



Dear St. James Families,

Now that you all have had a chance to read our *“Return to School”* plan, and hopefully had time to digest its information, I wanted to reach out to you to share some additional information that was not presented in the plan that you received.

First, please know that what you viewed was a summary of a much longer and more detailed document that Erie Catholic and the six campus Principals have been working on. That document was our attempt to share information with all of our families from the system-level perspective. Once that document is complete, it will be posted to our website.

As we move forward with our re-opening, please know that all of decision making has been done following the guidelines of reputable agencies; specifically the Centers for Disease Control, the Department of Health, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Our ultimate goal is to not only ensure that your children receive a high-quality faith-based education, but also to ensure the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff. We have established protocols to help mitigate the spread of the virus. Recently I submitted a Safety Grant to help off-set the incurred expenses related to COVID-19.

Each classroom will look a little different depending on the number of students. Mr. Blais and I are working together to determine the best way to utilize the space in our classrooms. We are applying “social distancing” guidelines to the extent that is logistically feasible.

The PA DOH face covering order has a lot of guidance for schools, and we will be following that guidance. The order is also very clear that face coverings are not necessarily worn “at all times”, and it provides for when face coverings may be taken off each day, according to the direction of the teacher and principal.

Your children will still have their “specials” classes, though they may look a little different than they have in the past. Your children will still have a recess time. Again, it may look a little different, but it will be scheduled into your child’s day. With the help of Fr. McCormick, I am hopeful that we will still have weekly Masses. I am still working on how “Lunch” will look. This is a school-level decision. I am hopeful that due to our smaller class sizes; that we will be able to have most, if not all of our classes eating in the cafeteria following a staggered lunch schedule.

To my Preschool parents: I am meeting with the Preschool teachers later this week. You will receive specific information pertaining to our youngest learners after that meeting. I know that Preschool was not addressed specifically in the *“Return to School”* plan. It was not an oversight; it was only because the needs of our “littles” are different than our other learners.

During these uncertain times, I know that there are a lot of unanswered questions. I am asking that you reach out to me personally and I will be happy to answer any questions that you may have to the best of my ability. I

am also asking that you allow some *Grace* into your daily lives: grace for me as well as for yourselves. We are stronger if we work together!

Sincerely in Christ,

*Mrs. Gina M. Brennan*

Mrs. Gina M. Brennan

Principal,

St. James School