

# St. Therese School

## Comprehensive Catholic Distance Learning Plan

### 2020-2021

#### Objectives

- Shifting from “Emergency Remote Learning” to “Comprehensive Catholic Distance Learning”.
- Providing robust instruction, feedback and live check-ins to deliver a rigorous quality Catholic education with support for all learners.
- Focusing on social-emotional learning and a system of support for students and families.
- Allocating funding to train caring adults at school, purchase new digital curriculum, and new devices to enhance the distance learning experience.
- Strengthening our foundation in faith and continuing our mission as a Catholic school.

#### Materials

- Families at home are encouraged to help their children set up a classroom space where they can organize themselves, their materials and their work. For example, a table or desk that can be kept free of clutter, a place for their folders, workbooks, and paper/pencils/tablet. Reduce distractions in the environment as much as possible to promote focus and concentration. Students should begin their day with a healthy breakfast, make their bed, get dressed and come to their morning class meeting ready to learn.
- iPads and Chromebooks will be available for check out to any student that needs a device. All students must adhere to the Technology Use Agreement.
- Families should conduct an assessment of their technology access, speed, and available devices to determine whether they can provide a consistent and successful internet connection. Troubleshooting questions can be directed to Mrs. El Youssef, your Principal.
- The school will host a family drive-thru every 2 weeks as needed to pick up instructional materials via a car line. These will include reading materials, supplies for projects, workbook pages or photocopies, etc. that will help provide students with “offline” instructional materials and provide an opportunity for students to turn in any class work that is not submitted digitally.

## Schedule

- Instruction will occur 5 days a week. Friday afternoons will be designated for catch up/extension work and provide teachers time for professional development.
- Families should expect their child(ren) to follow a regular, yet flexible school schedule routine over the course of each day, Monday-Friday. This schedule may include dedicated work periods like core instruction, specialists, meal/physical activity breaks, and downtime opportunities.
- A weekly schedule will be shared with parents outlining synchronous learning
  - This schedule will outline when students will need to log on at specific times so you may plan your week around these times and commitments.
- A daily agenda will be shared each morning, with details of the synchronous and asynchronous schedule.
  - This will provide a user-friendly breakdown of the assignments/expectations for the day.
- Weekly announcements and teacher/administration videos or letters will be emailed and posted to SchoolSpeak (with links provided through Google Classroom).

## Synchronous Instruction

- Synchronous instruction = instruction that happens LIVE and in real-time. This can be whole class or small group.
- Students will have daily interaction with one or more caring adults at school, who will guide their full educational experience.
- Each homeroom will host at least one synchronous session each morning, Monday through Friday. Each synchronous session will focus on one or more of the following formats:
  - Class meeting: general check-in, review assignments for the day, answer questions from the day before, student sharing.
  - Live instruction: an instructional lesson that is interactive.
  - Social Emotional Learning (SEL): Teachers will present lessons following our SEL curriculum. This might include community building activities, mindfulness activities, and games to encourage interactions.
  - Break-out Rooms/Small Group Instruction: Caring adults at school will help monitor small group sessions during synchronous instruction.
- Special meetings: May include instructional themes (such as a virtual field

trip), buddy class meetings, family group meetings, guest speakers, prayer services, parent check ins, etc.

- Instruction may be whole group, small group or individual based on students' needs/assignments for the day.
- Students must adhere to our Digital Citizenship Code of Conduct for participation and follow the guidelines set forth in the Student/Parent handbook.

## **Asynchronous Instruction**

- Asynchronous Instruction = instruction that is pre-recorded, allowing students to watch, pause, and replay as often as is necessary for understanding.
- While some learning will be synchronous (live at a scheduled time), many of the required assignments will be delivered asynchronously (not time bound). This instruction will include flexibility and autonomy for students to complete the required assignments on their own schedule to meet the needs of unique family situations while at home.
- Each day there will be posted assignments and activities available for the students on Google Classroom with teacher contact time.
- Instructional expectations and class work will follow Archdiocesan time allotments for each subject area.
  - Live meetings and instructional videos are typically scheduled for 30-45 min.
  - Any work a student is expected to accomplish for the day will be built into the time allotted for that subject area. Exceptions would include independent reading time, physical activity ("recess"), extra math practice for reinforcement of skills learned, and an occasional project or performance assessment that may require some additional time to collaborate with a peer or create a presentation.
- Generally, there will be one lesson/activity per subject area per day. Instruction will be delivered through one or more of the following formats:
  - Pre-recorded instructional video of the child's teacher presenting a full lesson for viewing.
  - Pre-recorded narration or video in picture of the child's teacher explaining the directions for an assignment of activity.
  - A link to a website or video and activity/classwork assigned to be completed by the student.
- Time will be built into the schedule on Friday afternoons for students to complete any assignments that needed more time to complete. Optional extension/enrichment assignments will be offered for students who are caught up and ready for additional practice.

