



Smart, Healthy, Holy:

A Home & School Partnership

Guidelines for Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School Opening August 2020

INTRODUCTION

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic School exists to provide a “holistic Catholic Christian environment that serves the soul, mind and body of each child.” It is understood that all aspects of the child’s being must be attended to as “health” is more than simply the absence of disease. The emergence of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), the resulting pandemic, public health response and closure of our school have presented unique challenges for the upcoming school year. In the absence of medications to treat COVID-19, or a vaccine to protect against it, the strategies used to limit the spread will be a combination of recommended public health measures and modifications in our daily routines. It is important to note that no single action, or set of actions, will completely eliminate the risk of illness, but implementation of several coordinated interventions will allow Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School to return to the “vibrant community of prayer, love and learning” (Bishop Olmstead, video message 06/10/20) it has always been while safeguarding the health and well-being of our students, staff and families.

ASSESSMENT PHASE

Prevalence of COVID-19 in the communities OLMC serves and prevalence of illness within the school community will be the data points used as Health Indicators.

1. Data analysis was done to compare the prevalence of COVID-19 cases in Maricopa County to the geographical areas that make up the OLMC school community (zip code).
 - 460 students reside in 46 Zip Codes
 - 45.3% of the student population (208) represent 3 zip codes:
85282, 85283, 85284 (Tempe cohort)
 - 18.1% of the student population (85) represent 4 zip codes:
85226, 85233, 85202, 85224 (Mesa, Chandler, Gilbert cohort)
 - Information available on the Arizona Department of Health Services (azdhs.gov) for COVID-19 is monitored daily and the reporting of cases by zip code has been compared to the communities Our Lady of Mt. Carmel students reside in.
 - On 07/13/20, 81,216 COVID-19 cases are reported for Maricopa County -
16,301 new cases in 1 week.
2.1% (352 cases) in our Tempe cohort.
3.0% (495 cases) in our Mesa, Chandler, Gilbert cohort.
 - On 07/06/20, 64,915 COVID-19 cases are reported for Maricopa County -
25,289 new cases in 4 weeks.

2.4% (1585 cases) in our Tempe cohort.

2.3% (1480 cases) in our Mesa, Chandler, Gilbert cohort.

- On 06/14/20, 18,692 cases of COVID-19 are reported for Maricopa County- 7,463 new cases.
2.78% (218 cases) in our Tempe cohort.
3.48% (259 cases) in our Mesa, Chandler, Gilbert cohort.
- On 06/04/20, 11,229 COVID-19 cases were reported for Maricopa County.
5.45% (292 cases) in our Tempe cohort.
9.09% (515 cases) in our Mesa, Chandler, Gilbert cohort.

CONCLUSION: The prevalence of COVID-19 in the communities that 65.3% of our students come from has steadily decreased from 14.54% (June 2020) to 5.1% (July 2020).

2. Data analysis of attendance records, specifically absences due to illness, for the school years 2018-19 and 2019-20 have been done to determine patterns of seasonal illness.
3. The Centers for Disease Control has published the Schools Decision Tree to guide reopening.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools-decision-tool.html>
 - a. When considering the attributes of the community, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School is able to answer “Yes” to all questions posed on the Decision Tree.

ACTION PLAN

1. Those practices identified by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and public health officials as being “best practices” for limiting the spread of illness, and based on what is reasonable, practical, and feasible for our community, will be implemented in a “phased in” approach.
2. Three practices have been identified as being vitally important in infection control: **Hand-washing, physical distancing, and limiting contact with those who are sick.** These three actions will be the basis of our plan.
3. Enhanced cleaning and disinfection of classrooms, restrooms, common areas and high-touch surfaces, using EPA approved products will be implemented and continue as indicated throughout the school year. This will be done throughout the day and nightly.

4. Upgrades to the HVAC systems include needlepoint bipolar ionization (NPBI), which have had up to a 99.4% rate of reduction for COVID-19. Additionally, new filters have been installed, and all coils have been sanitized and treated.
5. There will be an increased emphasis on hand hygiene and handwashing throughout the school year. Time and supplies will be allotted to facilitate more frequent and deliberate washing of hands among students, staff and visitors.

