

## **St. Matthew Lutheran School COVID-19 Procedures For 2020-2021 School Year**

As we prepare for a new school year, we have made many necessary changes and updates to our program due to COVID-19. However, let's please not look at these precautions in the negative sense as far as things we can't do or have to do. **We can look at these precautions as opportunities that allow us to get back to school 5 days a week! Let's be honest, online learning was not ideal!** We can also look at these precautions as opportunities to show love to all God's children as we are considerate of their well-being. The plan is to implement the following precautions until things change in our country and community in regards to COVID-19. This will allow us to have school five days per week. Below you will find the list of precautions we are taking and what has been recommended by our state government to help stop the spread of germs.

### **CHILDREN & STAFF HEALTH**

Students, parents, and staff showing signs of COVID-19 will not be allowed on site if they:

- Are showing symptoms of COVID-19 which include:
  - A cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - A fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher or a sense of having a fever
  - A sore throat
  - Chills
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
  - Congestion/running nose-not related to seasonal allergies
  - Unusual fatigue
- Have been in close contact with someone who has confirmed or suspected COVID-19 in the past 14 days

### **Daily Health Screening**

Parents will be required to confirm that their child is symptom and contact free each morning. The parents can sign off on the COVID-19 checklist that we will give them every morning. This will be followed by a temperature check being conducted at school with a no touch thermometer. Please take your child's temperature in the morning before school as well if at all possible. This will hopefully speed up the morning health screening by not having us get caught off guard by any possible high temperature readings.

Please keep your children home for monitoring if anyone in your family has tested positive for COVID-19 or if anyone in your family has come into contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Should a child show COVID-19 symptoms in the morning or as the day develops they will immediately be removed from the classroom until they can be picked up. We will make use of the church cry room as an

isolation room of sorts. The child will be monitored during this time period and will be given options of resting, reading, watching a movie, etc.

Students and staff having signs of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 can return when at least 72 hours have passed since the recovery AND at least 10 days have passed since signs first appeared OR it has been at least 72 hours since recovery AND a health care professional provides a note that the student does not have suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and may return to school.

## **DROP OFF & PICK UP**

### **PARENTS:**

- Parents are encouraged to do their best to maintain a six-foot distance from others during drop off and pick up.
- Parents must wear a face covering that meets state guidelines during drop off and pick up times.
- Parents must confirm that their child is symptom and contact free each morning as part of the “Daily Health Check.”
- In order to promote social distancing, we will be having limited children and parents allowed in the classroom at a time. **Please bring your child to the classroom door each morning for drop off.** We will be allowing three families in each classroom at a time while we conduct the “Daily Health Check.” Thank you in advance for your patience with this process. Please give yourself extra time in the mornings as well as be respectful of other school family’s time. (Note: phone calls, emails, notes, texts will be extra important this year as teachers will not have hardly any time for talking in the mornings. However, we would still love to talk with you! Please take time to set up meetings after school with your child’s teacher.)
- In order to promote social distancing, our pick up procedure will also look differently. We plan on having all families come through the gate and going to their child’s classroom door for pick up. After picking up their children we would ask that families continue the flow of traffic by exiting down the sidewalk by the church. The 5-8 grade classroom families can just exit back out the gate.
- Parents must wash hands or use hand sanitizer anytime they enter the building.
- Parents should make sure their children have access to at least 3 face masks or a face shield for day to day use at school.
- Parents who return to school throughout the day to drop off lunch, homework, etc. should consider if entrance to the building is really necessary. Mr. Biebert’s door will be the only door available for during school entrance. Masks will be required.

- **Please have a plan in place for picking your children up within 30 minutes should they be suspected to have COVID-19.**

#### **Students:**

- Students must wash hands or use hand sanitizer upon entering the classroom.
- Students should come to school with a filled water bottle instead of planning on getting a drink from the water fountain. Students will be able to use the bottle filler water fountain should there bottle get empty.
- Students must wear a mask or face shield if there are no health risks. (Please note: forgetting a mask on a particular day does not suddenly qualify as a health risk. School will have a few extra masks and face shields on hand for situations where masks are forgotten.)

