



March 5, 2020

Dear Parents,

I am writing to provide you with another update you on recent developments concerning the COVID-19 coronavirus. Over the past several days, I, along with the school nursing staff and the Admissions & Communications Office, have participated in calls with the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Paterson and the Governor of New Jersey as well as the New Jersey Department of Health, and the New Jersey Department of Education. Based on these calls and ongoing preparations we have been making, I want to share the following with you:

- The faculty and staff continue to work with our students to emphasize proper hygiene, especially washing hands. The School Nurse has visited all classrooms and grades, providing instruction on proper hand washing to all students.
- We are continuing to ask parents not to send a sick child to school.
- We continue disinfectant and sanitizing practices on a daily basis, with common areas and high touch areas being cleaned several times during the day.
- At this time, we are asking all members of the St. Patrick School community to volunteer information to the School Nurse at schoolnurse@st-pats.org regarding any current travel outside of the U.S.
- We will monitor all school field trips set to take place over the next few weeks and months and will make determinations about them on a case-by-case basis as we have more information.
- We would like all families to prepare for the possibility that school could close and that if they do close, there may not be a lot of forewarning.
- The faculty is preparing to provide instruction to students in a digital or electronic format. We are fortunate that our online classroom environment, Google Classroom, is web-based and allows us to communicate with learners remotely. If access to the internet and a device is a hardship for your family, please contact your child's homeroom teacher immediately. Please note that this instruction will not be review work but a continuation of current curriculum.
- If school is forced to close, we will do the best we can to provide as much instruction and as many learning resources as possible to students. While the situation will not be the same as being in school, we will make the best of the situation. The faculty at all grade levels and in all departments, including specials such as Spanish, Music and Art, have been working hard to plan for a potential closure of school.
- As many parents are already aware, all registered students at St. Patrick School have been assigned an email address for access to digital learning. Your child's teacher may contact you in the near future with information to preemptively prepare for this transition.
- Most important is that we have not yet received direction from the Department of Education on how to manage a prolonged closure of school and whether the state will be flexible or suspend the 180-day school year requirement. We know that providing work for our students to do at home is the best way to stay on task and to help provide some sort of normalcy while students are not in the school building.

With so much changing information being shared in the open, it is understandable that students may feel worried or frightened about this health issue. Please use the resources below for assistance in understanding the health issue and communicating with your child(ren). As always, please contact your child's teacher if the school can help in any way.

<https://healthykidshappykids.com/2020/02/27/coronavirus-covid-19/>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>



Thank you for remaining flexible, patient and calm as we navigate this unusual set of circumstances. The purpose of my letter is to communicate and prepare everyone as best we can. We do ask that parents please refrain from contacting the school about the medical status of others. Everyone, especially your child, has a right to their medical privacy. We are trying our best to balance those privacy rights while being transparent for the greater good of our school community.

I will update you with additional information if or when it becomes available.

Blessings,

Christine Ross, Ed. D
Principal

