

Dear School Families,

We have updated our COVID Plan with based on the most recent guidance from the Washington State DOH on January 7th. All changes since our 12/30/2021 edition have been noted in red. Most notable are the changes related to isolation and quarantine timelines for positive COVID cases and identified close contacts. Thank you for taking the time to read these updates, and as always, for your vigilance in helping us all stay safe and healthy.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Daily Health Screenings at Home

Daily health attestations are no longer required by schools, so we will not be using Health Shield as we did last year. Please complete your own daily health check with your child(ren) before arriving at school. Teachers will no longer be taking student temperatures upon entry to the classroom daily each morning beginning 1/3/2022. This has not been a recommendation since the end of the 2019-2020 school year, and has not been found to be a necessary continued mitigation strategy.

Face Coverings and Masks

All staff, students, and volunteers/visitors must continue to wear face masks while on campus both indoors and outdoors regardless of vaccination status. Students may remove face masks to eat and drink. Wearing masks in school is not a local decision, it is a state mandated requirement, regardless of vaccination status. As masks are strongly recommended outdoors in crowded spaces or when in close contact for a sustained period of time, we will continue to require masks at recess, as it is very difficult to ensure students are not in close contact. Students will eat snacks outside during recess, and be able to take short mask breaks as needed by moving away from students at least 6 feet and briefly pulling down their masks. In music class, all students will be provided a singer's mask when singing will occur, and will be at least 6 feet apart (and outside when possible) while singing.

Distancing

Students will be directed to remain a minimum of 3-feet apart at all times.

- Hallways will remain one-way paths.
- Restrooms will have a maximum of 3 students allowed at a time. Students will not be allowed to change in the bathrooms at dismissal in preparation for sports and other after school activities, as they are used by Extended Care at that time and can't facilitate that volume with distancing.
- Recesses will combine students from different grades, however students will continue to remain at least 3 feet from one another.
- In the event of a school assembly, Mass, or multi-class event, there will be a limited number of students to ensure 3-foot distancing at a minimum.
- Drinking fountains will be reopened as of January 4, 2022. Protocols will be implemented allowing only one student at the fountain at a time. We still recommend that students should bring a full water bottle to school each day. Our water filling stations will remain open, as well.
- In preschool, Cubs and Tigers classes are each considered cohorts and will remain a minimum of 6 feet apart at all times. Children in each of the two preschool cohorts will remain a minimum of 3 feet apart at all times.

Lunch and Birthday Treats

- Students will eat lunch in the gym, the music room, and/or outside in three waves: (THIS MODEL WILL BEGIN 9/14/2021)
 - K-2 (K/1st in gym, 2nd outside under covered area or in music room if weather is not conducive to being outside)
 - 3-5 (3rd/4th in gym, 5th outside under covered area or in music room if weather is not conducive to being outside)
 - 6-8 (6th/7th in gym, 8th outside under covered area or in music room if weather is not conducive to being outside).
- Students eating in the gym will sit by grade level and be separated by grades with more than 6 feet between grade levels. Students eating outside/in the music room will sit in a single grade level on outdoor waterproof seating pads.
- Students will remove their masks during their lunch period and sanitize their hands prior to eating.
- Students eat in silence and are not allowed to talk during the lunch period. Staff members will play audiobooks during the lunch period.
- **Hot lunch** service will be provided in individual baskets served by one employee from our hot lunch caterer. **Pizza lunch** will be distributed to students by individual parent helpers.
- If your child would like to bring **birthday treats** on their birthday, please make sure each treat is individually wrapped. They will be passed out at a time during the day at the teacher's discretion, likely not at lunch as the lunch period is only long enough to eat lunch.

Handwashing and Sanitizing

Per guidelines, students will be encouraged to frequently wash their hands. Upon arrival each day, all students will be directed to sanitize their hands at the hand sanitizing station at the entrance to the building. While hand washing will be the preferred method for cleaning hands, there are a limited number of sinks available, therefore washing hands may not always be possible. In those circumstances, hand sanitizing stations are located in every classroom and in numerous areas around the school campus. Students will be required to use sanitizer when entering the classroom and after completing various activities. Parents are asked to notify the office if their child should not use hand sanitizer for medical reasons.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Current DOH guidance recommends cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces each night after students leave and if someone in the room exhibits symptoms (they will in turn be immediately isolated, and then sent home.).