### **Program Closure**

St. Matthew Lutheran School will make every effort to staff all classrooms upon a teacher's sickness, but families should be prepared that if the required number of teachers cannot be fulfilled the school will be forced to close until further notice. Parents should also be prepared for school closure should COVID-19 have an outbreak at our school. The amount of time we would need to close would determine if temporary online schooling measures would take place until school could resume.

## **CLASSROOM PREVENTION**

#### **HANDWASHING:**

- Students and teachers **MUST** wash their hands before and after lunch, and after using the restroom;
- Students and teachers will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer at the following times:
  - any time their hands touch their face;
  - after blowing/wiping their nose or sneezing;
  - after playing outside;
  - before and after snack times.

#### **PHYSICAL DISTANCING:**

- Desks will all face the same way and be separated as much as possible. K-1 tables will have clear shields installed in addition to separation.
- Teachers will encourage physical distancing when appropriate throughout the day.
- Students will be 6 feet apart when traveling throughout the school when possible. Examples would include distancing at lockers, bathroom, etc.

## **SCHOOL SUPPLIES:**

- Students will have their own supply box to use for school work.
- Shared materials will be kept to a minimum without trying to hinder what the school can offer. (Please note: This means library books, certain classroom manipulatives, certain toys, etc. may not be sanitized daily and may be shared.)
- Students should have a filled water bottle every morning. Students will only be allowed to use the touchless water fountain to fill up their water bottles.
- Students should have access to 3 face masks or a face shield each day.

## **LUNCH AND RECESS ROUTINES:**

- Students and teachers will sanitize their hands before and after lunch.
- Students and teachers will eat lunch in their classrooms.
- We ask that students bring their own lunch ware to cut down on the shared supplies.
- The classroom will be cleaned and sanitized as best as time allows after lunch.
- Masks will not be required during lunch time.
- Regular recess schedules will be followed. Masks will not be required.

## **PROGRAM:**

- Students will typically be in their same classroom cohort all day every day. This means that students will be in the same classroom with their same desk 90% of the time during the week. The only exceptions to this would be on Friday's rotational classes and if students would need to be pulled for 1 on 1 help. However, even during Friday's rotational classes students will be with their same classroom cohort.
- Masks will continue to be used during special classes such as music when possible. (Please note: there will no doubt be situations where students may not have masks on for parts of each day.)
- If parents choose to make use of aftercare, then safety precautions will take place as they would during school.
- Field trips will likely be cancelled for the time being.
- All extracurricular events on our school calendar will be cancelled or modified for the time being. This would include the events in lighter blue, purple, and summer orientations. These will be reevaluated in November as well as the beginning of February for different events that happen in the winter and spring of the year.
- Chapel will continue to be held, but the children will wear their masks with smaller spaced out chapel families of 5-6 students.

## **CLASSROOM CLEANING:**

- Desks, door handles, hand rails will be disinfected throughout the day.
- Staff will clean, sanitize, and disinfect the classroom after each school day.

## Communication

St. Matthew Lutheran School will communicate new guidelines, routines, expectations, and any COVID cases (while protecting student privacy) through weekly newsletters and emails. Please read!!

Parents must call the school office at (509-327-5601) or fill out a sickness/absence form on our school website at ([school.stmatthewspokane.org/online-absence-form.html](http://school.stmatthewspokane.org/online-absence-form.html)) **and contact their child's teacher** if their child is sick to report his/her symptoms.

## UNDERSTANDING

St. Matthew Lutheran School teachers and staff will strive to provide your child with the best learning environment they can while maintaining the procedures outlined in this letter (based off the guidance provided by WA DOH, the CDC, AAP, and PolicyLab).

Parents who choose to enroll their child at St. Matthew Lutheran School agree to follow the health standards and precautions outlined in this document. Parents assume any and all risks and responsibilities for sending their child to school each day as outlined in this document. St. Matthew Lutheran School is not responsible for any sickness your child (or any family members) may incur while at school.

Your understanding and patience this year with this whole process will be much appreciated. We obviously hope that these procedures will not last for the entire year. However, for the time being these are the rules and procedures we will need to put in place. We plan on being back to school 5 days a week for the entirety of the school year and this excites us! While there will continue to be many uncertainties this school year, our God will continue to remain a constant. The same God that has blessed our school and its families in the past will continue to bless us in his own way. We look forward to another year and thank God for granting it.