



# 2020 Reopening & COVID-19 Safety Plans | **DRAFT PLAN**

The threat presented by COVID-19 is something that none of us have ever experienced in our lifetimes, and together, we are learning more all the time about how best to respond. We all feel a great deal of fear and concern, and yet, as people of faith, we also remain hopeful. We want so dearly to “return to normal,” but right now, that is simply not possible. Instead, we must adapt to a “new normal” in which our daily life is adjusted, in some small ways and some big, to look out not only for our own health, but the health and wellbeing of our neighbors. During this difficult time, we are all asked to make some sacrifices in service of the common good, and what is more Catholic than that?

On the following pages, you will find our initial draft of Reopening Plans amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Following the most current guidance from the Archdiocese of Denver Office of Catholic Schools, we are planning for **Operational Level “Green: Unrestricted In-School Learning”** and implementing **“Level 2 Amber” Health & Safety Protocols** (more information on these designations can be found on page 3). In undertaking the work to create these plans, we were guided by and rooted in some foundational beliefs that inform the way we think about kids, community, school, and learning during this pandemic:

1. We believe that we are communities of charity, solidarity, and justice, called to seek and protect the good, safety, health, and well-being of all: our children, families, teachers, staff, volunteers, neighbors, and especially the most vulnerable in our community.
2. We believe that only in true community do children flourish and become who they are called to be. (*Wellspring Root Belief #4: We are Interconnected: with each other, we become who God destines us to be.*)
3. We believe we are partners with families in this work, because adults set the tone for students to be adaptable and resilient. (*Wellspring Root Belief #7: Educators walk alongside parents, who are the Primary Educators of their children.*)
4. We believe students succeed when they are loved, heard, protected, and challenged.
5. We believe that true freedom and healing comes from knowing, serving, loving, and being loved by God.

We are in this together, and we will strive to always maintain an open line of communication, keeping you informed with regular communication and updates, via email and FLYER messages, regarding the health and safety of our school community. In this pandemic, situations can evolve rapidly, so in the event that we must communicate an urgent update, please have FLYER App downloaded on your phone to receive immediate notifications.

Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, it is our firm belief that in-person learning can be offered safely, and with the guidance and direction of the Archdiocese of Denver Office of Catholic Schools, we've been hard at work to make that belief a reality. While we cannot give a perfect guarantee that no one in our school will ever get infected with COVID-19, we can commit to working tirelessly to limit that possibility. We know that kids need to be in school with peers, not just for their intellectual growth, but for their social and emotional wellbeing, and we also know that working parents need a safe and engaging place for their children to be during the day – for many, distance learning from home is simply not an option. Given all this, we are committed to making safe, in-person schooling possible for all our students.

## Some Important Things We've Learned So Far about COVID-19

- ◆ This disease is not going away anytime soon. Until there is a vaccine or proven treatment, we must adapt to a “new normal” to ensure the safety of all our community members.  
> Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of National Institute for Allergy & Infectious Diseases // New Normal: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/lisettevoytko/2020/06/14/fauci-says-real-normality-unlikely-for-a-year-as-us-continues-pandemic-slog/#6322772d1855>
- ◆ Even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, being in school is important for the growth and wellbeing of kids.  
> American Academy of Pediatrics // Guidance for School Re-Entry: <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>
- ◆ The real infection risk in reopening schools is not to kids (who show very low infection rates), but to their parents and elderly or immune-compromised family members.  
> Infectious Diseases Society of America // Viral Transmission: <https://academic.oup.com/cid/article/doi/10.1093/cid/ciaa450/5821281>  
> Guangzhou Center for Disease Control & Prevention // COVID-19: <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.04.11.20056010v1>
- ◆ This virus is spread overwhelmingly through the air (respiratory droplets from an infected person), much less so through contact with surfaces, thus face masks, physical distancing, & air flow are very important.  
> Dr. Michael Osterholm, Center for Infectious Disease Research & Policy, University of Minnesota // COVID-19 Transmission & New Normal: <https://www.npr.org/2020/06/17/879255417/amid-confusion-about-reopening-an-expert-explains-how-to-assess-covid-risk>
- ◆ Many people who get COVID-19 (and can spread it) show no symptoms, making screening difficult.  
> Journal of American Medicine, Dr. Anthony Fauci // COVID-19: <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2767208>
- ◆ Face Shields, as well as masks, are effective at limiting the transmission of COVID-19.  
> Journal of American Medicine // Viral Transmission & Face Shields: <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2765525>

