



St. Joseph School

Return to In-Person Instruction

2020-2021

Introduction

The attached plan was created in accordance with recommendations for a return to in-person instruction for schools given by the State Governor's Office, the Bristol/Burlington Board of Health, and the Archdiocese of Hartford's Office of Education, Evangelization, and Catechesis (OEEC). Using these recommendations, the **St. Joseph School Return to In-Person Instruction Team (RIIT)** developed the below guidelines, policies, and procedures for each of the three phases of possible instruction: **Green** (all in-person instruction with appropriate health and safety policies/procedures in place), **Yellow** (potential hybrid scenarios depending on the current health concerns in the greater Bristol or Connecticut community), and **Red** (all remote instruction). It is possible that SJS may move in and out of these phases throughout the school year based on decisions made by the State of Connecticut, the Bristol/Burlington Board of Health, and the OEEC.

The SJS RIIT consists of Fr. Ivan (pastor), Mr. Eric Frenette (principal), the St. Joseph School Board, and local medical, health/safety, and educational professionals. The plan was approved by the individuals mentioned above as well as the Archdiocese's Office of Education, Evangelization, and Catechesis. Data from family and faculty surveys was also taken into consideration when developing these plans.

As updates regarding public health and the COVID-19 pandemic change from day to day, these guidelines and policies/procedures are tentative and may change prior to the first day of school. Any changes will be communicated to the school population via the school email list and School Messenger phone calls as soon as possible.

While these policies and procedures will be explained and reviewed on a regular basis with our students, it is critical that families review this information with students and encourage full compliance to them. It is also important that families play a critical first line of defense in keeping our school community safe by keeping any child who is or may be sick home from school until it is safe to return.

We appreciate your continued cooperation, support, and patience during these trying times. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Mr. Frenette at Frenette@stjosephbristol.org or by calling (860)582-8696.

Green Phase

The Green Phase is when schools conduct all in-person instruction with strict adherence to social distancing and health/safety guidelines. Options must be in place for parents who elect to keep their child at home for a temporary period of time or longer due to personal health circumstances. These guidelines include but are not limited to:

- All desks are facing the same direction.
- Desks are spaced out as physically distant as possible.
- Students (K-8) wear masks in classrooms when 6 feet of distance cannot be physically maintained.
- Masks are worn in all common areas of the school.
- Hand sanitizer is available in each classroom and office space.
- Students are encouraged and given opportunity to wash hands as often as possible.
- Classroom surfaces are cleaned with disinfecting wipes at least twice a day.
- Restrooms are cleaned at least three times a day.
- Lunches are organized in classrooms with respect to social distancing.

Overall Procedures/Policies:

- It is critical that families be the first line of defense in protecting our school family. If students show any potential symptoms of COVID-19 or are not feeling well, they should remain home from school. Families must pre-screen their children using the checklist provided by the CDC/Bristol-Burlington Board of Health provided by St. Joseph School before sending them to school each day.
- Students, faculty, and staff who show possible symptoms of COVID-19 (especially gastrointestinal issues or fever) are asked to stay home sick from school.
- Students, faculty, and staff who show such symptoms while in school will be screened and evaluated by the Health Staff and may be asked to leave the school. Families would be contacted in the event of it being a student.
- The “isolation room” for students/staff showing symptoms of COVID-19 will be the room that previously housed the Health Office. Students will be supervised at all times while in this room by staff.
- Families will ring the front entrance and their student will be brought to the front door by administration or the Health Staff.

- Any student, faculty, or staff who shows symptoms of or is diagnosed with COVID-19 will have be approved by and meet any requirements of the Bristol/Burlington Board of Health before being able to reenter St. Joseph School.
- The new Health Office will be in the room that previously housed the 1st Floor Faculty Room by the Main Entrance.

Infrastructure:

1. Doorways and stairways will be assigned to each grade to limit amount of traffic during arrival/dismissal (see “Arrival/Dismissal Procedures” below for more information).
2. Lanes of traffic in hallways and staircases will direct flow of traffic.
3. Signs will be posted reminding students/faculty of health and safety procedures and directions for traffic flow.
4. Student desks will be placed as socially distant as possible based on each class’s population.
5. Surfaces, bathrooms, classrooms, common areas, and door handles will be cleaned throughout the day and thoroughly after school hours.
6. CDC/Bristol-Burlington Board of Health-approved cleaning methods will be utilized in all classrooms, common areas, and school grounds daily as recommended by the above agencies.
7. Bathrooms will be cleaned three times throughout the school day or as necessary. Bathroom usage will be staggered when possible to limit students in hallways and bathrooms at one time. Bathrooms will be assigned to each grade to limit number of students using each bathroom.
8. Bathroom Assignments:
 - a. Boys’ Bathrooms:
 - i. Grades K-2 will use 1st floor center bathroom.
 - ii. Grades 3-5 will use 1st floor East bathroom.
 - iii. Grades 6-8 will use 2nd floor center bathroom.
 - b. Girls’ Bathrooms:
 - i. Grades K-2 will use 1st floor East bathroom.
 - ii. Grades 3-5 will use 2nd floor East bathroom.
 - iii. Grades 6-8 will use 2nd floor West bathroom.

K-8 Classrooms:

1. Instruction will follow procedures/policies as normal as possible while still respecting social distancing.
2. Desks will face the same direction and will be as close to three to six feet apart as possible.

3. Students and faculty will wear face coverings at all times, especially during movement throughout the building/classrooms and whenever social distancing is not possible. Face coverings may also be encouraged during particular outdoor activities or instruction that may increase spreading risks.
4. Middle School students will NOT change classrooms for different subjects. Rather, teachers will move to the students' "homeroom" classroom for specific subjects.
5. Each classroom will have an "Enter" and "Exit" door to create a safe flow of traffic for students and faculty.
6. Coat Rooms will have an "Enter" and "Exit" procedure and students will have be assigned access to these areas to ensure social distancing.
7. "Common items", such as manipulatives and devices, will be thoroughly cleaned prior and after use. Such items will be individualized for each student when possible. Families are also welcome to provide individual materials to their students as appropriate (check with the classroom teacher prior to purchasing these items).
8. Students are strongly encouraged to bring all necessary items to school each day to avoid having to use communal materials such as pencils, pens, etc. These items are available to purchase in the School Store.
9. Class libraries will be removed or limited as needed and books will be assigned to individual students by the teacher.
10. Non-essential "common areas" within classrooms, such as carpets and tables, will be removed for the 2020-2021 school year.
11. Classes will be "cohorting" by grade to limit movement throughout the school and exposure to other individuals in the school as much as possible throughout the day. "Cohorting" means each class will be separated as much as possible to ensure potential tracking of contact in the event of a COVID-19 diagnosis within the class.
12. Teachers will utilize outdoor areas of campus as often as possible when appropriate.
13. Use of "common area" classrooms (such as the Library, Science Lab, Guild Hall, etc.) will be scheduled in order to ensure they are used by only one class per day or appropriately cleaned between use.
14. Students must keep track of their own textbooks, notebooks, and supplies.
15. Guardian Angel/Special Friend events and other social events for students will take place outdoors or in the Guild Hall (while respecting social distancing) throughout the year with appropriate safety procedures in place.

Pre-K Classrooms:

1. The SJS Pre-K program will be contained within the school's Early Education wing (west side of the 1st floor). Only Pre-K students and school faculty/staff/administration will be allowed to enter this area.
2. Pre-K classrooms will be set up to allow social distancing as much as possible.
3. All faculty and staff will wear face coverings.

4. Pre-K students will be encouraged to wear masks as often as possible or when proper social distancing cannot be achieved. While we understand the age of these students will make this a difficult task, we will work toward this goal as we move through the year. In the meantime, faculty and staff will wear face coverings at all times.
5. Pre-K classrooms, surfaces, and materials will be cleaned frequently throughout the day and thoroughly after hours.
6. “Common areas” and communal toys/materials will be limited and/or rotated throughout the week for use.
7. Students will be brought to wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer frequently throughout the day.
8. Personal hygiene practices will be reinforced and encouraged throughout the day.

Special Classes (i.e., Art, Music, PE):

1. Students will not change classrooms for Special Classes. Teachers will come into each grade’s classroom for instruction.
2. Instruction will be accommodated to respect appropriate health and safety procedures and policies.
3. When instruction calls for singing or physical activity that requires extended social distance, classes will be held outdoors or in larger space areas (such as Guild Hall or Science Lab) and will follow “K-8 Classrooms: Rule 12” outlined above.
4. The SJS Computer Lab will be scheduled to allow only one class per day on the desktop computers. Keyboards and surfaces will be cleaned prior and after use. The lab will be thoroughly cleaned daily after hours.