6. **Wearing of Masks**

- a. Cloth face coverings are barriers which protect others if the wearer is infected with COVID-19. Additionally, cloth face masks may offer some level of protection for the wearer. There is increasing evidence that the universal wearing of face masks can decrease the spread of respiratory illness.
- b. Although ideal, mask wearing by everyone, everyday, all day, may not be possible.
- c. Older students (5th grade & up) should have a mask available to wear, on campus when physical distancing is not possible, or when a teacher requests them to put on a mask.
 - Face coverings must be cloth and withstand daily laundering
 - Face coverings must be solid colored and free of patterns, graphics and text
 - Students must be able to independently apply and remove their own face covering and understand how to store their mask (in a sealed plastic bag).
 - Students should have 2 face coverings in the event of one becoming soiled.
- d. Parents may choose to have their student (any age) wear a face covering. If a parent chooses this, the parent must have the child practice wearing the mask for extended periods of time. Put the mask on at 8:15am when school begins, remove it for a 20 minute lunch and then wear the mask for 5 days. All parents should follow CDC guidelines:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings>.
- e. Parents are asked to notify the School Nurse if their child has a medical condition which precludes mask wearing.

7. **Home and School Bond**

- a. We share a Home and School bond. We ask that you do your part at home to keep your family healthy as we will do our part as a faculty to keep ourselves healthy, especially the two weeks leading up to school. Be cognizant of where you are going and avoid large crowds and gathering.

- i. *Please note if a parent is diagnosed with COVID-19 their child/children will need to quarantine for 14 days from the time the person with COVID begins their home isolation (Date person with COVID-19 began home isolation + 14 days=end of quarantine).*
- ii. *If a student or staff member tests positive, we will notify the school community and follow the Maricopa County of Health Department's most current procedures.*

8. Staff and students showing signs of illness must STAY HOME.

The School Nurse is the designated point of contact for Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School at the School Nurse can be reached at (480) 967-5567 X1

PHASES 1-3:

Phase 1 - Specific Actions (August 17, 2020)

- a. Morning Care will be held in McCready Hall to allow students more space to spread out.
- b. Kindergarten and preschool parents ONLY may accompany children to areas outside of classrooms, each morning. Parents must wear a mask to be allowed onto campus. Adults should practice/model recommended physical distancing while waiting with children. **Parents may not enter the classrooms/buildings.** Parents will leave the campus immediately after the child enters the building on the East side behind McCready by the field.
- c. When lining up/waiting in line, students need to maintain space between themselves and others.
- d. The students will be dismissed from Morning Care at 7:50 and will go to their classrooms.
- e. We will begin a “kiss and go” drop off. Only parents of kindergarten students and preschool students may park and walk their child to the class. Parents must not enter the buildings and must leave on the east side of the buildings. The children will enter the campus through assigned gates. A map explaining the drop off and a video will be sent home prior to the commencement of school.
- f. A new dismissal process will also occur. More information will come pertaining to this process too. There will be a staggered dismissal process.

- g. **Cohorting**
- Each classroom will be treated as a “homeroom”. Students will stay with classmates from their homeroom, as much as possible.
 - Classrooms will be configured to allow as much space as possible between desks/students and teachers.
 - Students will sit in assigned seats.
 - There will be no mixing of classes (i.e. no “buddies”).
 - Special teachers will come to the classroom rather than students going to other classrooms.
 - There will be no sharing of objects, each student will have his/her own supplies.
- h. **Resting:** Will be done at desks; “nap-time” items should not be brought to school.
- i. **Recess:** Outdoor recess will continue. Students are encouraged to play games which do not involve physical contact. For morning recesses, students will be assigned to a designated area to allow for a limited number of students in any one location. An additional lunch period has been added to allow for the maintenance of established “cohorting”.
- j. Each student should have his/her own **water bottle**. Bottles may be refilled using the bottle filling option on drinking fountains. Students should not drink directly from the fountain. There will be sanitizer located near the water fountain and the children will be taught when and how to use it properly.
- k. **Lunch:** To decrease the number of students at each lunch table and in McCready Hall at the same time, a lunch period has been added. Hot lunch will continue. Students will be served individually. There will not be a communal condiment/salad bar.
- l. **Mass:** Students in Grades K - 3 will view Mass via livestream. Students in Grades 4 - 8 will attend Mass, seating will be according to a chart which allows for physical distancing. Families attending Mass may not sit with their child’s class; the student may sit with his/her family in a separate pew distanced from other classes. If the family is late for Mass the student will not leave the class seating to sit with the family. Families must follow the current guidelines for participation in the Mass.
- m. **Sports:** Suspended for fall season; await CYAA guidance.
- n. **Field Trips:** No off-campus field trips.

