

2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR PLAN

Assumption Regional Catholic School Galloway, New Jersey



*Create ~ Inspire ~ Nurture
an environment that embraces Gospel values*

INTRODUCTION

Catholic schools provide an environment in which we consistently model Gospel values and Church teachings and traditions in the image of Jesus Christ. All students experience an academically challenging curriculum that helps them to grow closer to God by learning about themselves and His world, while preparing them to succeed at every level. At Assumption Regional Catholic School, our mission is to *create, inspire, and nurture an environment that embraces Gospel values, and meets the needs of each student for the growth of our school community.*

We believe that this mission is best carried out when students, faculty, and staff can be together, in person, as a Catholic community. This belief was reinforced during the 2020-2021 school year, when parents and their children, along with the leadership, faculty, and staff of our school, made personal sacrifices every day for the good of all members of the community so that the majority of students could be in school every day from September through June. We were blessed to have been able to meet our goal of having as many students as possible come to school every day safely. In the process, we learned much that has influenced our preparations for the 2021-2022 school year. Our goal for the coming school year remains the same, and we will welcome all students back to the classroom in September. Our process for achieving that goal is influenced by the lessons we learned last year, a review of current guidelines, data on the status of COVID-19 in our community, and input from public health officials, educators, parents, and others.

We have created this plan to aid families as they prepare for the 2021-2022 school year and to guide our decisions, procedures, and protocols as a school community. It is intended to help employees, students, and families understand how we will promote health and safety together to reduce the potential impact that COVID-19 may have on our community. **It is expected that as the COVID-19 pandemic continues, new guidance may mean that aspects of this plan will need to be updated or changed.** Therefore, necessary updates will be made to this plan based on information provided by local public health officials, guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and applicable federal, state and local agencies, and our experience of how well it is working every day in school. We will inform all members of the school community of changes as soon as they occur.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In order to ensure the continued well-being of our employees and students, the following principles are the foundation that guide our planning:

- 1) Protect the health and safety of Assumption Regional Catholic School students, faculty, staff, and families.

- 2) Sustain the Catholic faith communities that distinguish our schools and drive their success.
- 3) Maximize student learning through best practices in classroom and, if necessary, temporary remote learning instruction and assessment.
- 4) Maintain flexibility to respond to changing circumstances based on lived experience in the school and guidance from state, public health, and medical leaders in response to the progression of COVID-19 in our community.

In addition to these principles, our school is a Catholic community. As such, we are used to depending on one another. The school leadership and faculty are taking on many actions and activities to promote the safety of our community. In order for this plan to be effective, it is important that parents and students continue to take seriously our responsibilities to one another, just as we all did last year. All individuals will be asked to take actions that protect their health and that protect the health of others. The plan will have the best opportunity for success when we all continue to work together – when we all respond to Jesus’ commandment to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

ARCS 2021-2022 SCHOOL THEME

***Love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and love your neighbor as yourself.
Luke 10: 27***

This verse will sustain and lead us through the 2021-2022 school year. It is a profound reminder that love of God and love of neighbor is our primary mission as Christians. This is particularly true as we continue to navigate through COVID-19. All of our policies, procedures, and protocols are ways to respond to Jesus’ commandment to love our neighbor as we love ourselves in our effort to keep our school community safe and healthy.

PART I: PROMOTING HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health of students and all members of the school community is the top priority that ensures all other aspects of the Catholic school program can be delivered. The expectations provided below are intended to help all members of the Assumption School community to do their part to keep themselves and each other safe and healthy.

During the 2020-2021 school year, the NJ Department of Health established the Regional Risk Matrix to describe the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in six regions of the state. Assumption Regional Catholic School is located in the Southeast region. Risk levels are low, moderate, high, and very high. Each risk level includes recommendations for additional health and safety measures.

Health and safety expectations for Assumption Regional Catholic School for the 2021-2022 school year are subject to change based on the risk level for our region or if evidence of the spread of COVID-19 within a classroom here or at any school in the diocese emerges.