## Other Resources We've Consulted

- US Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), Considerations for Schools: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>
- US Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), Planning & Responding to COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools-faq.html>
- Colorado Dept. of Education, COVID-19 Resources for Schools: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/safeschools>
- Colorado Dept. of Public Health & Environment, Guidance & Resources for COVID-19: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/guidance-resources>
- Jeffco Public Schools, Restart Plan: [https://www.jeffcopublicschools.org/restart\\_jeffco](https://www.jeffcopublicschools.org/restart_jeffco)

As we plan for the upcoming school year and beyond with COVID-19 in mind, we are developing operational contingency plans and a range of health protocols for various scenarios, depending on state directives and the spread of the virus in our area. Our primary objectives are to keep our community safe and healthy, while also ensuring continuity of learning and quality instruction for all students throughout the school year. Below are the Operational and Health frameworks being utilized by all Archdiocese of Denver Catholic Schools to inform our decision making throughout this pandemic, though it is important to know that these models address two distinct domains and do not directly inform the other (example: we may be operating at “Unrestricted In-School Learning” because there are no legal directives limiting our capacity, but still be implementing heightened health and safety protocols because our healthy school level is at “LEVEL 2: Amber Status”)

## Guiding Framework for Reopening

**Operational Model** | The operational model below informs how learning and school operations will unfold (e.g. how to structure classes) when building capacity limitations are set based on state, local, or archdiocesan orders, given the status of a viral outbreak in our area.

<b>Unrestricted In-School Learning</b>	There are no limitations set on how many students can be in the building or in a given classroom space at one time, so In-School Learning to full capacity can proceed, minding appropriate health and safety protocols depending on “Healthy School Level.”
<b>Modified In-School Learning A</b>	There are some restrictions on the volume of people allowed in the building and in the classroom, per state and/or local health officials' orders. At this level, schools begin to creatively use spaces to lower room occupancy and maximize in-school learning time to the greatest extent possible, with additional child-care hours provided for children of working parents and full distance learning available for families who don't wish to send children to school.
<b>Modified In-School Learning B</b>	There are significant restrictions on the volume of people allowed in the building and in the classroom, per state and/or local health officials' orders. At this level, schools will create blended learning/distance learning schedules to provide part-time in school learning and part-time at home study (In-school learning prioritized for students with special learning needs and for intervention), with additional child-care hours provided for children of working parents and full distance learning available for families who don't wish to send children to school.
<b>Distance Learning</b>	Stay at home orders are in place per state and/or local officials. At this level, all students are engaged in distance learning, with in-school learning available only for students with special-learning needs or learning intervention.

**Health Protocol Levels** | The Office of Catholic Schools have defined four (4) “healthy school” levels for Archdiocese of Denver Catholic Schools. These healthy school levels provide school leadership with guidelines and recommendations in the areas of a) health and hygiene, b) cleaning and disinfecting, c) illness tracking, and d) communication with state and county health departments.

<b>LEVEL 4: Green Status</b>	Preparedness level due to no or a low risk of community spread
<b>LEVEL 3: Blue Status</b>	Guarded level due to potential spike in community spread, or an increase in faculty, staff and/or student absenteeism
<b>LEVEL 2: Amber Status</b>	Elevated level due to moderate community outbreak
<b>LEVEL 1: Red Status</b>	High level due to substantial community outbreak and spread of COVID-19

## Health &amp; Safety Protocols

COVID-19 is impacting all facets of the school experience and is forcing us to think creatively. In drafting this local-level plan, we've considered many challenges, like the near impossibility of getting little children (ages 3-7) to wear masks all day; the challenge of (and effectiveness of) keeping young children socially/physically distant; the best way to leverage our large school facility size; the impacts to our learning model which relies heavily on collaborative learning; the importance of making school feel warm and welcoming despite COVID19 (ensuring kids don't begin to negatively associate school with a place that feels scary and isolating); and more. With all this in mind and subject to all Colorado Dept. of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE) and Jefferson County Public Health (JCPH) directives (and being subject to modification should these policies change), we've created this draft plan that breaks down our COVID-19 Health & Safety Protocols into 3 categories:

- ▶ **Prevention** | These are actions that happen before a person sets foot in the school, helping us keep the school building COVID-19/coronavirus free. These are most important because they constitute the most effective way of preventing the spread of COVID-19 in our school community.
- ▶ **Precaution** | These are actions taken by school staff, students, and others in the school building to protect against the spread of germs and disease within classrooms and throughout the school building.
- ▶ **Mitigation** | These are actions taken in response to a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in the community, intended to lessen the impact and limit the transmission of the virus to other members of the school community.