Ventilation

We purchased individual ventilation units for each classroom and shared space with a Fulcrum grant we received last year. These units help to improve air circulation. We are adding additional operable windows in our science lab, church basement (K-8 Spanish and 7/8 ELA), and Benicasa basement (art room) to increase ventilation in that area of the building which will be installed in mid-November. During the school days, windows will also be open throughout the school for increased ventilation. As colder weather approaches, your child(ren) are encouraged to bring coats daily.

Participation in Learn to Return

Beginning 1/11/2022, St. Catherine is partnering with the Washington State Department of Health and Health Commons Project to offer free COVID-19 testing at St. Catherine. This program provides students and staff with quick and highly accurate COVID-19 PCR testing as symptoms arise or following known

exposure. This is an optional program in which a [student consent form](#) must be completed prior to testing and submitted to the office (alucero@stcatherineschool.net). We are able to conduct tests during school hours (at mutually agreeable times) and under emergency circumstances on the weekend based on individual circumstances and availability of staffing to test.

Responding to Cases or Suspected Cases

Any student, teacher, or staff who reports COVID-19-like symptoms will be immediately isolated from others and sent home. They should seek diagnostic testing as soon as feasible.

Isolation (for any staff or students who test positive)

Any student or staff member with COVID-19 should isolate at home. This isolation guidance applies regardless of vaccination status.

If a student or staff member tests positive for SARS-CoV-2 by a molecular or antigen test, they can return to school when the following criteria are met:

- 5 days have passed since symptom onset, or since positive test specimen collection date if no symptoms are present AND
- No symptoms are present, or symptoms are resolving; AND
- No fever within the past 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.

Students and staff should continue monitoring for symptoms and wearing a well-fitting mask around others through day 10 (days 6-10) both in and out of school, including during extracurricular and sports activities.

Individuals who have been in isolation **may** test on day 5 of their isolation period, but only if the above criteria for completing isolation have been met. An antigen test is **recommended**. (St. Catherine is currently not able to offer antigen testing.) If the test result is positive, they must continue to isolate until day 10. If the test result is negative, they may return to school and should continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public until day 10.

Note: If for any reason a person undergoes multiple PCR tests, only the result from the first PCR test will be considered when determining the timeline to return to school.

This isolation guidance applies regardless of vaccination status.

Responding to Cases or Suspected Cases of COVID-19 (following WA State DOH Decision Tree)

- **What if My Child Has One or More of These Symptoms** (fever 100.4° F or higher; shortness of breath or difficulty breathing; muscle or body aches; new loss of taste or smell, cough (new, changed, or worsening)
 - YOU MUST NOTIFY OUR OFFICE MANAGER, AMANDA LUECRO ALUCERO@STCATHERINESCHOOL.NET WHEN YOU FIRST NOTICE A SYMPTOM. You will receive guidance as to how to proceed in regards to testing and returning to school.)
 - Your child should isolate at home AND get tested for COVID-19 via a PCR test.
 - If the they test **POSITIVE** for COVID-19, they need to **isolate at home and identify close contacts** (St. Catherine will identify close contacts for possible school close contacts). **See above section regarding isolation requirements.**

- The designated isolation space for individuals with suspected COVID-19 symptoms will be separated from the space used for those requiring general first aid or medicine distribution. When possible, the isolation space will be a room with a door that can close and a window that can be opened to improve ventilation.
- If no appropriate indoor space is available (e.g., already occupied) and the child can be supervised and made comfortable, an outdoor setting will be used as an alternative if weather and privacy permitting.
- **What if Someone Visited School while Contagious with COVID-19**
 - If someone visited the school while contagious with COVID-19, it is possible that students, staff, and/or guests may have been exposed. A person is contagious with COVID-19 starting two days before they have symptoms (or if asymptomatic, two days before they test positive for SARS-CoV-2) and through the end of their isolation period. Close contacts of a person with COVID-19 would be identified to determine if they must quarantine. This would be immediately communicated to families of anyone affected.
- **What if Someone is a Close Contact of Someone with COVID-19**

In most settings, a close contact for COVID-19 is someone who was within 6 feet of an infectious person a total of 15 minutes over a 24-hour period (for example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes). An infectious person can spread COVID-19 starting 2 days before they have any symptoms or, if they are asymptomatic, 2 days before their sample that tested positive was collected. This definition applies regardless of whether the case or contact was wearing a mask. If identified as a close contact, a person may need to quarantine as outlined below.

