



Smart, Healthy, Holy: A Home & School Partnership

OLMC Back-to-School FAQ

How many students will be in my child's classroom?

We are going to cap our enrollment at 25 per classroom. We will waitlist any additional students. Current class sizes are between 18-25.

Will the children be spaced 6 feet apart?

Yes, we are fortunate to have large classroom sizes. We have removed additional furniture for Phase I and we will place the desks in staggered rows and columns. We will maximize our floor space and the students will be more than 6 feet apart to start the year in phase 1.

How are you going to handle having the children attend Mass?

We will rotate one grade per week. The additional classes will watch Mass live streamed in their classroom.

What can be on the mask?

Masks cannot have words on them and they must be school appropriate.

When do students have to wear masks?

Students **MUST** wear masks:

- for Drop-Off
- when they are within 6 feet of others in the classrooms
- when they go to the restroom
- when a teacher requests them to put on a mask
- for Dismissal and Pick-Up

Students can have mask breaks:

- when they are physically distanced more than 6 ft from others
- when they are at recess
- when they are at lunch

They will also have a face shield they can use.

Will my child be testing the first two weeks of school?

We will be doing some assessment with the students but these are short assessments. The Star Math Assessment takes approximately 30 to 40 minutes and the Star Reading Assessment is shorter. The DIBELS testing for grades kinder through third (and sporadically 4th through 6th) is also a short assessment. The teachers will be using additional formal and informal assessments in the classroom. The children will be given academic instruction during this time. They will not be “over tested”. Some of these assessments will be verbal such as having the children read passages aloud. They may not even know we are assessing them!

How will you prepare children to not share food at lunch?

We have always impressed on the children to not share food. We will emphasize the rationale: reducing spread of germs and kids eating what their parents packed or bought for them. With our Home and School partnership, this is something we are asking you to begin addressing prior to sending you child/children back to school. We will reiterate this at school, but this needs to come from home too. We are a partnership and we want to show the children we are on the same page.

What if we need a Chromebook or laptop for at home Real Time Virtual Learning ?

A sign up for Real Time Virtual Learning will be emailed on July 20th. All students in 5th-8th grade will have Chromebooks, whether they are attending class virtually or in-person. In the sign-up, you can note that you need a Chromebook. Details for Chromebook checkout will be sent later.

What if we signed up for Real Time Virtual Learning but change our mind and want to send our children to in-person school?

We believe that your children will learn more and benefit socially and emotionally from being at school, so when you are comfortable sending them, we want them here. However, we will have to make some adjustments, so you must give 24 hours notice so the teacher may prepare a desk and supplies for the student.

How do we know that other OLMC families are being careful?

OLMC is special because of the community. Our Home and School bond is one of our strongest traits. No one wants to become ill and we want our children to return to campus in a safe and healthy environment. We have to trust that we are all being careful as we want to create a healthy environment upon return. Especially once we

reach August, we ask that all families take extra precautions by knowing what environments your child is visiting and at what level of risk, so that we can all arrive back to school healthy and ready to go.

What if I'm not sure if my child is sick?

Begin by following the [Daily Screening Tool](#) from Nurse David. We will include it in the Orientation paperwork so you may hang it on your fridge and refer to it before loading the children in the car for school in the morning. If you are unsure, Nurse David will set up a Nurse's Station in the parking lot in the morning. You may park your car and walk your child up for Nurse David to screen him/her. You must wait with your child as Nurse David determines his/her school readiness.

What if a child is sick in my child's class?

While it is impossible to know if we will experience any COVID infections in our School, we are prepared to quickly mitigate the impact and spread of any infection. Our Home and School Partnership will allow us to identify possible or real infections as early as possible.

Should a student test positive for COVID, we will work with public health officials from Maricopa County Department of Public Health to implement the most current actions to prevent the spread of illness. The school community will be notified that we have a case in our community and which classes may have had contact with that particular person. We will not release the individual names and personal identifiers of any person with illness, in accordance with privacy laws. Public health officials ("Contact Tracers") will notify those who need to begin quarantine or be tested. Students who need to stay home may access school work on the virtual platform. Students may return to school according to most current public health guidelines.

<https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/58863/Home-Isolation-Guidelines>

What if my student is sick with something other than COVID?

