



The
Lutheran
School
of Flushing
& Bayside

REOPENING PLAN

July 31, 2020

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Please note that the contents of this booklet are subject to change with the need to revise according to latest COVID-19 conditions and regulations.

Operating Assumptions

The coronavirus (COVID-19) remains with us and the Lutheran School of Flushing and Bayside (LSFB) will likely not return to normalcy until there is a vaccine or a cure. A return to school will look different. LSFB students and staff, as well as families, will need to be flexible and nimble with an understanding that the priority of protecting the health of everyone may require changes in procedures, sometimes with minimal notice. The classroom/school is an extension of your family, and therefore cooperation and UNITY is needed.

We have spent time researching, discussing with education and medical professionals, and in prayer before and during the development of this plan. We are aware that not everyone will be in agreement, but we are doing what we feel is best given the information and guidance we have received.

Guiding Principles

“...the AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school. The importance of in person learning is well-documented, and there is already evidence of the negative impacts on children because of school closures in the spring of 2020. Lengthy time away from school and associated interruption of supportive services often results in social isolation, making it difficult for schools to identify and address important learning deficits as well as child and adolescent physical or sexual abuse, substance use, depression, and suicidal ideation. This, in turn, places children and adolescents at considerable risk of morbidity and, in some cases, mortality. Beyond the educational impact and social impact of school closures, there has been substantial impact on food security and physical activity for children and families.”
([American Academy of Pediatrics](#))

After meeting with and surveying parents, staff, and the school board, it is the desire of the majority to return to school full time (as of September 9, 2020) if the state and local governments will allow. That being said, school will look different than it did before March 13, 2020. To best protect the health of and safety of our students, LSFB will abide by recommendations from the New York State and local Department of Health and other knowledgeable agencies. Whatever the circumstances, we remain committed to providing a loving Christian environment, which supports the whole child.

We hope to enable the students to come back to school in a staggered setting during the week prior to September 9th, so that we may have a smooth transition to the “new normal” routine.

We understand that some individuals, due to their own or a close family member's personal health issues, may not feel comfortable in this new environment. We will work with those individuals to ensure that no one is pressured or feeling they are putting their health or safety at risk. We will accommodate them with distance teaching and learning possibilities (all classes will be using online resources such as Class DOJO, Google Classroom, Zoom, etc., to ensure that all students have access to and understand assignments).

While it is our goal to prepare and plan as best as we possibly can, all plans are subject to change based on government, CDC, and state and local Health Department recommendations. Please note situations may arise where adjustments must be made quickly. Communication is key, and families are asked to regularly monitor texts and emails for school communication. Please note that the contents of this booklet are subject to change with the need to revise according to latest COVID-19 conditions and regulations.

Clearance to Work at and Attend School

Prior to the start of school, all LSFB staff members and students must have a COVID-19 test performed and be cleared to come to the school. All medicals must also be up to date with vaccinations.

Travel

LSFB students and staff will be advised to avoid all unnecessary travel (domestic/international) to maintain a healthy environment at our school. If travel is unavoidable, especially to an area that COVID-19 is prevalent, that individual will be asked to self-isolate themselves for 14 days prior to returning to the school.

COVID-19 Coordinators

The principal and assistant principal of LSFB will be the COVID-19 Coordinators. They will be the liaisons with coordinators at other schools who will convene periodically during the school year if needed and with state and regional public health officials.

Access to the School Building

Everyone entering the building/school office must wear a mask. Only LSFB staff and students will be allowed in the building during the school day. Parents/guardians or delivery personnel will not be admitted beyond the office. Outside maintenance personnel will only be allowed to work in the building when school is not in session.

Visitations for a health and welfare inspection (DOH, Fire Safety, etc.) will be made by appointment, no less than 30 minutes prior. Screenings will be done for those individuals who need to gain access further than the school office.

Screening

“Using non-contact temperature measurement devices may help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 infections.” ([Food and Drug Administration Screening](#))

It is be the parent’s/guardian’s responsibility to screen their child for illness prior to leaving the home. If the child is ill or has a fever, please do not bring your child to school. The same applies for a staff member of LSFBS.