Recess & Lunches:

1. Morning Recess for Grades 1-4 will be held individually per grade at each teacher’s discretion at an appointed time.
2. Afternoon Recess for Grades 1-8 will have an added session to allow a reduction in grades per session:
 - a. Grades 1-3
 - b. Grades 4 & 5
 - c. Grades 6-8
3. Activities during recess will be limited to ensure social distancing is respected by all students.
4. Activities will have assigned areas on blacktop to ensure social distancing is respected by all students.
5. Increased faculty supervision during recess.
6. Students will be allowed to wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer before snacks/lunch.
7. Students will eat lunches at their regularly assigned desk.

8. Surfaces will be sanitized before and after eating.
9. The SJS Hot Lunch program will be adapted to provide pre-packaged/individually wrapped items by the food provider. No serving of items (i.e., salads, vegetables, French Fries, etc.) will be served at SJS.

Arrival Procedure:

1. Morning Arrival of students not participating in Before Care are allowed to arrive at the school no earlier than 7:25am.
2. Students will report to the back West Door of the school. During warm or dry weather, students will remain outside until the Morning Bell at 7:55am. Students will be expected to follow social distancing procedures or wear face coverings. At the bell, students will gather in pre-designated areas for each grade that are socially distant.
3. K-8 students and faculty will wear face coverings during the entrance procedure.
4. Entrance procedures will use various entrance ways to ensure a limited number of individuals entering at a given time:
 - a. Pre-K will remain in line outside until all other students enter and then enter through the West Entrance and go downstairs. Face coverings for Pre-K students will be encouraged during this time.
 - b. Grades K-2 will enter the Middle (back) Entrance and go downstairs.
 - c. Grades 3-5 will enter the East Entrance and go upstairs.
 - d. Grades 6-8 will enter the West Entrance and go upstairs.
5. During wet or cold weather, students will enter the school upon arrival through the West Entrance and report directly to their classrooms. Teachers will be on duty in each classroom and students will be asked to remain seated at their desks or wear face coverings as they move about the classroom.
6. Tardy students will enter through the Main Entrance and report to their classrooms.
7. Parents/guardians will NOT be permitted to enter the school with their student. Any business to be done by families at the Main Office or the Health Office should call before to schedule an appointment.

Dismissal Procedure:

1. K-8 students and faculty will wear face coverings during dismissal procedure.
2. Students and families are encouraged to leave the campus as soon as possible after dismissal to avoid congregations of large groups.
3. Dismissal will be staggered to ensure social distancing and minimal congestion in hallways, staircases, and parking lot.
4. Families must leave the school property as soon as students are dismissed. No social gatherings will be allowed on school or parish property per Bristol/Burlington Board of Health regulations.

5. While car riders will dismiss through various exits, they will all arrive at the normal dismissal area in the back of the school near the playscape.
6. Staggered Dismissal by time & grade:
 - a. 2:15pm (MTuThF) and 1:50pm (W): Pre-K dismisses out West Exit
 - b. 2:20pm (MTuThF) and 1:55pm (W):
 - i. K dismisses out Middle Exit
 - ii. Grade 3 dismisses out East Exit
 - iii. Grade 8 dismisses out West Exit
 - c. 2:25pm (MTuThF) and 2:00pm (W):
 - i. Grade 1 dismisses out Middle Exit
 - ii. Grade 4 dismisses out East Exit
 - iii. Grade 7 dismisses out the West Exit
 - d. 2:30pm (MTuThF) and 2:05pm (W):
 - i. Grade 2 dismisses from the Middle Exit
 - ii. Grade 5 dismisses from the East Exit
 - iii. Grade 6 dismisses from the West Exit
7. Families picking up students in various grades are asked to remain as socially distant as possible while awaiting classes to exit the school. Face coverings are required. Families must leave as soon as students are dismissed.

Before Care:

1. Before Care will take place in the 1st Floor classroom in the back of the school, closest to the East Exit (off Goodwin Street). Families will drive through the school parking lot behind the school (between 7am and 7:25am only!) and will meet the Before Care teacher at the East Exit for the student to enter.
2. Students attending Before Care will be cohorted within the Before Care Room by grade being socially distant as possible.
3. Students & staff will remain socially distant and wear face coverings in the classroom until it is time for them to join their classes for the normal Arrival Procedures.

After Care:

1. After Care will take place in the Guild Hall (church basement) after school until 5:30pm.
2. Students will be kept in grade cohorts as much as possible and will remain socially distant within the Guild Hall.
3. All students and staff will be expected to wear face coverings.
4. No physical activity (i.e., running around, etc.) will be allowed while in the Guild Hall.
5. Students will be taken outside as much as possible as weather allows.
6. At pick up, families will knock on the door closest to the school and a staff member will meet them to check out students. Families are welcome to park in the lot next to the school if the gates are open (meaning students are not outside using the parking lot).

