



August 25, 2021

Dear SJA Families,

The faculty and staff have been busy this week getting everything ready to welcome our students on August 30th. I am blessed to be here and move St. Joan of Arc into the future but also to carry on the vision of those leaders who have gone before me.

As I think about our theme for this year, *Encounter God's Presence in Creation*, we can focus on the words of Pope Francis: "We are stewards, not masters of our earth. Each of us has a personal responsibility to care for the precious gift of God's Creation." We are each God's creation and need to care for one another.

Therefore, the health and safety of our community is at the forefront of planning as we look to have all of our students in person this school year. As you have seen in my previous communications, the Archdiocese of Baltimore has put together a plan for the safe opening of schools. Each week families will be notified by 5:00pm on Sunday evening of any changes or implementation that will need to take place for the upcoming week, specifically masking. Please be aware that with the changing status of our community, county and state, it is important that our families read all communications that come from the school.

Besides the Sunday notification, I will be sending a Weekly SJA Newsletter through email. Families can also access this information on our school website.

Please note the most recent changes:

- All volunteers and visitors need to contact the school before entering the building.
- Masks are required this week.
- Back to School Nights will be virtual.

Thank you for helping to make the 2021-2022 school year the best.

God Bless,

Ms. Dianne Kestler
Principal

The week ahead:

- August 26** Hops & Flops at Hopkins Farm Brewery 5:00pm – 7:00pm (adult only gathering)
- August 27** PreK and K Orientation will be held from 9:00am – 11:15am. Parents will be notified by their student's teacher of the designated time for orientation. New students and parents only are invited to meet their teachers from 9:30am – 10:30am. Invitations will be sent to these families.

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| August 30 | First Day of School - full day for Grades 1 – 8 (Gradual entrance for PreK & K) |
| August 31 | Full day for Grades 1 – 8 (Gradual entrance for PreK & K) |
| September 1 | Full day for Grades 1 – 8 (Gradual entrance for PreK & K) Back to School Night –Grades 1-5 – Virtual Only |
| September 2 | Full day for Grades 1 – 8 (Gradual entrance for PreK & K) Back to School Night –Grades 6 -8 – Virtual Only |
| September 3 | 12:05pm dismissal Boo Hoo/Hee Haw Breakfast for PreK & K – canceled |

Reminders:

- Forms need to be completed and uploaded in the School Admin portal including The Assumption of Risk, Acknowledgement Agreement Regarding COVID-19, and Mask Use Policy. **All families must sign and submit the forms before your child may attend school.**
<https://stjoanarc.schooladminonline.com>
- Review the uniform policy listed in the school handbook. All students will be in the new uniform for the 2021-2022 school year.
- Check for emails from the teachers for back to school information.

Notes:

- Join the band! Mrs. Thamert is excited about a return to St. Joan in person this year! She will be at school to talk about the band on Wednesday, Sept. 8. (Detailed information will come home that day.) Students in grades 4-8 are invited to join the band for the first time, or continue learning. Please feel free to reach out to Mrs. Thamert directly if you have any questions: knightchic@aol.com.

Opening of School:

Basic COVID -19 Procedures

- Guidelines for Catholic Schools can be found in the letter sent from the Archdiocese of Baltimore on August 17.
- Masking criteria will be determined each week depending on case count in Harford County.
- Each Sunday by 5:00pm families will receive notification regarding the masking of students and adults on campus for the following week.
- Masking will *not* be required for outdoor activities on campus at this time.
- Attendance will be recorded as *masked* or *unmasked* for contact tracing.
- Social distancing will continue to operate at 3 feet where possible.
- Visitors and volunteers on campus will be restricted and by appointment only.
- Students will continue handwashing and hand sanitizing within their classroom and throughout the school.
- Faculty and students will maintain their classroom and student space throughout the day, cleaning as needed.
- No wellness survey or temperature checks are required at this time
- Students showing any symptoms of illness should remain home and the school should be contacted.
- CDC and Maryland Department quarantining guidance for COVID 19 positive cases and close contacts will continue to be observed

- Isolation area will continue to be located on the second floor landing.
- All students are in person and curriculum will not be delivered virtually.
- Student work will be available through the teacher websites.

Arrival Procedures

- Cars will enter at the Plater Street entrance to the parking lot.
- Turn into alley, but do not discharge students until you make a LEFT TURN into the DROP-OFF ZONE which begins at the exit of the parking lot going out to Edmund Street and ends at the Plater Street entrance.
- Students will exit the vehicles on the passenger side
- Students will proceed at a safe distance to their grade level line and wait for their teacher.
- AT NO TIME SHOULD A PARENT EXIT THE CAR IN THE DROP OFF ZONE.
- **PreK** families only will follow directions and park in a separate row to the left of the drop off zone, parents will escort their students to the door to meet their teacher
- All traffic will exit the parking lot onto Edmund Street. PLEASE DO NOT PASS OTHER CARS IN THE DROP OFF ZONE AS THIS POSES A DANGER TO STUDENTS.
- The bell will ring at 8AM – students will enter the building with their teacher
- Students should be dropped off between 7:50AM and 8:10AM only

Dismissal Procedures

- Vehicles are to turn right to enter the parking lot through the alley entrance on Plater Street only.
- Vehicles will be lined up in rows beginning at the residential side of the lot. (Parents are asked not to arrive prior to 2:50PM as physical education classes are conducted on this lot.)
- The school office will be closed from 2:45-3:15PM daily to ensure safe and timely dismissal for all students.
- All families will receive 2 placards to be placed in the right front passenger side of the windshield of the vehicle picking up the student(s) in that family. The names on the placards of the vehicles parked in the first row will be communicated to the office by the staff member on duty, and those students will be called for dismissal.
- Students will proceed directly to their vehicles in the first row.
- Students will be called and proceed to the next row of waiting vehicles when it is safe to do so.
- The rows will be dismissed through the Edmund Street exit. ALL CARS MUST EXIT WHEN DIRECTED TO DO SO. If your child is not yet in the car, you must exit the parking lot and reenter it through the Plater Street entrance.
- Since no child may be left unattended, students not picked up 15 minutes after dismissal time will be sent to Extended Care and parents will be charged for at least one hour according to the Extended Care fees

Lunch/Recess

- Students will bring their own lunch and snacks; no sharing food
- Students will eat in their designated classroom in their assigned seats
 - Masks do not need to be worn while eating.

Extra-Curricular Activities, Fieldtrips, Service Projects

- Students may participate in selected extra-curricular activities. All school protocols need to be followed during these times along with location guideline.