Although everyone, staff and students, are expected to have their temperature checked prior to leaving their homes, LSFBS will use no-contact devices to daily test all staff and students upon arrival. Children and staff who have a fever of 100 or above or other signs of illness will not be admitted. Parents must help be on alert for signs of illness in their children and must keep them home when they are sick. Even if the child does not have a temperature, but they appear sick (cough, runny nose, etc.) the Principal or Assistant Principal has the right to deny the child’s attendance for that day or days thereafter.

- Staff doing screening will follow proper hand hygiene and put on personal protective equipment (PPE) including a mask and a pair of disposable gloves.
- Screening will occur as soon as a student/staff member enters the building.
- During the screening, the staff member will make a visual inspection of the child/staff for signs of illness, which could include flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), or fatigue, and confirm that the child is not experiencing coughing or shortness of breath. Throughout the day, all staff members will observe for signs of illness in students and staff.
- Staff will take the child’s temperature using a non-contact thermometer.
- Students/staff will wash/sanitize hands prior to reaching their destination (homeroom, office, etc.).
- After screening, staff will remove and discard PPE, and wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Anyone who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms or who is running a fever will be directed to leave the premises immediately to seek medical care and/or COVID-19 testing, per CDC guidelines.
- If LSFBS learns that a staff member or student has tested positive for COVID-19, we will consult CDC guidelines and contact the local health department to discuss the appropriate management of potentially exposed staff and students, and to determine whether school should immediately cease in-person gatherings, close for additional cleaning, or otherwise change protocols.

Students or Staff who Become Sick at School

“Although many questions remain, the preponderance of evidence indicates that children and adolescents are less likely to be symptomatic and less likely to have severe disease resulting from SARS-CoV-2 infection. In addition, children may be less likely to become infected and to spread infection.” ([American Academy of Pediatrics](#))

If a student/staff member becomes ill while at school:

- LSFBS will provide an isolated space for the ill student to go to and rest while waiting for the arrival of parent/guardian.
- LSFBS will contact the student’s parent/guardian to pick up the student as soon as possible and the student will be monitored while waiting to be picked up.
- The student will be brought out to the car by the staff upon the arrival of the parent/guardian.
- If a staff member is experiencing COVID-like symptoms, he/she will be instructed to leave the school immediately.
- Staff will close off areas used by a sick person and will not use before cleaning and disinfecting is completed.
- COVID-19 Coordinators will notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Sick children and staff will not return to school until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation. Those with fever cannot return to school for 72 hours or proof of wellness.

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

“Hand hygiene is an important part of the U.S. response to the international emergence of COVID-19. Practicing hand hygiene, which includes the use of alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) or hand washing, is a simple yet effective way to prevent the spread of pathogens and infections in healthcare settings. CDC recommendations reflect this important role.” ([Centers for Disease and Control](#))

Staff will wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and will assist children in doing the same. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are placed in each classroom and hallways, especially by the entrances. Children will be supervised if they use hand sanitizer to prevent ingestion. Age appropriate CDC signage describing hand washing steps will be posted near all sinks.

All children and staff will engage in hand hygiene at the following times:

- Arrival and after breaks.
- Before and after preparing food or drinks.
- Before and after eating or handling food, or feeding children.
- Before and after administering medication or medical ointment.
- After using the toilet.
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid.
- After playing outdoors.
- After handling garbage.

To ensure that proper hand hygiene is enforced, LSFBS will:

- Teach and reinforce washing hands among students and staff.
- Practice frequent hand washing and advise students and staff to avoid touching their face.
- Have adequate supplies throughout the building (restrooms, classrooms, building entrances, etc.) to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), tissues, and no-touch trashcans.

LSFBS will also reinforce proper respiratory etiquette. Since the COVID-19 virus spreads from person to person in droplets produced by coughs and sneezes, the importance of covering noses and mouths with tissues that will be disposed of quickly will be strongly encouraged. If no tissues are available, using the inside of the elbow (or shirtsleeve) to cover the mouth or nose is preferable to using the hands. Proper hand hygiene will be performed afterwards. Age appropriate CDC signage about this will be posted in all classrooms.