In the K-12 indoor classroom setting, or a structured outdoor setting (i.e., holding class outdoors with educator supervision), where masks are worn correctly and consistently, the close contact definition excludes students who were between 3 to 6 feet of an infectious student if both the infectious student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. In other words, in K-12 indoor classrooms and structured outdoor settings, if students are consistently wearing masks and seated or otherwise able to remain at least 3 feet apart, they are NOT considered close contacts.

The definition of a close contact may vary in some situations (e.g., less time spent in close proximity to an unmasked person who is coughing, direct cough/sneeze spray, or other contact that is more intense like sharing drinks, eating utensils, etc.). The ultimate determination of close contact is made by the local health jurisdiction during its investigation; it may delegate this determination if appropriate.

***If your child has had close contact or suspected close contact, please contact our office manager, Amanda Lucero alucero@stcatherineschool.net, as soon as possible. We will provide guidance based on each individual close contact scenario.**

Close Contact Quarantine Protocols

Quarantine is when someone who has been exposed to COVID-19 stays home and away from others for the recommended period of time.

Who Must Quarantine:

Students and staff who come into close contact with someone with COVID-19 must quarantine for at least 5 days (day 0 through day 5) after their last close contact* with a person who has COVID-19 if they are in one of the following groups:

- Ages 18 or older and completed the primary series of recommended vaccine but have not received a recommended booster shot when eligible.
- Those who have received the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine (completing the primary series) over 2 months ago and have not received a recommended booster shot.
- Those who are not vaccinated or have not completed a primary vaccine series.

*For household exposures this would be the last day the person with COVID-19 is considered infectious.

Who Does Not Need to Quarantine:

Students and staff who come into close contact with someone with COVID-19 do not need to quarantine if they:

- Are ages 18 or older and have received all recommended vaccine doses, including Boosters.
- Are ages 5-17 years and completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines.
- Had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days.

Quarantine for Close Contacts

Students or staff must quarantine at home. Quarantine can end after 5 full days beginning after the last close contact (the date of last close contact is considered day 0 if no symptoms have developed and after receiving a negative PCR test result from a test taken no sooner than day 5).

Students and staff must wait to receive a negative PCR test result from a test taken no sooner than day 5 post-exposure and provide the negative test documentation to the school before returning.

Students and staff should continue monitoring for symptoms and wearing a well-fitting mask around others through day 10 (days 6-10) both in and out of school, including during extracurricular and sports activities. During this window of time, these students will need to eat isolated from others.

If an individual or student who is a close contact chooses not to test or does not get tested: 10-day Quarantine: Quarantine should last for 10 days after the last close contact. However, if any COVID-19 symptoms develop during the 10 days, the individual should isolate and get tested.

Livestreaming and Remote Learning Conditions

- If students need to quarantine due to close contact exposure or a confirmed case of COVID-19, teachers will provide [a livestream of instruction via Zoom](#). (*Confidential St. Catherine document*)

link provides Zoom links and passwords for each grade.) Once we receive notification of confirmed close contact exposure or a confirmed case of COVID-19, there will be a 24-hour period before live-streaming will be available. At that time, your child's homeroom teacher will provide a Zoom link (or multiple links if your child has multiple teachers on a given day). There will not be any interaction during this livestream. Teachers will communicate with individual families regarding missed work. If in grades 3-8, teachers will post assignments through Google Classroom. In Preschool and grades K-2, teachers will communicate with families via email for assignments.

- If an entire class has to quarantine due to a DOH-defined outbreak, St. Catherine will provide remote learning during the class quarantine period.
- If transmissions increase significantly, or if staffing shortages result, it may be necessary for specific classes (or an entire school) to go remote for a period of time. While these future circumstances are uncertain, we recommend that families have a plan in place should this occur. In this event, there will be a 2-day lag enabling teachers to shift to remote learning and prepare student materials, and to provide a materials pickup day for families.
- All other non-COVID-19 related sick days and unexcused absences will be treated as typical missed school days. Students will receive information about missed work and instruction from their teacher(s) upon returning to school.

