PRE-KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 8 2021 – 2022 School Year

Catholic Academy of Niagara Falls

1055 N. Military Road

Niagara Falls, N.Y. 14304

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\*\*\*\*\* Due to the constant changing in information and guidelines, questions concerning quarantine, isolation, tracing, etc are referred to the Niagara County Health Department at 716-439-7430.

OPTION A

**IN-HOUSE FULL POPULATION**

Catholic Academy of NF is a small, private Catholic School that can accommodate our entire school population five days a week on our existing campus by utilizing all classrooms and instruction areas. Instruction will be delivered in person each day.

OPTION B

**IF THE STATE OR THE DOH MANDATES REMOTE LEARNING ONLY**

This model will be used only if mandated by the state due to the pandemic or a DOH mandate for a particular class due to exposure. Virtual learning will be required only if in-house schooling is not allowed.

**CLASSROOMS**

All unnecessary furniture has been removed and desks have been placed so that students can be seated three feet apart from each other. In the case that this was not possible, classes have been split and alternate classrooms will be used. Small groups will allow for in person instruction Monday through Friday. Both staircases will be used to prohibit more than one class moving up/down at a time. Larger classes will be split for “specials” classes so that social distancing can be maintained. Technology classes will be taught in Middle School classrooms on individually assigned devices. Windows will be cracked open for ventilation when possible.

**CAFETERIA**

Pre-Kindergarten classes will eat lunch in their classrooms, allowing four separate lunch periods to be held with ample time for sanitizing between lunch periods.

State restaurant guidelines such as single use condiments and cleaning of surfaces after each diner will be achieved.

Students will sanitize hands before entering and upon leaving the cafeteria.

Students will be separated by 3 feet while waiting in the lunch line.

Students will sit in assigned seats in the cafeteria, separated by 3 feet.

All cafeteria staff and monitors will wear masks and gloves while in the cafeteria.

All tables, benches and serving lines will be disinfected between lunch periods.

Parents may not drop off student lunches during the school day. If a student forgets their lunch from home, students will be provided with a school lunch.

Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles from home labeled with their name.

All snacks will be individually packaged. Sharing of food and beverages will not be allowed.

**GYMNASIUM AND CHURCH BUILDING**

Students will wear gym clothes on gym days and stay in them throughout the day. Students will remain 3 feet apart unless the activity requires a shorter distance.

When in the Church building, students and staff will be physically distanced according to church markings and will wear acceptable face coverings.

**OUTDOOR PLAY SPACE**

When used, outdoor play spaces will be used and sanitized in compliance with existing NYSDOH guidelines.

**SPACES WHERE OTHER GROUPS CONGREGATE**

No other groups use our school facility except for school-sponsored events at which 3 feet of physical spacing will be achieved as well as limited door usage and one-way directional signs for entering and exiting.

**ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Bus students will enter and be checked through Door #1 and Drop-offs will enter through Door #6 and be checked by staff before heading to homeroom.

Bus students will be dismissed at Door #1 and Pick-ups will be dismissed by grade level at Door #6

Pre-K students will arrive and dismiss at Door # 2 and Door #3.

Before and After-school care students will be assigned to a specific room by cohorts. All social distancing, PPE usage and cleaning and disinfection requirements will be followed.

**PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

All faculty, staff and students have been informed to wear masks and the school has developed protocols for wearing masks throughout the school day in accordance with public health guidelines. Students are responsible for providing their own mask. School will have a supply of disposable masks for students who forget. Students will not be allowed in school for the day if they do not wear a mask. Students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering, including students where such coverings would impair their physical health or mental health, are not subject to the required use of a face mask. Parents must provide a medical note from their pediatrician.

**OTHER PPE REQUIREMENTS**

School nurse, kitchen and custodial staff will follow any special PPE requirements mandated for these individuals.

**DISINFECTION**

Hand sanitizers are available at the entrances to the building, classrooms and cafeteria. Disposable wipes or other acceptable cleaners are available in all bathrooms, classrooms and other shared facilities. Students, faculty and staff are reminded to wash hands frequently and public, corridor and office spaces and their bathrooms are cleaned in accordance with the State’s general guidelines for businesses.

**STAFFING**

Faculty, students and staff have been explicitly instructed not to come to work or leave their rooms if they are experiencing COVID-like symptoms.

Those who have higher likelihood of serious illness from COVID-19 are advised to consider whether or not they wish to remain working in their current position.

**ACCESS**

Effective for 90 days: All faculty/staff must show proof of vaccination or provide weekly Covid test results.