Social Distancing Strategies

“Physical distancing, sometimes referred to as social distancing, is simply the act of keeping people separated with the goal of limiting spread of contagion between individuals. It is fundamental to lowering the risk of spread of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), as the primary mode of transmission is through respiratory droplets by persons in close proximity.” ([American Academy of Pediatrics](#))

In order to promote social distancing LSFBS will follow these procedures:

- Only LSFBS staff and students will be allowed in the building during the school day. Parents/guardians or delivery personnel will not be admitted beyond the office.

- Schedules will be staggered to minimize the overlap of grades in common areas such as the gym/cafeteria, playground, front lawns, or church.
- Chapel services and assemblies will be modified to include smaller groups or be broadcast into classrooms.
- Each group of children will be in a separate room as much as possible.
- Students will take turns while putting away their outer garments and/or getting their things (books, lunchbags, etc.) at the lockers.
- Desks and seating will be spaced out as much as possible. Desks will all face one direction and seating will be staggered.
- When necessary teachers will move and students stay in the same rooms.
- Middle school students will move from room to room. Students will move as a class to the hallway; classes will be staggered, with students wearing face masks and shields, and spaced out in distances of 6 feet.
- Age appropriate CDC signage will be posted and indicators of 6 feet distances will be present in the hallways.
- When the weather is pleasant, classes may be held outside on our large campus or within the neighborhood making sure that there is appropriate distance between students, classes, and people from the neighborhood. Masks will be worn during these times.
- Grades K-8th grade violin classes will be held in a specified classroom that will be cleaned and sanitize after each class.

Face Masks

“COVID-19 can be spread by people who do not have symptoms and do not know that they are infected. That’s why it’s important for everyone to wear cloth face coverings in public settings and practice social distancing.” ([Centers for Disease and Control](#))

At LSFB, it is mandatory to wear face masks for students ages 3 years and older. Students in Nursery and Pre-K will be encouraged to wear face masks, but we understand the tendency to take it off and will encourage social distancing. Face masks will be worn by staff and students and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. There will be short intervals of time that the face coverings can be taken off, but the majority of time the masks will be worn.

LSFB will:

- provide extra face masks; students are encouraged to bring and use their own.
- provide face shields for the Kindergarten to 8th Grade students and to the staff to be used in conjunction with the masks.

- provide Information to staff, students, and students' families on proper use, removal, and washing/sanitizing of cloth face coverings.
- promote the cleaning and sanitizing the face shields that are to be left in school.
- give reminders not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently.
- post age appropriate CDC signage to reinforce the wearing of masks in the classrooms.

We do understand that the use of face coverings will be dependent on a variety of factors. There will be times that students will need to take off the mask, like eating snack/lunch, but we ask that they keep at least the shield on while they take a short break from the covering if they are still in a situation where social distancing is difficult. We also understand that face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger students) to wear in all-day settings such as school. All students and staff will be monitored so that the health and safety of all is never compromised.

Protective Barriers

"...the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that schools "space seating/desks at least 6 feet apart when feasible." In many school settings, 6 feet between students is not feasible without limiting the number of students. Evidence suggests that spacing as close as 3 feet may approach the benefits of 6 feet of space, particularly if students are wearing face coverings and are asymptomatic." ([American Academy of Pediatrics](#))

"Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least 6 feet apart."([Centers for Disease and Control](#))

For the LSFB rooms that do not allow the 6 or even 3 foot social distancing, we will ensure that:

- each desk will have a barriers/shield that can be easily cleaned and disinfected.
- students (kindergarten and older) will still be required to wear their face mask while seated at the desks with barriers/shields.
- the office will have a protective shield/window at the counter.

Recommendations for Cleaning and Disinfecting

COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. It is thought that the virus may spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose or mouth, causing infection. Therefore, personal prevention practices (such as hand washing, staying home when sick) and environmental cleaning and disinfection are important principles... ([Centers for Disease and Control](#))

Cleaning is physically removing dirt, debris, and sticky film by washing, wiping, and rinsing.

Disinfecting kills nearly all germs on a hard, non-porous surface when applied correctly. Prior to disinfecting, cleaning must be completed. *Note: Disinfecting is different than sanitizing.*

Sanitizing is the reduction of bacteria to safe levels as set by public health standards. It is required for any surface that comes in contact with food.

The following will be disinfected at least daily:

- Playground equipment
- Door and cabinet handles
- Restroom handles (sinks, toilets, urinals, paper towel dispensers) handles

Every time these procedures are done, it will be notated in a logbook located at the doorway to the room.