## I. Prevention

- **Sick Persons & Travel** | If anyone (students, staff, or parents) is sick in any way, we ask they they do not come to school until they are healthy and disease free.
  - If a person has a possible case of COVID-19 and is experiencing COVID-like symptoms (listed below), they must get tested and cleared by a doctor before they (or other members of their family, students included) may return to school
    - ▶ *COVID-19 Symptoms: Fever or chills, dry cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea*  
\*\*Most people infected with COVID-19 experience some of these these symptoms but not all.
  - If anyone in a family becomes sick with COVID-19, all members of that family (students included) must stay away from school until they are healthy and disease free, which means quarantining for 14 days or getting tested and cleared by a doctor, whichever happens first.
  - Depending on Jeffco Pub. Health & CDC recommendations, staff, students, parents, and other visitors may be screened for international or out of state travel, which may require quarantine for 14 days,
- **Contact with COVID-19-Infected Person** | If anyone in a family has had personal contact with a person who was known to be infected with COVID-19 at the time of contact, they and all members of their family (students included) must stay way from school until they are healthy and confirmed disease free, which means quarantining for 14 days or getting tested and cleared by a doctor, whichever happens first.
- **Temperature Checks & Symptom Screens** | All people (staff, students, family members, visitors, and other community members) entering the school building will be subject to a temperature check and symptom screen. If a person is running a fever (at or above 100.4° Fahrenheit) or is experiencing any COVID-like symptoms, they will not be allowed to enter the school facility.
- **Staff Training** | School staff will be trained by a Registered Nurse (RN) to look for possible signs and symptoms of COVID-19, to screen people effectively, and to help handle situations when a potential COVID-19 case presents itself at school.

## II. Precaution

- **Face Coverings: Masks & Face Shields** | Given the substantial body of evidence pointing to the effectiveness of face coverings at limiting the spread of infectious “respiratory droplets,” particularly in indoor spaces, we do generally recommend the wearing of facial coverings indoors, following the age-specific guidelines below (Note: the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children should wear face coverings when harms do not outweigh benefits). We also believe that as educators, part of our job is to help children learn how to wear face coverings comfortably and correctly, as we’ve seen done in other countries that have reopened schools safely.
  - Face Covering Zones: Certain shared spaces in our school, especially at peak busy times, will be designated as “Face Covering Zones” where everyone of all ages are strongly recommended to wear face coverings (it will be good practice for our youngest learners), these zones will be marked, and will include the lobby, hallway, restroom, and front office (during drop off and pick up times).
  - Preschool – 1<sup>st</sup> Grade: Wearing Masks or Face Coverings is Not Required, although all students must have a mask or face covering with them at school. Masks and other face coverings may be worn by any student in this age range at the urging and direction of their parents; however, given the age and maturity of children this age, these students will not be compelled to wear masks for long stretches of time. They will, however, be taught how to wear them and be asked to wear them sometimes in some shared spaces/face covering zones (like hallways, lobby, etc.) for the sake of instruction.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade: Masks or Face Coverings are Recommended but Not Required, and students must have a mask or face covering with them at school. If students can consistently and correctly wear a face covering and are comfortable doing so for longer stretches of the day, they are encouraged to do so; however, we are not mandating that they be worn at all times. Students will be taught how to wear them properly and be expected to wear them in some shared spaces/face coverings zones (like hallways, lobby, etc.).
  - Faculty & Staff: Masks or Face Coverings are Required when in close contact with others; however, faculty & staff are not expected to wear masks or face coverings at all times. Masks or face coverings can be safely removed when at least 6 ft from others (example: while teaching a lesson assuming there is reasonable spacing around the teacher), outside, or working alone (eg. teacher alone in a classroom).
  - Adults (Non-Staff) & Children (Non-Student) in Building: Face Coverings are Required for all non-staff adults in the school building, except when at least safely 6 ft from others or outside. Any other child must abide by the guidelines above; birth through age 7 are not expected to wear facial coverings.
- **Physical Distancing** | Ensuring that people are not too crowded together (such that the respiratory droplets emitted from their mouths are not easily breathed in or contacted by others nearby) is a proven way of limiting the spread of infectious diseases like COVID-19. However, the recommended 6 ft of “social/physical distance” between people is not possible to enforce or ensure at all times, given the size of our spaces and the social nature of elementary students and especially early learners, who naturally communicate, explore, collaborate, and play together. As such, we’re attempting to implement the modified social distancing practices below.
  - Classrooms: Given the ample size of our classrooms and the number of students per classroom, students will naturally have more space than many small and crowded classrooms at other schools, and some additional physical distancing in classrooms is manageable; however, we will not be able to fully or consistently space students out to the recommended 6 ft. To provide extra physical distance...
    - Teachers will be careful to appropriately limit the number of students sitting or grouping together at work-stations, centers, tables, etc. to ensure these spaces do not become too crowded.
    - Teachers will have students leave ample space between one another when gathering for crew or circle time.
    - Because most of our classrooms are equipped with tables, not desks, our teachers will try when possible to keep table groups small (with some space between them) and keep these small table groups “cohorted” together for their work in the class, to limit the number of social recombinations (eg. A pod of 4 students who sit together at a table will remain together and move together, if they are moving to a new work station).