When an individual is in quarantine, they should stay home and away from others except to get medical care. If a student is doing remote learning or livestreaming due to quarantine/outbreak quarantine, they should not go anywhere except home or to seek medical care. Parents/Guardians should notify all care providers (e.g., child care, school) when their child is in quarantine and thus excluded from all settings. Children in quarantine should go or stay home.

Contact Tracing

To aid in the process of contact tracing if necessary, the school is keeping detailed attendance records, seating charts for all classes and specialists' classes, and individual attendance records for Extended Care and all other in-school after school activities. We have protocols and strategies in place to avoid situations that could be defined as close contact within the building or on campus. In the event a close contact situation does occur, families of students of possible contact will be notified ASAP after conferring with the local health jurisdiction for their determination of close contact in the given situation.

All cases of COVID-19 and outbreaks will be reported to the local health jurisdiction per Washington State law (WAC 246-101). In addition, we will cooperate with public health authorities in the investigation of cases and outbreaks that may be associated with our school (WAC 246-101).

Domestic Out-of-State Travel During COVID-19 by planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation (excludes travel by car)

- **If you are fully vaccinated, after you travel:**
 - Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms.
 - You do NOT need to get tested or self-quarantine if you are fully vaccinated or have recovered from COVID-19 in the past 3 months.
 - You should still follow all other travel recommendations.
- **If you are NOT fully vaccinated, before you travel:**
 - Fill out a [pre-absence form](#) (found on our website) and submit to the office at least 2 weeks before absence)

- **Notify our office manager, Amanda Lucero alucero@stcatherineschool.net, of your student's travel dates**
- **If you are NOT fully vaccinated, after you travel:**
 - Get tested with a PCR test 3-5 days after travel AND stay home and self-quarantine for a full 7 days after travel. Send your child's test results to our office manager, Amanda Lucero alucero@stcatherineschool.net. She will notify you when your child is able to return to school.
 - Even if you test negative, stay home and self-quarantine for the full 7 days. You may return to school on the 8th day after travel.
 - If your test is positive, isolate yourself to protect others from getting infected.
 - If you don't get tested, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days after travel.
 - Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms.
 - **Note: Live stream instruction will not be provided for quarantining due to travel.**

International Travel During COVID-19 (per CDC recommendations)

- **If you are NOT fully vaccinated, before you travel:**
 - Fill out a [pre-absence form](#) (found on our website) and submit to the office at least 2 weeks before absence)
 - **Notify our office manager, Amanda Lucero alucero@stcatherineschool.net, of your student's travel dates**
- **Regardless of vaccination status after you travel, after you travel:**
 - Get tested with a COVID-19 PCR test 3-5 days after travel and submit to the school office.
 - Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms.
- **If you are NOT fully vaccinated, after you travel:**
 - **In addition** to the protocols above for testing and self-monitoring regardless of vaccination status:
 - Stay home and self-quarantine for a full 7 days after travel, even if you test negative at 3-5 days.
 - If you don't get tested, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days after travel.

Vaccinations for Eligible Students and Volunteers

In accordance with the Governor's August 18th proclamation (and the DOH and L&I guidelines), all schools must verify vaccination status of staff, eligible students, and volunteers/visitors. **Parents or guardians of children 5 and over are required to confirm their student's COVID-19 vaccination status to our office. For students ages 5-11, this includes completing our Google Form indicating your intent to vaccinate or not vaccinate. As the year progresses, and your child turns 5, or you seek vaccination after December 1, 2021, you will be required to communicate and/or verify their vaccination status to the office.** Please email a photo of your student's vaccination card to Amanda Lucero (alucero@stcatherineschool.net) or complete [this form](#) indicating your student is not currently vaccinated.

Volunteers/visitors will also need to communicate and verify their vaccination when they are in the school building. Due to this protocol, other than staff and students, we will only be allowing vaccination verified adults/volunteers/vendors in the school building. When volunteers are scheduled, we will ask you to send vaccination verification to our office before you come in the building. This will need to be done in advance and will not be available for any drop in scenario. For those volunteers who are not vaccinated, we will be providing opportunities for volunteering outside of the school building when children are not present as we're able.