Shared objects (e.g., toys, games, manipulatives, art supplies) should be cleaned and disinfected in between uses along with being notated in the logbook. Staff will not share toys and manipulatives with other classrooms, unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved to another classroom. Toys and objects that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by bodily fluids will be set aside until they are cleaned by hand with water and detergent, rinsed, sanitized with disinfectant, rinsed again, and air-dried.

Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfecting procedures. If they have come into contact with bodily fluid, they will be cleaned and disinfected prior to being returned to the classroom and students.

Any toys and objects that cannot be cleaned and disinfected easily (cloth, fabrics, etc.) will be stored away and not used for the school year.

Most spaces at LSFBS do have air conditioning units, but will be used sparingly, filters will be cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis, and will be notated in the classroom logbook. Windows will be opened to let in fresh air and circulate the air within the classroom to the outside.

Drinking Fountains

Although the staff has been maintaining the functionality of the drinking fountains while the school was closed, drinking straight from them will be forbidden at this time (Signs stating this will be posted at all fountains). Students will bring their own water bottles

labeled with their name from home. The water bottles may be refilled at the fountain. If the child forgets their water bottle, the school will provide disposable cups that will be labeled with student's name.

Limit Sharing

“Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (e.g., playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) within the school and on school buses at least daily or between use as much as possible. Use of shared objects (e.g., gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, toys, games) should be limited when possible, or cleaned between use.” ([Centers for Disease and Control](#))

LSFB will ensure that:

- each student's belongings are separated and in individually labeled storage containers, cubbies, lockers, or areas. Some items may have to go home each day to be cleaned, but those will be placed into bags that the students have for their belongings.
- adequate supplies are accessible for each student to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (art supplies, equipment etc. assigned to a single student). If not enough supplies are accessible for each student, LSFB will limit the use of supplies and equipment by one group of students at a time while cleaning and disinfecting between use.
- sharing electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids will be avoided.
- NO food will be shared, therefore there will be **no birthday treats**.

Recommendations for Cafeteria

Communal use shared spaces such as dining halls should be staggered and cleaned and disinfected/sanitized between use. ([Centers for Disease and Control](#))

The following will be implemented to the full extent possible:

- All food service workers should wear a face mask or cloth face covering.
- Frequently wash and sanitize all food contact surfaces and utensils.
- Workers must practice frequent hand washing and glove changes before and after preparing food.
- When food is not already prepackage for individual servings, food will be served using gloves.
- If a food allergy is present, it will be notated within the classroom. Parents and students will be notified of the food item to be avoided in the snacks and lunch to

help reduce the possibility of an allergic reaction.

- Children should be seated with at least 6 feet of distance in between each other.
- When possible, students and staff will be encouraged to eat meals in the classroom or outside
- All kitchen/cafeteria/dining areas will be cleaned and disinfected after use and prior to a new group of students entering for meals.

Recommendations for Gym and Playground

“Enforcing physical distancing in an outside playground is difficult and may not be the most effective method of risk mitigation. Emphasis should be placed on cohorting students and limiting the size of groups participating in playground time. Outdoor transmission of virus is known to be much lower than indoor transmission.” ([American Academy of Pediatrics](#))

LSFB will comply with guidelines using the following procedures:

- Face masks should not be worn while engaged in physical activity. Recess and Physical Education classes will be held outside unless weather deems it not possible (i.e. rain, snow, cold temperatures).
- Physically distancing will be encouraged with non-contact sports and activities.
- According to Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and other credible health resources, COVID-19 is not spread through sweat. However, surfaces touch by multiple people and that are dirty will be cleaned prior to disinfection.
- Staff members will be responsible for ensuring regular cleaning and disinfection.
- Staff members will minimize sharing of equipment as much as possible and disinfect shared equipment between uses.

Recommendations for Restrooms

The control measures that LSFB will institute will be:

- To increase cleaning frequency for restrooms.
- To assign classes to specific restrooms.
- Install barriers between sinks and urinals.
- To place a trash can by the door if the door cannot be opened without touching the handle, so restroom users can cover the handle with a paper towel and easily dispose of it afterward. Younger students will go to the bathrooms with the door in an open position and paper towels located in the hall by a trashcan.
- Post signs instructing students and staff on how to wash hands after using the restroom.