## II. Precaution (Continued)

○ **Physical Distancing** | Continued...

- Physical Contact: In so far as is possible, we will limit physical contact between adults and students, and among students. This means working together to find creative ways to greet one another and express affection, while we try to avoid or limit handshakes, hugs, high fives, etc.
- Limiting Group Gatherings & Use of Shared Spaces: Until it becomes safe to do so, we will not be having large gatherings of students beyond classroom-sized groups inside the building.
  - For the time being, lunch will not take place together in the cafeteria, but in classrooms instead.
  - For the time being, there will be no "All-School Gatherings" outside of weekly mass (which will be socially distanced throughout the large church); this includes no in-person opening or closing all-school crews, assemblies, award ceremonies, or lunchtimes.
  - For the time being, water fountains will only be available for refilling water bottles (not drinking), and students are asked to bring their own water bottles to school for classroom use.
  - The only shared learning space will be the art/music room, which will be wiped down and ventilated between each class use, minimizing the sharing of supplies between students/classes.
- Restrooms: To avoid large groups of students using it at the same time, bathroom capacity will be limited and enforced, with groups of students having assigned times to use the restroom. One single-occupancy restroom downstairs will be available for parent/family use.
- Outside: For outside recess, we believe it is safe for multiple classes of students to be present at the same time on the blacktop and playground given the size of the space, not to exceed 40 students in one area of the blacktop or in the playground area.
- One-Way Flow for Entry & Exit Doors: All building access will be monitored through the main entry, with the left doors serving as an entrance only, and the right doors an exit only.
- Staggered & Controlled Flow Through Shared Spaces (like the Lobby): This year, we will have some students coming for before school care between 7:15am – 8:30am, with a flexible start time between 8:30am – 8:55am to stagger the times for students and their parents to enter the building.
  - To help your children navigate the temperature & symptom screening process at the main entry, supervise them to maintain physical/social distance in the lobby and hallways (while school admin are doing symptom screens), and ensure that your children go directly to their classrooms each morning, we are **REQUIRING ALL PARENTS** to enter the building with your children (with proper face coverings) and walk them to their classroom(s).
  - We are also adding benches outside the main entrance to provide seating for those waiting to enter, as we limit the flow into the lobby.
- We want to name a few things that we will not offer, as a result of funding, space, and/or philosophy:
  - Desks spaced out 6 ft apart in rows or grids
  - Physical barriers between students/work-stations

○ **Increased Outside Air Flow & Circulation** | At this point, the research is abundantly clear that the primary (not only) way COVID-19 spreads is through respiratory droplets in the air (as opposed to spreading on surfaces). For this reason, being outside is very safe, and if we are to spend time inside, it is crucial that we ensure adequate flow of air inside (and not recirculation of air).

- Unidirectional Air Flow: Utilizing 3 large fans (that altogether are capable of moving 15,000 cubic feet of air per minute), we have created a single-direction air-flow on the first floor that pulls fresh air into the school building through the windows in the empty north classrooms, draws it across the hallway into the south classrooms (which students will be using), then pushes the air out of the open windows of the south classrooms. This ensures a steady, 1-way flow of fresh, clean air into classrooms at all times, with "used" classroom air constantly being vented out through open classroom windows.
- Classroom Ceiling Fans: All classrooms have ceiling fans that will be left on, to the greatest extent possible, to ensure additional air flow and circulation in the classrooms.