- o. **Volunteers/Visitors:** No volunteers/visitors permitted in classrooms at this time.
- p. Students going to **Kid's Club** after school will go directly there after school; younger students will be in McCready Hall, older students will be in the Library. Snacks will be served individually, no "family dining".

ILLNESS SURVEILLANCE

1. Home is the first point of screening for illness. All members of the OLMC school community are expected to monitor for signs of illness and STAY HOME if they are sick.
 - This would include checking for fever (temperature greater than 99.9°) and/or symptoms like cough, congestion, runny nose, sore throat, diarrhea, vomiting, or other indications of illness, prior to coming to school.
 - It is understood that when a parent, or designated caretaker, brings a child to school, they are assuring the child is well and fit for school.
 - A parent/caregiver who is not able to screen their child prior to bringing to school, may request the School Nurse perform the assessment. Students needing to be screened are to be brought to a designated area for screening. A parent/caregiver will need to wait with the student until the student is cleared.
 - According to the CDC, children may be less likely to have a fever and may be less likely to have a fever as an initial symptom, thus the absence of fever is not a reliable indicator.
2. Daily health screening will be in place for Phase 1.
 - Teachers and staff will be screened each morning for symptoms of illness in accordance with established protocols.
 - Daily "rounds" will be done by the School Nurse. Screening, which may include temperature checks of students, will be done by random sampling of 20% of students in attendance.
 - Increased surveillance measures will be enacted when warranted based on the monitoring of community Health Indicators.
3. To control the spread of illness, during times of increased illness in the OLMC school community, Phase 1 restrictions may be reinstated.

MANAGEMENT OF ILLNESS

1. Families/staff should self-report to the School Nurse if they or their student have symptoms of COVID-19, a positive test for COVID-19, or through contact tracing, were exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.

2. In accordance with state and local laws and regulations, the School Nurse and Administration will notify school families if there is an exposure at school while maintaining confidentiality.
3. The School Nurse will notify local health officials of any case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with state and local laws and regulations.
4. Care of ill students and staff will be guided by **Guidelines for Infection Surveillance and Control During 2020 Pandemic (COVID) for Healthcare Staff**.
5. Consideration for return to school/work will be in accordance with Maricopa County Department of Public Health Guidelines:
<https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/58863/Home-Isolation-Guidelines>

Phase 2 - Relaxing of some restrictions

- a. Lifting of restrictions in Phase 1 will be based on data from primary Health Indicators and in accordance with public health recommendations.
- b. Expanding the interaction of cohorts (“homerooms”) while continuing to maintain increased handwashing, physical distancing and separation from those who are sick will be the focus.
 - Students will be able to go to other classrooms for “specials”
 - All students will be able to go to the church for Mass
- c. **Volunteers/visitors will be allowed. All volunteers will need to have completed their Safe Environment Training and will be screened for illness when arriving on campus. Volunteers may not go to classrooms without approval.**
- d. Families attending Mass may not sit with their child’s class; the student may sit with his/her family in a separate pew. Families must follow the current guidelines for participation in the Mass.
- e. After School clubs (Chess Club, Little Flowers, Little Women, Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, etc.) allowed. Clubs must maintain small groups and practice recommended public health guidelines.

Phase 3 - Lifting of restrictions

1. Hand hygiene and frequent cleaning will still be practiced.
2. Community building activities will resume during this phase.

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