

The COVID-19 pandemic is constantly changing. In order to help families have current information, this plan will be updated as information changes. Please check the school website for updated information.

2020/2021 School Year Plan

Many families have questions about what school will look like at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School (OLPH) next year. These are unprecedented times as we prepare to return to a “new normal.” Right now, we are working with the Catholic Schools Office to finalize the school plan based on the recommendations from the health department and state guidelines.

The current plan is based on best practices and recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), AZ Department of Education (AZED), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and state (ADHS) and local county health department recommendations. As updates happen at the diocesan, state or local level, the plan may be modified.

Our first goal is to keep our community safe as we educate our students. We want to make sure that we are taking steps to provide for the health and safety of our students, faculty, staff, and families.

On Campus Learning Plan

The on campus plan is to have students on campus 5 days a week while employing practices to help keep students, faculty, staff, and families healthy. The plan includes keeping students socially distant from one another, various health screenings upon conducted on campus, wearing face coverings, changing dismissal procedures, and increasing the frequency of disinfecting surfaces.

Once the final plan is approved, we will share the entire plan for families to review. Below is a list of questions with the responses:

Social Distancing

- **How will students remain socially distant in the classroom?** Desks are being positioned so that students are all facing the same direction and sitting 6 feet from other students.
- **What will be the class size?** The kindergarten classrooms can accommodate up to 15 students, and the 1st to 8th grade classrooms can accommodate up to 23 students.
- **Will students switch classes?** In order to limit the movement of students, students will remain in their classroom during the day. Music will be held in the homeroom, and the teacher will travel to the class. For students in grades 5-8, the teachers will switch classes, and the students will remain in the room.
- **Where will the students eat lunch?** Lunch will be eaten in the classroom; hot lunch will be delivered to classrooms. Teachers may take students out for lunch in the pavilion or field as weather and spacing permit.

- **How will recess work?** The field and basketball court will be divided into sections. Each homeroom will have recess in a different area so that students can remain distant from one another. During the first few weeks of school, the faculty will help coordinate various games and activities for recess that allow kids to remain distant from one another.

Health Screening

- **What will the health screen entail?** All faculty, staff, and visitors to campus will complete a daily health screen. This will include a temperature check as well as a verbal affirmation that the individual is not experiencing any symptoms related to COVID-19. Any individual who has a fever or says that he or she is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms will not be admitted onto campus. Parents will be asked to conduct a similar screen of their child/children before leaving the house in the morning.

Face Covering

- **Who will wear a face covering?** In order to protect each other, all individuals on campus, grades 1-8, will need to wear a face covering while in proximity to others. Students will be permitted to remove their face covering for snack, lunch, and recess. In order to ensure that face coverings are not worn for too long, the schedule will be adjusted so that students will have a shorter recess in both the morning and afternoon at all grade levels.
- **Will the younger kids be able to keep the face covering on their face?** We realize that the younger students may find it challenging to wear a face cover for long stretches, but with practice, we believe the students will be successful.
- **Will my child need a uniform face covering?** No. Children will be permitted to wear any face covering to include a mask or face shield. Face coverings should align with the spirit of the non-dress code policy.

Arrival

- **Where will arrival occur?** In order to allow for social distancing, all students in grades K-8 must be dropped off via the drive through car line starting at 7:40 a.m. Preschool students will enter campus through the preschool gate.

Dismissal Procedures

- **Where will dismissal occur?** In order to allow for classes to spread out, dismissal will occur on the field. Students will assemble with their teacher in a designated location on the field, and parents will pick up their children via the drive through car line.
- **What time is dismissal?** Dismissal will be at 3:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday. Dismissal will be at 1:00 p.m. on Friday and other days noted on the school calendar.