## II. Precaution (Continued)

- **Cleaning & Sanitizing** | Although COVID-19 is spread primarily through droplets suspended in the air, we still aim to ensure that all surfaces, especially in high-traffic spaces like the lobby and restrooms, are cleaned and sanitized frequently to minimize the spread of germs.
  - **Classrooms:** All teachers (and/or their classes) will wipe down their classrooms (tables/desks, chairs, work stations, materials, door knobs, and other surfaces) at the end of each school day with sanitizing wipes.
  - **Classroom Supplies:** To the extent possible, students and staff will limit the sharing of all supplies, utensils, devices, toys, books, and learning aids.
  - **Restrooms:** Restrooms will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized each evening after the school day by our janitorial vendor, and in all restrooms, students/teachers/families will be provided with sanitizing wipes to use when they enter and exit, to wipe down any surfaces they need to touch (toilet seat, flusher, sink etc.)
  - **Cleaning Hands:** Hand Sanitizer is readily available throughout the school, with hand sanitizer stations in each room; students will be required to wash their hands at several points throughout the school day.
  - **Lobby & Office:** All surfaces in the lobby and office will be regularly wiped and sanitized between uses.
  - **Front Door:** Access to the front door will be controlled from inside (by school personnel), so we discourage people using their hands on the door handles. However, sanitizing wipes will be available to wipe down all surfaces after contact.
- **Signage** | Additional signage on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, properly wash hands, promote everyday protective measures including face coverings will be on display through buildings (and taught to children).

## III. Mitigation

- **Signs of Illness** | Anyone (students, staff, parents, or others) showing signs of illness while at school will have their temperature taken, be isolated in a designated location, and their class/cohort will be monitored closely.
  - As per Colorado health guidelines, a temperature no greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit will be the guideline for being in the school building.
  - For sick students, parents will be notified to pick up the sick child (and all siblings) from school, and the sick person (and any members of their family) are to remain away from school until they are healthy, following the guidelines and criteria below.
  - For anyone who becomes sick and leaves school, they are expected to closely monitor their symptoms, get tested for COVID-19 if appropriate, and communicate regularly with school administration during their absence to alert them if they test positive for COVID-19.
- **Symptomatic Persons at School & Confirmed Cases of COVID-19** | If anyone (students, staff, parents, or others) begins developing COVID-like symptoms while at school...
  - He or she will go to an established isolated room until they can safely leave the building.
  - Before anyone with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 can return to school, he or she must stay away from school until they are healthy and disease free, which means meeting all 3 criteria...
    - At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (no fever without fever-reducing medication).
    - Improved Respiratory Symptoms
    - Depending on guidelines, a healthcare provider or county health department may need to confirm release of person to return to the school.
    - \*If person has COVID-like symptoms but does not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, it is assumed that person has COVID-19, and they may not return to school until all 3 criteria above have been met.
  - If anyone in a family becomes sick with COVID-19, all members of that family (students included) must stay away from school until they are healthy and disease free, following the 3 criteria already stated.

### III. Mitigation (Continued)

- **Symptomatic Persons at School & Confirmed Cases of COVID-19** | Continued...
  - If a COVID-19 case is confirmed and the infected person was on campus while contagious, the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools will assist school leadership, in coordination with the Jefferson County Public Health (JCPH) insofar as is necessary, to determine the appropriate course of action. This may include...
    - Dismissal of students and most staff for a short-term.
    - Dismissal of certain groups of students (eg. Just the students from the same class as the infected student) or subgroup of students (eg. Just students who may be higher-risk or live with a higher-risk person).
    - Shift to Online Remote/Distance Learning (as a back-up) for a short period of time until it is safe for students and staff to return to school.
    - Thorough cleaning and sanitization of school building.
  - If a COVID-19 case is confirmed and the infected person was on campus while contagious, the school will coordinate with local health officials to communicate important and timely information with all school community members related to the possible COVID-19 exposure.
- **Assigned Seating** | To the extent possible, all students will sit in assigned seats to help track virus spread if a student to staff member were to test positive for COVID-19.
- **Sanitizing of Building & Classrooms** | If anyone (students, staff, parents, or other visitors) with COVID-19 is known to have been on campus while infected, we will take appropriate actions to thoroughly clean, sanitize, and ventilate the school building before students and staff are allowed to return.