VACCINATION

One of the most significant differences between opening school in Fall 2021 and Fall 2020 is the availability of vaccines for adults and children ages 12 and older. According to the Centers for Disease Control, COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective (please see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/vaccine-benefits.html> for more information.) The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have also confirmed that the COVID-19 vaccines are morally permissible for Catholics (please see <https://www.usccb.org/resources/moral-considerations-covid-vaccines.pdf>). The advantages of vaccination may include significantly reduced risk of critical or severe symptoms of COVID-19, significantly reduced risk of hospitalization, increased protection from infection, and in some cases reduced transmission of COVID-19 from asymptomatic infections.

Vaccination protects the community through two important mechanisms.

- 1) Direct protection of vaccinated individuals.** Parents, students, and employees who are vaccinated are highly protected from the worst effects of COVID-19 and have strong protection against contracting it when exposed to it.
- 2) Indirect protection of unvaccinated individuals, especially children under 12.** On a large scale, this phenomenon is sometimes called “herd immunity.” It means that when more people are vaccinated, the virus thrives in fewer people and therefore is far less likely to spread to or from most of the vaccinated individuals. In our school, specifically, all cases of COVID-19 identified during the 2020-2021 school year were contracted outside of school. If children are primarily surrounded by vaccinated adults and family members, they are less likely to encounter a high enough amount of the virus to become infected themselves, and therefore less likely to bring it to school.

It is not known at this time how long the benefits of vaccination may last, but members of the school community will be informed if public health officials recommend additional steps for vaccinated individuals.

Parents and Staff will be asked to provide vaccination information for their children to the school nurse to aid with contact tracing and quarantine recommendations if they become necessary.

SCHOOL SCHEDULE AND ARRIVAL

To ensure that we can continue to maintain social distancing, we will keep a staggered arrival and dismissal schedule.

- Before Care begins at 7:00 AM
- Arrival will occur in 5 minute intervals from 7:30 AM - 7:55 AM*
- Buses and car riders dismiss from 2:10 PM - 2:30 PM on a rolling basis*
- After Care ends at 5:30 PM

*see Protocols below for details

Arrival Protocol			
Last Name A - D	7:30 - 7:35	Last Name M - P	7:45 - 7:50
Last Name E - H	7:35 - 7:40	Last Name Q - U	7:50 - 7:55
Last Name I - L	7:40 - 7:45	Last Name V - Z	7:55 - 8:00
Students arriving after 8:00 will be directed to the Cafeteria entrance.			
Morning Prayer begins at 8:05 AM			

Arriving by Bus

- Sanitize hands before boarding the bus
- Assigned seating
- Masks must be worn on the bus
- Sanitize hands when leaving the bus

Arrival procedures for the 2021-2022 school year will be:

- PreK – Grade 1 will enter by the PreK doors
- 2nd – 4th Grades will enter by the first cafeteria doors
- 5th – 8th Grades will enter through the main doors

Dismissal Protocol

To best protect students’ safety and ensure social distancing, we will continue with a drive-thru method to limit the number of vehicles picking up children at any given time.

- 2:05 PM: Busses will dismiss from the front parking lot
- 2:05 PM: Students will begin to be dismissed to vehicles lined up in front of the school building.
 - Parents with children in safety restraint seats are to park on the right lane.
 - Parents/Guardians must place their school-issued placard on the rear-view mirror or in the bottom passenger-side corner of their windshield when arriving at school.
 - Parents of students with last names A – L arrive at the school from 2:05 – 2:15. Parents of students with last names M – Z arrive at school from 2:15 – 2:25.

- ARCS staff will dismiss students to the cars according to the placards while maintaining social distancing.
- Parents/Guardians will not be permitted to exit their vehicle during dismissal unless they must assist children in buckling seatbelts
- All vehicles along the sidewalk **must remain parked** while students are dismissing and **will not be permitted** to leave until all students are safely within the vehicles.
- **Parents are asked to pay close attention to the dismissal attendants and to refrain from using cell phones while in line as this is disruptive to the flow of traffic.**

SCREENING

Identifying students, faculty, and staff who may be sick is a critical component of keeping the entire school community healthy. Identification begins before students arrive at school and continues with vigilance throughout the school day. Screening and response to symptoms require faithful citizenship and partnership between parents and the school, with all school community members doing their part to identify potential sickness and respond respectfully, swiftly, and confidentially.