Assorted Policies & Procedures:

1. School Masses:
 - a. St. Joseph School will delay full-school in-person attendance at Holy Day Masses or school-wide celebrations (such as the Welcome Back Mass) until further notice. In the meantime, students will watch the Holy Mass on these special occasions via the Parish's Facebook Live stream.
 - b. When/if SJS returns to in-person attendance to Holy Day Masses in the church, we will stagger classes as necessary and will have a reserved section in the pews, away from the rest of those in attendance, for our students that allow for social distancing. SJS students will enter and exit the church by the back door that is not open for public use.
 - c. Classes will attend a week day Mass on a rotational schedule starting the week of September 14th and will follow the same safety precautions mentioned above for Holy Day Masses:
 - i. Students will sit in reserved seating away from the rest of the congregation.
 - ii. Appropriate social distancing will be maintained.
 - iii. Students will enter/exit through a private entrance not available for public use.
2. Playscape and Outdoor Areas:
 - a. Appropriate social distancing and face covering procedures will be followed for outdoor spaces including the playscape as appropriate.
 - b. The playscape will be cleaned regularly.
 - c. The playscape will be reserved for grades PK and K only.
3. Monitoring:
 - a. Cohorted classes, faculty, staff, and classroom visitors/volunteers will be documented to ensure monitoring is possible in the event of a confirmed infection. "Monitoring" means that St. Joseph School is able to track who came into contact during the school day with a possible infected person.
 - b. In the event a student, faculty member, or staff is diagnosed with COVID-19, that cohorted class will be quarantined (at home) for a two week period. At that time, a remote learning program will be provided for those students.
 - c. St. Joseph School will follow Bristol/Burlington Board of Health regulations and requirements for the return to school of any person who was diagnosed with COVID-19.
4. Communication:
 - a. The COVID-19 Health and Safety Compliance Liaisons for St. Joseph School will be the School Health Aide and the School Principal. Any questions about compliance issues can be addressed to them.

- b. All developments, procedural/policy updates, and other information critical for families to know will be communicated by the school administration in a timely manner through, but not limited to, email communication, mailed letters, and School Messenger phone calls to school families.
- c. Coordinated Communication Plan:
 - i. The school administration will release a weekly update on guidelines, policies, and school news via email and “backpack mail”. These will be short but will contain any critical information families need to know.
 - ii. All information, including the weekly updates, will be posted on the school’s website under the “SJS Covid-19 Response” page.
 - iii. Monthly videos from the school’s administration will be posted on the school’s Facebook page. The link will also be emailed to families.
 - iv. Methods of Important Communication:
 - 1. School-wide email
 - 2. School Messenger call system
 - 3. Facebook
 - 4. School Website under the “SJS Covid-19 Response” page.
 - 5. “Backpack Mail” (if time allows).
 - 6. USPS Mailing (if time allows).

Families Temporarily Opting Out of In-Person Instruction:

- 1. Families who choose to temporarily opt out of returning to in-person instruction are eligible to receive an accommodated remote learning program.
- 2. Accommodated remote learning programs will vary depending on the grade and specific needs of the student.
- 3. As classroom teachers will be teaching classes during the day to students present in the building, the teacher/administration will work with individual families to develop a remote learning program that will ensure the student receives academic work and regularly scheduled Zoom meetings to clarify material/responsibilities, provide some individual instruction/support, and conduct assessment of student learning.
- 4. Students receiving “opt-out” remote learning accommodations will be invited to Zoom specific “live streamed” lessons for specific content areas when applicable.
- 5. Any family who is interested in temporarily opting out of in-person instruction is encouraged to contact the Principal as early as possible so the program details can be developed and communicated.

Yellow Phase

The Yellow Phase is when schools provide a hybrid blended model of in-person instruction and remote learning instruction due to an increase of COVID-19 in the community. Any in-school instruction must follow the health and safety guidelines outlined in the Green Phase. This Yellow Phase strategy may be tailored to each school based on available resources, classroom size, enrollment and physical school space structures.