## **Eagle Enrichment**

- St. Therese will provide enrichment activities for all students through distance learning.
- Instructional delivery will follow the same guidelines as above, with a mix of live synchronous instruction, pre-recorded videos, and activities that can be done at home and offline.
- PE classes will be offered throughout the week in a combination of live synchronous classes and pre-recorded asynchronous videos for instruction.
- Each caring adult at St. Therese will be responsible for creating engaging enrichment activities and challenges to infuse fun into our daily learning, and teach important skills like sewing, drawing, painting, mindfulness, and sports.
- Any caring adult who has an idea for our Eagle Enrichment should contact Mrs. El Youssef to learn how you can participate.

## **Social-Emotional Learning**

- Caring adults at school will offer Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in an ongoing manner for ALL students.
- Caring adults will check in with families individually throughout the distance learning experience.
- Caring adults will assist as engagement coaches to support students.
- Virtual assemblies, videos, peer collaborations, spirit days, and other creative methods for SEL support will be designed to enhance the student experience.
- Teachers will host individual Zoom conferences at the start of the school year with each family to introduce themselves to your child, answer questions you have, look at the year ahead, and build a relationship for learning.
- Family engagement nights, videos, guides, and other supports will be available for Eagle Families as they navigate distance learning with their child.

## **Learning Support**

- The Learning Support Specialist will work with teachers, students and families to provide scheduled support.
- Caring adults at school will be available during scheduled times to offer support to students individually or in small groups as needed.
- Students who qualify for intervention in reading or math will receive support

from our learning specialists, even in distance learning. This year, services will be contracted through Catapult Learning – they have a comprehensive distance learning program.

## **Assessments**

- Teachers will use summative and formative assessments in all core subjects with varied approaches. Their goal is to assess student progress towards proficiency in various standards.
- Specialists will grade on effort and participation in addition to providing feedback on skill and standards mastery.
- Feedback will be provided through Google Classroom and live class meetings. Feedback will be visible in Google Classroom regularly and Middle School grades will be updated every 2 weeks (minimum) in our SchoolSpeak student information system (SIS) platform.
- Assessments will drive instruction and be varied. Examples include project-based assessments, written responses, worksheets and other assignments through Google Classroom, writing prompts, reading journals, Google forms, quizzes, on-line discussions, collaborative Google slides, student created videos and/or note pages, exit tickets on Google Classroom, etc.

## **Attendance**

- Attendance will be taken daily.
- If a student is absent from a distance learning day for illness or other reason, the caring adult at home will need to call the main office, as with a typical absence.
- We recognize that at-home learning looks different for each child. Please work with your child's teacher if there are circumstances that require flexibility or additional planning.

## **Catholic Identity**

- Students will attend Mass virtually with their peers. There will also be opportunities for liturgical engagement through class prayer services.
- Religion lessons will be provided as part of our core instruction.
- Classes will pray daily.
- Students will participate in acts of service.
- Students will learn how Jesus is a role model for us as we overcome the difficulties

of distance, the fear of uncertainty, and help to lift each other up with hope and love in a challenging time.

- Teachers recognize their vocation and lead our mission to be a Catholic, parish-school community, rooted in Gospel values and dedicated to the spiritual and educational development of the whole child.

## **Screen Time**

- Although all assignments will be distributed via Google Classroom, not all assignments will be completed using the computer or tablet.
- Teachers will establish age-appropriate parameters for screen time and balance assignments that can be “online” and those that can be “offline” and completed with alternative methods of engagement.
- Teachers will utilize research based instructional methodologies to provide engaging and interactive content for the students.
- Teachers recognize the difference between “passive” or “non-educational” screen time (i.e. watching a movie, playing a non-educational video game) and “active” or “educational” screen time (i.e. students using technology as a tool to create, demonstrate learning, interact with instructional concepts, or build mastery of standards through multimedia instruction). Students will be taught to recognize this difference and set limits on how they interact with screens on a daily basis.
- Students will be encouraged to find leisure activities away from screens when the school day ends (i.e. outside play, board games, puzzles, books, creative writing, art, crafts, etc.)

## **Office Hours and Communication**

- All caring adults at school will be available for “office hours” each day for open communication. They will be available during this time to respond to student or parent questions in real time, and be accessible through Zoom, email or phone.
- Communication plays an important role in our partnership with parents. In a distance learning environment, a teacher spends significantly more time focused on communication than in a traditional classroom environment. Our teachers will work with students and parents to best organize and respond to questions in an efficient and supportive manner. Some questions may be answered with the whole group in the next day’s morning meeting, or a student/parent may schedule time during office hours.
- Online correspondence with students will follow safe environment protocols.
- Principal and office communications will be shared on a weekly basis keeping you updated on virtual school events and updated details regarding distance learning and our plans for reopening.

This plan was created in consultation with the faculty and staff of St. Therese Catholic School, the families who participated in Zoom calls and surveys, experts in educational distance learning, and the Department of Catholic Schools. This is a working document that will continue to evolve between now and our first week of school. Addendums and additional details will be available in the coming weeks. Teachers will plan to address grade level specific details during a virtual Back to School Night at the beginning of September (Date TBA).