we meet the needs of individual students, each affected differently by the virus;
 - 4) That we are nimble, able to quickly pivot from one mode to the other, with a minimum of lost learning time;
 - 5) That we continue to be a vibrant, dynamic Catholic school—a place where students learn the faith, pray and worship—all the while enjoying each other's company and having fun together.
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II. Modes for Learning in 2020-2021

(It is possible that we'll use each of these modes at different times during the year.)

- 1) Traditional Learning *(all students in school, under normal conditions)*
 - 2) Full Distance Learning, *(all students stay home, teachers deliver lessons and assignments on line, such as the Spring of 2020)*
 - 3) "Concurrent Classrooms" *(see below)*
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III. Concurrent Classrooms: How We'll Begin the Year

- 1) School will begin for all students on August 12, with stringent safety protocols in place. We expect that most of our students will choose to be in school with their classmates.
- 2) However, if parents prefer it, students will have the option to stay at home, log on, and "attend" each of their actual classes via "live streaming."
- 3) The academic expectations and due dates for assignments will be the same for both groups.

A. The Advantages of a Concurrent Classroom:

- 1) It provides a choice for parents, empowering them to make the right decision for their child. If for a variety of reasons, parents are not ready to place their child back in school, they have that option.
- 2) It's simple. No need for dual curriculums, separate assignments, special arrangements, students keeping up with unique responsibilities. The students at home are getting the same lesson as students in school.
- 3) It's flexible. If, for example, a student was initially anxious about coming to school physically, but later felt more comfortable about returning, he or she could do so. Or if a child was quarantined because of contracting the virus or being exposed to the virus, he or she could keep up with his or her studies.

B. The Caveats to a Concurrent Classroom:

- 1) Nothing, of course, is better than "being there" to get the full experience of school. Students at home will not be able to participate in assemblies, attend Mass, socialize with other students or "experience" high school life in the same way.
- 2) St. Michael has doubled its internet speeds and is purchasing technology to give kids at home the best, most immersive experience for virtual classes possible. But undoubtedly there will be occasional technical mistakes or glitches, board work that will be difficult to see, or muffled audio. We will do our best to lessen these things but will not be able to avoid them completely.
- 3) Teachers will not be able to "monitor" students' behavior if they are logging in classes from home. Though roll will be taken for each class, and certain at-home protocols developed for being part of a virtual classroom, it will depend on students' discipline and diligence to stay tuned in and current in their work.

C. School Health and Safety Protocols at St. Michael

Per Archdiocesan, AAP, CDC and State Health Department guidance, the following safety protocols will be in place during the school day at St. Michael:

Morning Protocols

- 1) Doors will open in the morning no earlier than 7:20 a.m. Parents are asked not to drop off their children any earlier than that. Students who drive should not come to campus before that time.

- 2) Students must enter the school through specified entrances:
 - *Seniors, through back door to gym facing courtyard*
 - *Juniors, through gym lobby, facing courtyard*
 - *Sophomores, through cafeteria lobby doors*
 - *Freshmen, through front entrance doors*
- 3) Temperature checks for all students and faculty are required for entrance into the school building. Anyone with a fever of over 100.4° will be sent home. Parents are asked to monitor health at home before sending students to school.
- 4) Students must wear face masks inside the building at all times. No exceptions, except for eating lunch, under strict social distancing standards. Students must bring their own masks—there will be extras available in the office (*students who frequently misplace their mask will be charged a nominal fee*).
- 5) When outside, during designated times, if socially distanced by six feet or more, students may remove masks.
- 6) Upon entering the school, students should go immediately to their first period class. They may not congregate in the hallways. Teachers will open their classrooms at 7:20 a.m.

School Day Protocols

- 1) As part of the standard procedure to begin each class, students will be asked to wipe down desks with disinfectant wipes and then wash their hands with sanitizer. All classrooms will have this in bountiful supply.
- 2) Desks for classrooms will be separated for maximum distance away from each other. We are blessed with relatively large classrooms, and we'll use all of that space. Students and teachers must remain masked during class.
- 3) Commonly touched areas, such as doorknobs, stair rails, etc. will be cleaned throughout the day. St. Michael has hired an additional full time custodian to assist in this endeavor. Classroom doors will remain open to minimize contact.
- 4) Locker rooms and classrooms will be fully disinfected each day with electrostatic mist machines—the same machines used by hospitals.
- 5) The front office now includes a "sick room" with bathroom access. This room will be used to isolate a sick student. Temperatures will be taken. We will ask parents to pick up their child immediately.
- 6) Lunch must take into account that masks are off while eating. Lunch periods include a time to eat, and a time to recreate, and different protocols will apply to each, the details of which will be outlined in the final plan.

- 7) Students will be asked to go immediately to the next class to minimize congestion during period changes. No congregating.
- 8) Students will be encouraged when feasible to use the outdoor walkway behind the school to get some fresh air and minimize hallway traffic when changing class-rooms.
- 9) Bathroom access will be limited. We will ask students to keep to a maximum of four at a time.
- 10) Wednesday morning school Mass is central to the life of our school and the practice of our faith. With social distancing requirements, however, only two classes at a time may attend mass in the gym, while the rest of the school participates virtually through advisory periods.
- 11) Band and Chorale classes, which currently use half the space in the music room for their respective programs, will use the entire space for each class so as to create greater social distancing.
- 12) Coaches will establish protocols for dressing out in P.E. classes, minimizing the # in locker-rooms at the same time.
- 13) All water fountains in the school are being converted to fill stations. The fountains will be disconnected until the virus is no longer with us. Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school for the purpose of hydration and may take it from class to class.
- 14) We anticipate Thursday "club" time will remain in effect, but the number of simultaneous meetings will be curtailed. Distancing rules remain in effect. All students will begin Thursday club meetings in their advisory periods, then be released for club meetings in a staggered fashion.
- 15) All other school rules remain fully in effect.