In alignment with Department of Health guidance, we continue to strongly recommend that all students eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine become fully vaccinated. Current guidance allows that fully vaccinated students will not be required to quarantine following a known exposure, if asymptomatic. We will continue to update families on any changes in the guidance from the state.

Other Mitigation Strategies

Along with wearing face coverings/masks, the DOH guidance includes layered mitigation strategies. Please use the following links to access the most recent guidance documents: [K-12 WA DOH Guidance from December 27](#), [L&I Requirements and Guidance for Preventing COVID-19 from June 30](#), and the [WA DOH K-12 Sports Document](#). Additional updates to guidance and requirements for extra and co-curricular activities are forthcoming. Due to the testing requirements of high-risk activities as identified by the DOH, PE classes will not partake in basketball until further notice. When reading this guidance, please be aware that it will likely change many times throughout the year. In addition, layered mitigation strategies will continue to be implemented as additional safety measures.

Daily Arrival and Departure Proceedings

Our daily drop-off and pickup procedures will be returning to a much more normal state. When you drop off your child in the carpool line, make sure your child(ren) are already masked and ready to exit the car promptly upon arriving. All K-8 families may arrive between 8:10-8:25, and all preschool families may arrive between 8:20-8:30. K-8 students will exit cars and walk directly to their respective homeroom classrooms. Preschool students will be escorted to the preschool classrooms. Students will be counted tardy when the final bell rings at 8:30 (8:40 for preschool students) if they are not in their homeroom.

At the end of the day, all K-8 students will be dismissed at 3:10 (2:25 on Wednesdays), and escorted by their homeroom teacher to the parking lot. Families picking up only one child should begin arriving at 3:13. Parents picking up 2 or more children should begin arriving at 3:18. (2:28 and 2:33 respectively on Wednesdays). If the drive through line is full when you arrive, please park in the parking lot. You may then walk and meet your student at the orange coned area by the crosswalk or your student may come to the crosswalk and head to their car if they see their car. Each class will have a designated area to sit and wait for their carpool. Staff will oversee continued minimum 3-foot distancing between students at this time. If your child(ren) is not ready for you when you are in line, you will be asked to park until they are ready. When you exit the parking lot, please turn right only on 85th to keep the flow of traffic going.

Walkers will be directed to go immediately to their homeroom classrooms upon arrival in the morning. At the end of the day, walkers will be dismissed at the front of the school and will be standing against the brick wall at the south end of the main building. Parents who meet their children to walk home may do so at the front of the building at 3:10 (front of preschool portables for Cubs and Tigers).

Late Arrival Procedure

If your family arrives after 8:30 (8:40 for preschool students), please follow this protocol:

1. Please park on 8th Avenue in front of the main school entrance. (Please DO NOT park directly in front of the houses across the street from the school; park on the side directly in front of the school).
2. Parents must escort their child to the front door and ring the buzzer.
3. Please announce who you are and that you need to sign your child in for the day.
4. A staff member will then meet you at the front door (parents are asked to remain outside of the building).

5. The student will be instructed to walk directly to their classroom (preschool student parents will escort their child to the preschool classroom).
6. The staff member will sign the K-8 student into the building.

Mid-Day Pick Up Procedure

If your student must be picked up early, please contact the office ahead of time. If you are picking your child up for an appointment, please ensure that you arrive with plenty of time to spare. The office will call for the student once you have arrived.

1. Please park on 8th Avenue in front of the main school entrance. (Please DO NOT park directly in front of the houses across the street from the school; park on the side directly in front of the school).
2. Ring the buzzer and announce who you are and that you are there to pick up your child.
3. Parents will be asked to wait outside the front door while a staff member retrieves the student. Please be patient as this may take a few moments.
4. A staff member will escort the student to the front door to meet you, then will sign him/her out of the building.

Classroom Assignments

In order to maintain a minimum 3-foot distance between students in the classroom, it was necessary to relocate most classes to different spaces again. The following chart shows where each grade level will be located for this year:

Cubs	West Preschool Portable
Tigers	East Preschool Portable
K	Main Floor Main Building
1	2 nd Floor Main Building
2	Main Floor Main Building
3	Main Floor Main Building
4	2 nd Floor Main Building
5	2 nd Floor Main Building
6	North Middle School portable
7	2 nd Floor Main Building
8	South Middle School Portable

Thank you for continued vigilance and support.

Best,

Kathy Cox