Screening at Home

All parents are expected to screen their children at home before coming to school for symptoms of COVID-19 and to take their temperature to ensure that they do not have a fever over 100.4° F. We may randomly screen children entering the building. If children have a fever or exhibit symptoms that are not explained by a known non-contagious prior condition, then they should stay at home. COVID-19 symptoms include:

- At least two of the following symptoms: fever of 100.4 or higher, chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion or runny nose; OR
- At least one of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell.

For students with chronic illness, only new symptoms or symptoms worse than baseline should be used to fulfill symptom-based exclusion criteria.

Parents will also be expected to keep their children home from school if they have had close contact with a person who is **lab confirmed** to have COVID-19. If this occurs, parents should notify the school immediately. Close contact is considered to be:

- Within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more over the course of 24 hours
- Provided care at home to, or visited, someone who is sick with COVID-19
- Direct physical contact with the person (touched, hugged, or kissed them)
- Shared eating or drinking utensils
- They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you

VENTILATION

Ensuring proper ventilation at our school is an important component of maintaining health and safety for all members of the community. Increasing the amount of fresh air and air flow when indoors can help to reduce the concentration of the virus that causes COVID-19 in classrooms and other indoor spaces if it is found there.

Assumption Regional Catholic School will continue the following measures to ensure proper ventilation at the school.

- Opening windows and doors to increase outdoor air flow.
- Adjusting the settings of central heating and air conditioning (HVAC) systems to maximize the introduction of fresh air and minimize recirculation of exhausted air back into classroom and other spaces.
- Ensuring that filters are maintained and changed according to manufacturer recommendations. (Filters are changed three times a year.)
- Using portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) fan/filtration systems to enhance the cleaning of circulating air.
- Taking students outside frequently for classes and other activities.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Personal protective equipment is an effective means to provide protection from infection with the virus that causes COVID-19. Personal protective equipment will be used at Assumption Regional Catholic School when necessary to promote the health and safety of the community.

ARCS Care Box

Each student is required to have a box (5" X 8.5") containing the following:

- 2-3 masks following the guidelines below
- unscented hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol)
- hand wipes (can be placed in a zip lock bag)
- tissues (can be placed in a zip lock bag)

Care Boxes must be brought home each day and refilled for the following day.

Masks

Masks can be an important component of maintaining health in the school, especially when community spread of COVID-19 is high and students are more likely to encounter COVID-19 outside of school.

All students, staff, and visitors to Assumption Regional Catholic School will be required to wear a face mask inside the building when the school year begins, according to NJ Executive Order 251. This includes vaccinated students, staff and visitors. If and when Executive Order 251 is no longer in effect, we will identify the conditions under which masks will be required in school. Decisions about mask requirements in the absence of the executive order or other directives will consider current recommendations from the Center for Disease Control, NJ Department of Health, and the Diocese of Camden. Additionally, we will review important data about the presence and/or transmission of COVID-19 in our school and in our local communities.

Face Coverings

All students, grades PreK through 8, will be required to have a cloth mask with them at school every day. Neck gaiters, scarves, bandanas, and masks with breathing valves will not be permitted as they have been shown to be ineffective in preventing the spread of droplets and the Coronavirus. Students will be required to wear the cloth mask when entering the building, while in classrooms and hallways, and exiting the building. Each family will be responsible for providing appropriately sized masks for their children.

- **Mask Guidelines:** As with last year, continues to be protecting the students' sense of community, togetherness, and safety. We are especially cognizant of the fact that masks can increase the feeling of isolation, so we approach masks with caution and concern for the wellbeing of all students. With this in mind, we understand that mask choice can present students with the opportunity for showcasing personality; however we must ensure that no mask designs are divisive and disruptive to our community. Potentially divisive designs include political statements, sports logos, band names, angry symbols such as sharks, etc. Therefore, we ask that no masks include any political words and/or symbols, band names, or offensive words and/or symbols in order to best protect the community.