After School Protocols

- 1) The school day ends at 3:10 p.m. Formal, in person, after school tutorials from 3:10 to 3:50 will be temporarily suspended until such time as Covid19 is no longer an is-sue. When school ends, we are asking students to leave campus or go directly to practice.
- 2) Teachers are still available for students needing tutoring, either through established video-conference times or by an appointment between the student and teacher. A student who is struggling should ask the teacher for extra help. Parents, encourage your child to ask the teacher!
- 3) We ask that parents arrange transportation to pick up the student immediately at dismissal. Students will not be allowed to "hang out" at the school unsupervised, waiting for their parents to pick them up.

- 4) Student athletes who have practice after school should go immediately to the gym. Coaches will develop protocols that limit the number of students dressing out in locker-rooms at any one time. Coaches will be asked to end practices at the same time each day, and parents are asked to pick their children up at this time.
- 5) As for athletic competitions, we are members of the Alabama High School Athletic Association, and will abide by their recommendations and decisions for the upcoming year.
- 6) All classrooms and locker rooms will be thoroughly disinfected prior to school the following day.

Protocols for Distance Learning in Concurrent Classrooms:

- 1) Families who wish their child to stay at home and to log into “live-streamed” classes must complete a “request for distance learning” form to do so, subject to approval by the school. Early on, this request form will be a weekly matter, as families experiment with what works better for their child. However, for the sake of planning and good order, by mid-September, we will ask families to decide for the remainder of the quarter and each quarter thereafter. *(This rule does not apply to students who must be quarantined or at home due to illness. We encourage sick students, if they are able, to log into classes.)*
- 2) Students will use their school-issued Chromebooks to access assignments and turn in work.
- 3) Teachers will post “log in” directions on their Blackbaud bulletin boards for each class. Students may not share these instructions with others, as access to live classrooms is restricted to current students and families.
- 4) All distance learning will use Blackbaud as the conduit for posting and accepting assignments.
- 5) Students logging into their classes virtually must be in school uniform shirts, on time for each class, at a desk or table, and with video cameras “on” the entirety of the class. Roll will be taken; teachers will have the discretion to call on the student from time to time. Students who are still in pajamas or laying in bed, or whose video is not on, or who step away from class for large blocks of time, will be considered absent for that class.
- 6) School attendance policies remain in place for both on campus and virtual learning. Anything over 7 absences per period are automatically “unexcused” and work cannot be made up. There is a “long term medical exception ” to the 7 day maximum if quarantined or if a student has contracted the virus.
- 7) Teachers will not be able to “monitor” student behavior at home. Though roll will be taken for each class, it will depend on student discipline and diligence to stay tuned in and current in his or her work.

- 8) Teachers will ask a student in each of their classes to serve as “proxy” for students on line. If a student has a question, he or she sends that question to the proxy, who then asks the question on the home student’s behalf.
- 9) Continued agreement to stay in “distance mode” on subsequent request form to remain at home will depend on whether students are meeting class requirements while at home.

IV. Full Distance Learning Mode:

If required to do so by local or state health officials or by the Archdiocese, we will move to full “distance” mode. In such an event, we anticipate the following:

- 1) If this looks to be a short term period—a couple of weeks—we will keep the schedule as similar as possible to the “regular” schedule, albeit on line. Classes will continue to meet according to the published schedule, with each student logging into his or her class virtually, from 7:45 a.m. until 3:10 p.m.
- 2) If this appears to be a longer term period, the faculty will re-assess the structure of our distance learning and modify class times and schedules.
- 3) All posting and turning in of assignments will be through black board exclusively.
- 4) A minimum of two graded assignments per class per week will be posted on a student’s grade book. As always, parents and students will have complete access to grade books to monitor progress.

V. Questions and Answers:

- 1) What if a student tests positive or is exposed to the virus during the school year?**
St. Michael would follow all state health and archdiocesan directives. At minimum, that student would be quarantined, and must log on to “concurrent classes” for two weeks.
- 2) What if a teacher must be quarantined because of exposure to someone with the virus?**
We have hired a full-time substitute teacher for this purpose. The quarantined teacher would stay at home for two weeks, but if able to do so, he or she would be asked to continue to teach by broadcasting lessons from his or her home to smart screens in our classrooms. The full-time substitute would be in those classes to supervise students..
- 3) What if the teacher himself or herself contracts the virus?**
We would follow the guidance of the health professionals and the Archdiocese of Mobile. The teacher would be quarantined for the appropriate time, and if able, asked to continue to lead lessons from home for students in school. Depending on the circumstance and the advice of the health professionals, this could also necessitate we move to a short-term “full distance learning” mode.

4) What if a student frequently disregards safety protocols?

We'd regard this as a very serious matter. Students would be sent home for distance learning for a period of time as a first step, with more serious consequences to follow if the behavior continues. Unlike other disciplinary issues, failure to abide by social distancing and face mask protocols puts other students' health and safety at risk.

5) What if something in the plan doesn't work or needs amending?

Then we will amend it! We will establish consistent "feedback loops" with students, parents and teachers via surveys or meetings to assess how we're doing, and make adjustments along the way. We must be nimble and flexible enough in our planning to pivot to best practices!

VI. How Can We Improve This Draft Plan?

Thoughts? Ideas? Suggestions? Our final plan will be published on August 7, so we'd appreciate your thoughts! Please share them by clicking the link below!

[**CLICK HERE to Share your Feedback**](#)

Thank you!