



May 18, 2020

Dear Families of the Archdiocese of San Francisco,

Last Wednesday, May 13, we celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima. Like the apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes, this appearance was to children. Through them, Mary requested that the Church spread devotion to the rosary to all the faithful. Our children are precious in the eyes of God and are precious to all of us in the Archdiocese of San Francisco. The spiritual, academic, emotional, and physical health of our students will always be our top priority. So as we look forward to the 20/21 school year, we are making plans to start the school year smart.

The reopening of school in August will proceed as scheduled and according to each school's specific calendar. Exactly what that reopening will look like is still in the planning phase. I have convened a Task Force made up of Archdiocesan and school leaders to develop planning assumptions and recommendations for reopening campuses. Implementation of these guidelines will include a variety of health and safety precautions. It is highly likely that social-distancing requirements will necessitate the need to limit the number of students on campus at one time. If this is the case, we will create a hybrid model of education to blend classroom instruction and distance learning as an alternative to campus closures. I have also been advised by public health officials to prepare for new protocols and modifications to our campus environment. We should anticipate the possibility of a resumption of distance learning if Safer at Home orders are reinstated. We will be prepared for both.

I feel confident that we can work within these guidelines, but we must work with our principals, pastors, school board members, and local health officials to determine a realistic plan for each school site. The summer will allow us time to further our plans and put the necessary measures in place. I will continue to send updates as plans solidify.

Thank you for your patience and partnership as we navigate these extraordinary times. Despite the present circumstances, our schools have defied the odds and stand out as a source of God's love and steadfastness. I would like to recognize our 8th graders and our seniors, particularly today. While I realize that this is not the way you would have chosen to end your time at your particular schools, our school sites are doing everything they can to provide you with a proper send-off, while still honoring county health department orders.

Thanks to the efforts of all involved - students, parents, principals, pastors and teachers alike - our schools have remained strong despite the disruption. Our faith is stronger than ever, our communities are intact, and our children are learning. We look forward to offering our gratitude for all these things together on campus in the very near future.

Yours in Christ,

Pamela Lyons
Superintendent of Schools