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**[www.srsnj.org](http://www.srsnj.org)**

**Inspired by Faith Empowered by Knowledge United by Community**

August 26, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Beginning a new school year is always such a joyful time filled with great anticipation and promise. As a faith community, we see each day as a gift; one that provides us with an opportunity to learn, to grow, and to passionately witness our love of God to the world.

The teachers, staff and I have been working tirelessly throughout the summer to prepare Saint Raphael School for the 2021 – 2022 school year. It is my greatest JOY to watch the transformation of the school building as it comes back to life. I anxiously await the return of the children as they are the heart of the school and I have genuinely missed their individual and collective spirits.

As we begin the 2021-2022 school year, we are called to be people of HOPE ... people who bear true witness the presence of God by loving Him and caring for one another ... people who, when faced with the unexpected challenges life presents, work TOGETHER for the common good. As I remind the children on a regular basis, God NEVER promised things would be EASY. He promised us that He is with us each and every day and to TRUST in Him.

COVID 19 is still very present in our world and has forced a different path for us to navigate. We have been called to patience and flexibility as this situation remains fluid and can change at a moment's notice. Some protocols have changed. Some have not.

These protocols exist in order for us to mitigate the risk of COVID entering the school building. Following the protocols during the **2020-2021** school year allowed us to provide 5 full days of Christ-centered instruction to our students. It should be noted that Saint Raphael School was the **ONLY** school in this area that did **NOT** have to be closed or a class quarantined from January 2nd until June 18<sup>th</sup>. I remain steadfast in my commitment to ensure the health, well-being, safety and security of EVERY member of the Saint Raphael School family.

Please note the following:

- **Executive Order 251** mandates that all students, faculty and staff are to wear a mask indoors. We **WILL** adhere to that mandate as we did last year. Please be sure that your child brings 2 CLEAN masks with them to school every day.
- **Medical Exemption Waiver for Masks:** With our desire to ensure the health and safety of the Saint Raphael School community coupled with the number of medically compromised individuals in the school, Saint Raphael School will **NOT** be accepting **Mask Exemption Waivers** for any reason. **PERIOD.**
- **The After School Care Program** will return this year. The program will run from 3:00 – 6:00 pm. The children will be outside as often as the weather permits otherwise, they will be in the Parish Center.
- **COVID Vaccinations:** If you, as parent(s), have made the decision to have your child receive the COVID vaccine, please forward a copy of the vaccination card to Nurse Cathy Gore and she will add it to your child's medical records. If we do not have a copy of the card, it will be assumed that your child is unvaccinated. This information is necessary as it could make the difference if a quarantine situation is warranted in a classroom.
- **Illness Policy** remains the same as last year. We need your help. If your child is sick, PLEASE keep them home. If your child is sent home due to illness, he/she must remain home for a FULL 24 hours.
- **Quarantine Protocols** for suspected or confirmed COVID exposure or diagnosis will continue to be implemented as outlined in NJ Department of Health guidance.

Item	2020-2021	2021-2022
Christ-Centered Environment	Yes	Yes
Masks	Required <i>*Executive Order 175</i>	Required <i>*Executive Order 251</i>
Friday Mass	Livestreamed to classrooms	In Church
Social Distancing	6 feet	3 feet
Fully Virtual Education Option	Yes	No
Partnership with Penn Medicine	Yes	Yes
Daily Temperature Check & COVID Screening	Required	Not Required
Morning Drop Off & Pick Up <i>*K- 8</i>	Parish Center	Parish Center
Morning Drop Off & Pick Up <i>*Pre K 3 &amp; 4</i>	Safety Zone ~ AM Front of School ~ PM	Safety Zone ~ AM Front of School ~ PM
Illness Policy	Yes	Yes
Nurse's Isolation Room	Yes	Yes
Contact Tracing	Yes	Yes
Hand-Washing Hygiene	Yes	Yes
Hand-Sanitizing Stations	Yes	Yes
Daily Electrostatic Disinfection of the School, Cafeteria & Gym	Required	Required

Item	2020-2021	2021-2022
One Way Hallways/Stairwells	Yes	Yes
Plexiglass Desk Shield	Required	Not required
Uniforms	Gym Uniform Option	Full Uniform
Backpacks & Lunch Kits	No	Yes
1:1 Chromebook Program	Yes	Yes
Google Classroom	Yes	Yes
Student Cohorts	Required	Modified
Students seated facing same direction	Yes	Yes
Seating Charts	Yes	Yes
Hot Lunch Program	No	No *Special Hot Lunch Day(s) (i.e. Pizza Friday) TBD
Lunch Location	Classrooms	Will begin in classrooms and then move to Cafeteria
After School Care Program	No	Yes
Communication with Parents/Guardians	School Messenger School Website Facebook	School Messenger School Website Facebook
Visitors in the Buildings	No	No
Back-To-School Night	Virtual	TBD
Field Trips/Assemblies	No	TBD

As the month of August is quickly drawing to a close, I would like to remind you again of the following information:

- **Tuesday, August 31, 2021**
  - Preschool 3 Meet & Greet with Mrs. Chiariello at 9:30 am
  - Preschool 4 Meet & Greet with Ms. Sandmeyer at 10:30 am
  - Kindergarten Meet & Greet with Ms. Hollendonner at 11:30 am
  - We will gather in the APR and then move to the classrooms at the specified time.
  - We will be following all CDC, WHO and NJDOE protocols.
  - Everyone is required to wear a mask.
  
- **Thursday, September 2, 2021**
  - Blessing of Saint Raphael School with Fr. Gene, Mrs. Cwirko and the teachers at 6:30 pm
    - Parking Lot in front of the Parish Center
  - Kona Ice sponsored by PTA
  - Used Uniform Sale beginning at **5:30 pm**
  
- **Monday, September 6, 2021**
  - **Labor Day ~ NO SCHOOL**
  
- **Tuesday, September 7, 2021**
  - **Opening Day**
  - 12:30 pm Dismissal
  - NO After School Care
  
- **Wednesday, September 8, 2021**
  - 12:30 pm Dismissal
  - NO After School Care
  
- **Thursday, September 9, 2021**
  - **First FULL day of school**
  - Preschool begins ~ per your child's schedule
  - Everyone brings a **lunch** from home
  - **After School Care Program** begins.
  
- **Friday, September 10, 2020**
  - **Second FULL day of school**
  - Everyone brings a **lunch** from home
  - Patriot Dress Down Day ~ Remembrance of 9/11
  - **After School Care Program**

We are looking forward to a wonderful school year! Working in partnership with one another will ensure that your child/children will continue to learn and grow in God's grace. As always, if you have any questions, please email me at [ann.cwirko@srsnj.org](mailto:ann.cwirko@srsnj.org).

I wish you God's peace.

God Bless.

Mrs. Cwirko