

November 4, 2020

Good Afternoon St. John Fisher School Families,

This past Friday, the Governor announced updated guidelines to the "Ready Schools, Safe Learners" guidance. The three major changes that affect St. John Fisher School are:

- **Changing the review period for examining metrics data to a two-week period rather than three consecutive one-week periods.** This important change aligns with the CDC, California and other states, and will avoid the situations we've seen where a one-time cluster in a smaller county resets the clock for them for an additional three weeks.
- **Increasing the County Case Rate per 100,000.** Please see the attached PDF for the 4 phases of re-opening.
- **Raising the amount of students allowed in a Limited In Person Cohort to 20** (rather than 10)

Currently, Multnomah and Washington Counties fall in the "Transition" zone. Therefore, we are required to continue to offer our current plan of Comprehensive Distance Learning with Limited In Person Instruction. However, with the increase in cohort size, we can safely and responsibly transition our cohorts from 3 cohorts per grade (8-9 students) to 2 cohorts per grade (10-13 students). This change will allow us to have students on campus 4 days a week. We will maintain our Wednesday as an all Comprehensive Distance Learning day to allow for whole-class activities such as Mass at 10:30 and 1:00 and our professional development early release.

For students in K and 1, NOTHING IS CHANGING! They already have 2 cohorts per grade attending Limited In Person Instruction 4 days per week.

For students in 2nd - 8th, I have maintained the "A" and "C" cohorts and distributed the students from cohort "B" into either "A" or "C." The new cohorts will come:

- Cohort A: Monday/Thursday 8:15-10:15 (like always) AND Tuesday/Friday 1:00-3:00.
- Cohort C: Tuesday/Friday 8:15-10:15 (like always) AND Monday/Thursday 1:00-3:00.

When dividing cohort "B," my priority was to keep siblings together and then take into account the boy/girl ratio so cohorts were more evenly distributed. Attached is the new cohort list.

We will begin these new cohorts Thursday, November 12th to provide a week for families to organize their transportation to/from the new available times and/or new cohort.

Some may be wondering why we are changing the metric and/or cohorts now while cases are on the rise. The answer is that students and learning need to be at the center of our decision making and it's a priority to return to in person instruction. Overall, SJF has already utilized Limited In Person Instruction. The increase in cohort size affects SJF in a minimal way with regards to COVID exposure increase. However, the large effect is the ability to see students "in person" up to 4 times per week. With these two choices to make, we wanted to follow the guidelines to the greatest extent possible while minimizing the risks. We will maintain our remote access so if/when students choose to not come to campus, they are able to fully participate in the learning online.

Over these 7 months we have learned a lot and have taken many steps to minimize the risk. We all must stay vigilant to reduce COVID with handwashing, wearing a mask, staying home when we are sick and avoid gatherings.

Thanks for your support and patience as we all work together as a team to accomplish the ultimate goal for our students, an exceptional Catholic education.

Blessings,

Merrit Holub  
Principal  
St. John Fisher School