Hygiene

- **When will student wash their hands?** In order to allow for proper hygiene, students will sanitizer their hands before entering the building in the morning. Students will wash their hands before and after eating, when hands are soiled, after recess, and after sneezing or coughing. If hand washing is not available, students can use hand sanitizer.
- **Will hand sanitizer be available?** Yes. Hand sanitizer will be available in the classrooms, office, and other common areas.
- **Will my child be instructed on proper hand washing?** Yes. We will begin the school year with hand washing lessons. Posted signs will be near sinks to remind students how to wash their hands.

Cleaning/Disinfecting Procedures

- **When will the school be cleaned and disinfected?** Each evening the school will be disinfected with a cleaner that continues to disinfect for 24 hours after it is applied to a surface. In addition, the school will increase cleaning throughout the day to include the following:
 - Common areas such as bathrooms, hallways, and the office will be disinfected mid-morning and after lunch each day.
 - The teacher will disinfect commonly touched surfaces in the classroom including door handles, light switches, and the boards in the morning, at lunch, mid-afternoon, and after school.
 - The teachers will disinfect student desks daily after school.
 - The students will use a soap and water spray and paper towel to clean their desk before and after eating.
 - The student can use the spray solution more often if the surface becomes dirty.

Illness

- **What if a student, faculty, or staff member tests positive for COVID-19?** If your child tests positive for COVID-19, please contact the school office. In the event of a positive case, the student, faculty, or staff member will be asked to stay home for 14 days and until they are fever free for 72 hours.
- **Will families be notified if there is a positive case in the community?** OLPH will not share the name of the sick person with others. If the person who tested positive was in contact with your child, you will be notified regarding the potential exposure. The school will also coordinate with the Diocese of Phoenix and the Maricopa County Department of Public Health to determine the proper steps to take.
- **If a member of my household has COVID-19, should I send my child to school?** No. We ask that all members of a household follow the quarantine guidelines if a member of the house has COVID-19. When all members of the home are symptom-free, the student(s) may return to school.

- **If my child has to be home for an extended period of time due to illness, will my child be penalized?** No. Your child's health is most important to us. If your child is confirmed with COVID-19, we expect that your child will focus on returning to good health. Once your child is feeling healthy, we ask that families communicate with the teachers to coordinate a modified work schedule for work that was missed.
- **If my child has to be home for an extended period of time due to a family member's illness, will my child be penalized?** No. If your child has to remain home due to an illness in the home, your child may participate in the online learning for a period that the child is home. If your child is unable to participate in online learning, please communicate with your child's teacher. When your child is able to resume learning, a modified work schedule will be arranged.

Faith Formation

- **Will the students attend Mass?** We are working with Fr. Greg to provide Mass opportunities. The entire school will not be able to attend Mass in person. A limited number of students may be permitted to attend while the rest of the student body will be able to attend virtually.
- **Will the students be able to participate in other prayer services that normally happen?** Yes. We will be working to organize faith experiences for the students that are meaningful and follow social distancing. The recommendations may change throughout the year, but in the current climate, prayer services will either be live streamed or pre-recorded so that we can pray together as a community in the individual classrooms.

Mental Health

- **Will a counselor be available?** OLPH is fortunate to have a full time counselor. Ms. Kubic is available as a support to our students, families, teachers, and staff.
- **Will the school provide support for my child?** The faculty will utilize opportunities to allow for students to share and talk. This may take the form of a class meeting, writing assignments, reflections, class discussions, etc. This provide a chance for students to share if they are feeling anxious or worried.
- **Should I let the school know if my child has been affected by COVID-19?** We invite families to notify their child's teacher as well as Ms. Kubic if their child has been impacted by COVID-19 so that the teacher, counselor, and parent can work together to support the child. This knowledge will allow for the teacher to keep a close eye on subtle changes in the child. All children deal with stress and worry differently, so it will help the teacher to look for any behavior changes and support your child accordingly.

Before and After School

- **Will there before and after care be available?** We plan to have a limited number of spaces available for before and after school. Families can sign-up to have a spot reserved

for their child. Sign-ups are for the month, and preference will be given to families who sign-up for the year.