SJS Yellow Phase:

1. The St. Joseph School Yellow Phase will consist of a hybrid model consisting of some in-person instruction and remote learning. **Details will depend on the reason for needing to enter the Yellow Phase and will follow recommendations from the State of Connecticut, the Bristol/Burlington Board of Health, and the OEEC.**
2. The below plan is just one possible option for a Yellow Phase program. This would be a plan in response to SJS needing to reduce the amount of people within the building at a given time.
 - a) Pre-K & K classes will attend a regularly scheduled program five days a week following the same policies and procedures implemented in the Green Phase.
 - b) Group 1 (Grades 1, 3, 4, 5)” will attend in-person instruction on Mondays and Wednesdays. On all other days, these grades will participate in remote learning to be defined at that time by the classroom teacher and administration.
 - c) “Even Grades (Grades 2, 6, 7, 8)” will attend in-person instruction on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On all other days, these grades will participate in remote learning to be defined at that time by the classroom teacher and administration.
3. In the event SJS does not have to limit the in-school population at a given time but rather needs to provide more time for thorough, deep cleaning of the building, the following plan (or some variation of it) would be put in place.
 - a) All classes receive in-person instruction under the Green Phase procedures Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.
 - b) Wednesday would have all classes receive remote learning so the school building can receive a thorough, deep cleaning.
4. Other Yellow Phase possibilities may include but are not limited to:
 - a) Half Days of in-person instruction followed up by remote learning.
 - b) Alternating students within grades for days of in-person instruction and days of remote learning.
 - c) Alternating periods of time within the school year that all or some grades will be remote learning.
 - d) Some grades attending in-person instruction for full days while others attending for in-person instruction for half days.

5. Students unable to attend in-person instruction on days scheduled for personal/family reasons will be given accommodated remote learning instruction.
6. Other variations of hybrid models consisting of in-person and remote learning may be developed as necessary. Any and all information will be communicated to families in a timely manner.
7. **Again, it is critical to stress that any transition to a Yellow Phase will be dependent on specific needs of the SJS community in light of the ongoing health and safety situation within the greater Bristol community and will be based on recommendations by the Bristol/Burlington Board of Health and the OEEC.**

St. Joseph School In-Person Instruction for Yellow Phase:

1. For classes that are to enter the school building for in-person instruction during the Yellow phase, the same policies and procedures will be in place as in the Green Phase. Cleaning, classroom, arrival/dismissal, and lunch procedures will all be the same to ensure health and safety while also to avoid any confusion amongst faculty, students, and families.
2. Special Classes will be adapted to the best of the school's ability to ensure students who normally receive in-person instruction on a day that they are remote will receive curriculum content either during in-person instruction days or remotely.

St. Joseph School Remote Learning Instruction for Yellow Phase:

1. When students are out of school for remote learning instruction, students will be expected to participate in and complete all assigned work, tasks, and online meetings, however, the school will work with families who have unique challenges or struggles.
2. Remote learning instruction will vary depending on the age of students.
3. St. Joseph School will work with families to the best of its ability to work with families who lack necessary technology for students to engage with remote learning instruction.
4. Any pre-paid Hot Lunch payments families paid for but miss due to remote learning days will be credited to the family.

Red Phase

The Red Phase is when schools are closed for in-person instruction. All instruction must be provided via remote learning using digital and non-digital platforms, depending on grade level. Grades 4-8 must incorporate live virtual classroom instruction and connections at least twice a week, optimally four days a week.

Grades K-3 may rely on digital and non-digital platforms with a live virtual classroom session at least once a week, optimally more when appropriate. Clear procedures and protocols must be in place for communication, unit planning and instruction, assessment, and technology platforms. PK programs may be able to remain open and in-person if Day Care Centers are not closed.

St. Joseph School Red Phase Remote Learning Instruction Programs:

1. Pre-K:
 - a. If the state closes schools but daycare centers remain open, St. Joseph School will be able to continuing running our in-person PK program. More information will be given if necessary.
2. Grades K-2:
 - a. Will participate in a combination of SeeSaw (an online learning app platform), Zoom, and other technology platforms for instruction, teacher/class communication, and assessment.
3. Grades 3-8:
 - a. Will participate in a combination of Google Classroom, Zoom, and other technology platforms for instruction, teacher/class communication, and assessment.
4. All students will receive some direct instruction via Zoom with the classroom teacher on a weekly basis in either full group or small groups depending on the age and specific needs of the student.
5. Morning Announcements will be released daily by the school administration on YouTube will links being provided via Facebook and school-wide email.
6. Scheduled events will be accommodated and adapted, if possible, remotely for students and families. Information will be released in a timely manner prior to any such events.