**TRANSPORTATION**

The Niagara Falls Public School District and Niagara Wheatfield Central School District will continue to provide transportation to and from school for students who qualify. They are subject to all Health Department and State guidelines in reference to social distancing and sanitizing.

All students are required to wear a mask while on the school bus and maintain appropriate social distancing unless they are members of the same household.

**USE OF FACILITIES OUTSIDE OF THE SCHOOL DAY**

The building is only used by school organizations. All will follow cleaning protocols used by the school.

**MENTAL HEALTH, BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS**

Services will be provided both in school and to our families at home, by our School Social Worker.

Staff, parents and students will be educated on symptoms that identify mental health needs.

Social-emotional learning will be promoted.

A positive and safe school environment will be encouraged.

Positive behaviors and decision-making will be reinforced.

Good physical health will be encouraged.

Faculty, staff and parents will be encouraged to watch for certain behaviors that indicate need for mental or emotional support.

**MONITORING THE HEALTH OF FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS**

The school has a plan for regular monitoring of health of students, faculty and staff as well as safeguards should one become sick or symptomatic at school.

*We ask parents to absolutely keep their child home if they are sick in any way*. COVID-19 symptoms can be mild and we cannot risk exposing our students and staff to the virus. If a child shows any symptoms, we ask that they are assessed by a doctor. Parents will need to screen students at home before getting on the bus.

Staff and visitors to the building will complete a health check questionnaire before entering the building.

All faculty/staff are required to have a daily temperature check upon entering the school building. Anyone with a temperature of 100 or higher will not be allowed to attend school.

Students identified with COVID symptoms during the school day will be isolated in a designated room while waiting for pick-up.

**APPOINTMENT OF A COVID-19 COORDINATOR**

The Principal/Assistant Principal will serve as the Coordinator and she will be the liaison with the coordinators of the other Diocesan schools who will convene in the Fall if needed and will coordinate as needed with State and Regional Public Health Officials.

**PROTOCOL FOR COLLECTING INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19 CASES**

The school has developed a protocol indicating that faculty, students, and staff have been asked to inform the Coordinator immediately that they are experiencing possible COVID-19 symptoms, as well as a protocol for having symptomatic students tested.

Local tracing agencies will be contacted to help with the tracing process.

**CONTAINMENT**

The school has a procedure in place consistent with applicable health guidelines concerning containment for students or employees who test positive for COVID-19.

Students or employees identified with COVID symptoms during the school day will be isolated in a designated room while waiting for pickup. All areas used by them must be closed until cleaning and disinfection has taken place according to CDC guidelines.

They will need a note to return following evaluation form a health care provider, a negative COVID-19 test result and symptom resolution and release from isolation.

**CONTACT TRACING**

Local and state government agencies as well as the Diocesan Superintendent and Department of Public Health will be informed of any positive COVID-19 test result including students, faculty, staff and visitors. Plans to support the local health department in tracing all contact of the individual to conduct contact tracing will be in accordance with the protocols, training and tools provided through the NYS Contact Tracing Program. Confidentiality will be maintained as required. Isolation and quarantine efforts will be followed.

**SHUTTING DOWN IF A SERIOUS OUTBREAK OCCURS**

If a serious outbreak occurs at the school or in the community that requires shutdown, we will follow the protocol to notify our families, local public school districts, local government officials and local Department of Public Health.

**SHUTTING DOWN IF MANDATED BY THE GOVERNOR**

The school will follow the instructions of the Governor if he determines that a statewide shutdown is required.

**PLAN FOR CONTINUATION OF PROGRAM IF SCHOOL IS SHUTDOWN**

The school will continue to provide instruction online if a shutdown occurs as stated in Option B above.

Teachers will be trained throughout the year in Google classroom and other platforms needed for instruction.

Zoom or Google Meet will be used for classroom meetings with students.

All students will have a Google e-mail and will have access to Google platforms as well.

Students will have access to devices that they are assigned when in school if they do not have one available at home.

Digital platforms will be provided for most of our textbooks.

**SAFETY DRILLS**

Safety drills will still be conducted at Catholic Academy.

These drills include fire and evacuation drills. Conducting lock down drills in the classroom will occur maintaining social distancing and using face coverings. These drills will occur without “hiding”/”sheltering” but explained to the students.

**CLOSING STATEMENT**

Catholic Academy’s priority is to adhere to the safety guidelines that the CDC, DOH, NYS Department of Education and the Diocese of Buffalo have recommended.

This document may be modified due to changes made by the New York State Department of Health, New York State Governor’s Office or New York State Department of Education.