- **How will the children be grouped in the morning?** When weather permits, before care will be held in the courtyard from 7:00-7:30 where there is ample room for social distancing. During inclement weather, before care will be held in the Library. Families will sit together, and students will sit in an assigned area.
- **How will the children be grouped in the afternoon?** Small groups will be organized for the after care program. Families will be grouped together within a small cohort that will have a designated staff member.
- **Will I be charged the drop-in rate?** Unfortunately, we will not be able to charge a drop-in rate. Instead, families will pay a monthly fee for a child to have unlimited usage for the month. Due to the limited number of participants, the monthly fee is the only way to ensure that the staff costs can be covered.
- **What will the cost for the program be for the month?** The fee for a child will be as follows for the month:
 - Morning Care: \$50.00
 - After Care: \$250.00
 - The cost for after care will include a pre-packaged snack
- **Is there a discount if I have multiple children?** Unfortunately, we cannot provide a multiple child discount. The monthly fees are the sole source of funding for the staff in the program.

Online Learning Plan

OLPH realizes that some families may elect to have their children learn from home during the pandemic for many reasons. Children participating in the online program will be placed with a homeroom teacher, and the pacing and learning will align with the classroom instruction. For families that choose to have their child learn from home, we ask that the child have an adult who can help coach and monitor that the work is completed in order for the student to be successful in this platform.

The online learning will incorporate teacher videos, class assignments, and assessments.

Instruction

- **How will my child learn a lesson?** The teacher will provide live/recorded lessons and the accompanying assignment. These lessons will include direct instruction and a description of how to complete an assignment.
- **How will my child turn in the completed work?** The work will be turned in via Google Classroom.
- **As a parent, how will I be involved in assisting my child?** We ask that families help coach their child and make sure that your child is watching the lessons and completing the work. We also ask that parents communicate with the teacher if your child is struggling. For students in the younger grades, parents may also need to help their child turn on the video, navigate the online system, and read to their child. Older students may be more comfortable completing the work independently.

- **If my child has questions about the work, how will their questions be answered?** Online students will be assigned to a faculty member. This person will be available to answer questions within one school day. If your child has questions and the work cannot be completed by the due date, parents should communicate with the teacher in order to move the due date back.
- **What if my child has an SSP?** Mrs. Higgins will review your child's plan and determine what supports may be necessary.

Faith Formation

- **Will the students attend Mass virtually?** Online students will be able to live stream the weekly Mass so that they can remain connected to our school community in prayer.
- **Will the students be able to participate in other prayer services that normally happen?** Yes. Our prayer services and other faith opportunities will be either pre-recorded or live streamed. The online students will be able to participate in the prayer services along with their peers.

Cost

- **Is there a reduced tuition rate for online learning?** Unfortunately, OLPH cannot provide a discount for online learning. The tuition that is paid is the sole source of compensation for the faculty. The faculty will be working very hard to provide the educational opportunities for the online learners.

Supporting Children During a Pandemic

Talking to Children about COVID-19

As the events surrounding COVID-19 evolve rapidly, it is important that we speak with our children. Some general guidelines for speaking with our children include the following. Depending on the age of your children will determine how much information you share; however, some general recommendations include:

- Sharing with your child how you are trying to keep them safe
- Talking about the coronavirus
- Keeping the communication open

For specific information based on your child's age, I would invite families to read the articles below which offer practical advice.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/smart-parenting-smarter-kids/202003/how-talk-kids-and-teens-about-the-coronavirus>

<https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>

Power of Prayer

With so much uncertainty, we can forget that we always have the power of prayer. We invite all our families to spend time in prayer for those impacted by COVID-19. One great prayer that families can pray during our time away from campus is the Rosary. As a Marian school, our students regularly pray the Rosary, and it is a wonderful prayer that can bring peace and clarity during times of trouble.

<https://dynamiccatholic.com/5-million-rosaries/10-reasons-why-pray-the-rosary>

If you would like a step-by-step guide on how to pray the Rosary, here is a guide:

<https://dynamiccatholic.com/5-million-rosaries/how-to-pray-the-rosary/>