Students who are diagnosed, by a medical provider, with things like pink eye, ear infections, strep throat, minor skin infections, or other bacterial infections may return to school once they have begun antibiotics and been fever free for 24 hours without medication.

**What if a parent or someone living in the same household is COVID positive?
What are the protocols for this type of scenario?**

If someone in the home is diagnosed with COVID, all those living in the household need to quarantine for 14 days from the time the ill person begins their isolation. Students who need to quarantine because a person in the home is sick would be able to access virtual learning.

When will Phase 1 be over?

It is impossible to know when we can safely move to Phase 2, but we will move to phase 2 when we are confident that it is safe to do so.

Why aren't all students wearing masks?

We spent considerable time researching the pros and cons of the students wearing masks. The goal of masks is to limit the spread of the virus, which we will accomplish through physical distancing, hand hygiene, and cohorting. Students, especially younger students, will struggle to properly wear their mask all day, which could result in more face touching, contamination and other skin infections. Also, long term wearing of facial coverings (8 hours/day, 5days/week) may aggravate asthma, cause headaches and contribute to dehydration as children don't want to remove their masks to drink water. In the end, the students being able to see each others' faces, breathe more easily, and avoid touching their faces was most persuasive and we will limit the spread of virus with the other precautionary measures.

When students are unable to distance, we will ask the older students (5th-8th grade) to put on a mask. Teachers will also wear a mask whenever in close contact with a student or another staff person.

We have also upgraded the HVAC systems on the Campus so that they more efficiently eliminate pathogens and particles and neutralize COVID-19. Additionally, we will be cleaning throughout the day and every night after school.

What if I want my child to wear a mask all day?

You are more than welcome to have your child wear a mask all day. Please take the time to build this into your child's routine before school starts. Try to build up to a full school day where they can place their own mask on at 8:15 AM, take it off for 20 minutes for lunch, and then put it on until 3:00 PM. It is your responsibility to discuss with your child why he/she must wear it all day. One of the most important aspects of

wearing a mask is the ability of a child to manage it him/herself. This means they understand how to put it on, take it off and store the mask properly. Please also discuss with your child the need to monitor themselves for feelings of discomfort which would indicate they need a “mask break”. The teachers and staff will not turn this into a disciplinary issue at school. If your child takes his/her own mask off during school, this is an issue between the parent and student. Please be aware that there are children in our community who, for medical reasons, cannot wear a mask.

Why aren't school personnel taking all of the students' temperatures every day?

We are asking all of the parents to check their children's temperatures every morning before school as part of a more thorough screening. However, fever is just one symptom of COVID-19 and it is not a reliable indicator- depending on the study somewhere between 20-50% of patients that tested positive, never had a fever. That is why it is so important for parents to run through a more complete screening of their children each morning. Parents have the ability to see how their child is doing overall and also take their temperature, giving a much better picture than a temperature check alone. If parents aren't sure and want a professional opinion, Nurse David will have a pop-up tent in the parking lot where she can give the children a screening. When a parent sends their child to school, it is with their assurance that they believe their child is healthy.

How will I drop off my Kindergartner safely if I can't walk her in?

Drop-off and pick-up will be adjusted to use the “Yellow Brick Road” in front of the school. For pick-up, we will include a Family Name Placard to place in your car window so that school staff can have your children ready for you when you pull up. A detailed map will be included in the Orientation paperwork and a [video](#) will show how both procedures will work.

What about carpooling?

If you are carpooling with family or friends that you have been safe with during this time, it is okay to carpool. You will need to have the name placard for that family so that the school knows which children are going in the car. We request that during the first phase of our Opening, if you do carpool please stay with the same carpool cohort.

Will any of this affect our STOs?

CEA and other STOs have stated that both in person and virtual classrooms in Catholic schools will continue to qualify for the awarded scholarships. However, if students withdraw to attend public or charter schools, even temporarily in the fall, the parents will need to reapply for STOs when they plan on returning to the Catholic School.

I still want more information. With conflicting reports available, where can I find more information about schools opening safely?

We relied more heavily for guidance on reports from groups of experts, like the [CDC](#) and the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), than on individual reports. Be careful with unverified stories on social media. With a new virus, we know that even information from experts will change and be updated, and we will update our plans accordingly. As you are making the decision for your children, we also encourage you to consult their pediatrician, who can address specific concerns you may have for your children.

If you have any other questions for us, please call or email.