Arrivals and Dismissals

Arrival for school will occur from 7:30 – 8 a.m. at the school entrance by the gymnasium and chapel. After 8 a.m. students will need to go to the School Office entrance.

*Please do not arrive too early. If you are running late, please notify the school office.

For students arriving to school:

- One Parent/guardian will drop off students no further than at the school entrances on Bell Blvd.
- Older students can walk down the walkway to the school entrance by themselves.
- Siblings may walk and arrive at the school entrance together.
- Signage at the walkways will encourage proper social distancing and mask wearing.

Dismissal will occur on 36th Ave. To enforce social distancing, class dismissals will be staggered from 2:45 – 3:15 p.m.

*Please note that there is limited parking on 36th Ave.

For parents picking up their child without a car:

- A mask must be worn by the parent/guardian who comes at dismissal.
- There will be no gathering on the sidewalk and proper social distance (6 ft.) shall be maintained.
- A sign with the child's name should be displayed so that the staff can see and bring your child to you.

For parents picking up their child with a car:

- Arrival from the direction of Bell Blvd (west going east) is strongly encouraged.
- Do not to block traffic on 36th Ave, Bell Blvd, and Corp. Stone St.
- Display your sign with the child's name in the windshield so that the staff can see and bring out the child to the vehicle.
- If at all possible, park further down on 36th Ave and walk with your mask on and sign so that we may bring your child safely to you.

Before and After School Child Care

LSFB's normal operational hours are from 8 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. For students needing to come earlier or stay later we offer before and after school care.

- Operational hours will be from 7:30 to 8 a.m. (free of charge) and 3:15–6:00 p.m. If a student needs to come before 7:30, please contact the office to make arrangements.
- Students and staff will be required to wear masks.
- Before school care will consist of students sitting on assigned spots 6 feet apart in the gym with no physical activity.
- Students staying for after school care will be screened prior to entering the room.
- Students will be taken outside whenever possible for after school care.
- Students will be grouped by families, not necessarily by age.
- Reservations must be made with the school.
- Student/teacher ratio will be kept to 12/1 with a maximum of 12 in one room. The maximum number of students for after school care will be 22.
- Children staying for after school care should be picked up at the school office entrance. Please call the after school phone, (917) 526-2080, to let them know you are at the door and a staff member will bring your child out to you.

After School Clubs

A definite decision has not been made on the start of our after school clubs, but we will keep you abreast of developments.

Attendance

Attendance will be taken every morning and submitted to the office by 9 a.m. The middle school teachers will take attendance in each class they teach. In the event that the school is closed and we go to Distance Learning, attendance will be taken as the students show work, complete assignments, and participate in meetings.

If a student is absent from school for a day without a written note, the homeroom teacher will contact the parents and record whether it is a lawful or unlawful absence. If a student is absent from school for a few days without a written note, the office will call the home to find out the health status of the student. If the student is absent from school due to COVID-19, the COVID-19 Coordinators will notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Parent/Teacher Conferences

All meetings between parents and teachers will be carefully scheduled and done virtually, via Zoom, Face Time, etc. Contact will be kept to a minimum and while keeping the lines of communication open.

Staff Professional Development

All professional development will be done virtually. The staff has already been doing a number of online courses (optimizing distance learning, mandated reporter, etc.) to satisfy state and local educational requirements and will continue to do so throughout the school year.

Safety Drills

During all safety drills, social distancing guidelines will be stressed while still adhering to the standard operating procedures. Classes will have separate safety drills to help accentuate all guidelines in an age appropriate manner along with school-wide drills. If the safety drill doesn't allow for social distancing (i.e. shelter in place), all students and staff should be wearing their masks (Kindergarten – 8th graders and faculty with the face shield) and keeping their hands to themselves.

Appeals

If a student is unable to follow these guidelines, a written explanation along with a doctor's notice must be given to the principal.

Closure

If the Lutheran School of Flushing and Bayside is closed for more than 5 days consecutively (result of illness, weather, etc.), it will return to Distance Learning if required by the government or health department. Students and parents will be given instruction on how to use the online classrooms at the beginning of the school year so that we may maximize instructional opportunities for all students without any interruptions.