High Risk and/or Evidence of Transmission/Executive Order in Effect:

Masks will be required at all times (currently inside only) for all students regardless of their vaccination status if:

- The COVID-19 risk is high/extremely high in our region according to the NJ Regional Risk Matrix.
- There is evidence of transmission of COVID-19 during the school day at our school or at other schools in the Diocese of Camden.
- Executive Order 251 is in effect

Low/Moderate Risk and/or No Transmission

When the COVID-19 risk is low or moderate, and/or in the absence of evidence of transmission of COVID-19 in school, and no mandate is in effect, our approach will be as follows:

At the low and moderate risk levels, and if there is no evidence of in-school transmission, masks will be required in some circumstances, but generally not required when seated during class. Any parent who would like their child(ren) to wear a mask more frequently while at school is welcome to direct them accordingly.

All students, grades PreK through 8, will be required to have several cloth masks with them at school every day. Students may be required to wear the masks when in the hallways, at lockers, and when social distancing cannot be maintained. Please note that these requirements apply to all students, whether they are vaccinated or not.

Each family will be responsible for providing appropriately sized masks for their children. Each student should have an extra mask with them at school at all times in their care box.

Masks may also be required at all times for all students if the school is mandated to require masks or for other unforeseen reasons that may arise during the school year.

All students and adults on school buses must wear a mask, by requirement of the US Department of Transportation.

SOCIAL DISTANCE

Social distance involves maintaining a specified distance from all other individuals to ensure that large droplets that are exhaled and may contain the coronavirus do not reach other people. The minimum social distance that will be maintained in classrooms and other spaces in the school is 3 feet.

Maintaining social distance may be challenging for students of all ages, particularly when they have not seen each other or when they have found themselves in social environments outside of school in which social distancing has been relaxed. It may also be difficult when larger classes are gathered. When social distancing is not possible, and if regional risk is low or moderate and there is no evidence of in-school transmission, students will be required to wear masks as an additional layer of protection.

It is critical that all school personnel and parents remain vigilant in reminding students of their responsibility to each other to maintain a social distance in case they are carrying the virus and may be able to unknowingly transmit it to others, even if they do not have symptoms.

Social Distancing in Classrooms

We have taken every measure possible to ensure the maximum distance between students in each classroom. These measures include spacing desks at 3 feet, and removal of furniture to allow for greater social distance.

Social Distancing in Other Areas of the School

In addition to social distancing measures in classrooms, we are implementing the following procedures and protocols to promote social distancing:

- Physical Education/Gym Class will be held outside as often as possible. Students will participate in activities that maximize distance. Masks do not need to be worn during this class when students are engaged in aerobic activity and/or when at least 3 feet apart.
- The number of students who can enter the restroom at any time will be limited to ensure adequate social distancing. The maximum number of students allowed in a restroom is

two. Students will use assigned restrooms to limit the total number of individuals using any one restroom.

- In areas where students might wait in line, students will be given direction on how many “squares” they should be separated from another student.
- Student movement through the school will be limited to only essential movement (e.g., to use the restroom, to get to/from class).

PERSONAL HYGIENE

In addition to PPE and social distancing, each member of the school community will be expected to take responsibility for his or her personal hygiene, including responsibility for personal belongings and space. Teachers will provide instruction and allocate time in the classroom to ensure that students understand and can take these responsibilities seriously.

Hand Washing and Hand Sanitizing

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important defenses against the spread of all sickness, including COVID-19. The virus may survive for a period of time on surfaces that students touch throughout the day. For this reason, it is critical that students, teachers, and staff wash or sanitize their hands regularly.

- Each class will have a regular schedule, including before and after all meals or snacks, for students and teachers to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds or to use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to sanitize their hands.
- Hand sanitization stations will be set up in the following locations:
 - In each classroom
 - At all entrances and exits to the school building
 - At the entrance to the school office
 - At the entrance to or in the nurse’s office
 - At the entrance to or in the faculty lounge
- Each student should have a personal bottle of hand sanitizer and a personal container of sanitizing wipes for use in his or her personal space.
- Teachers will reinforce hand washing and the importance of students avoiding touching their faces and masks, particularly with those in the primary grades.

Personal Space and Belongings

Personal responsibility is an important skill for students to develop and exercise as a defense against the spread of COVID-19. Students have a responsibility to each other that they demonstrate through hand washing, social distancing, and the use of masks when appropriate. Taking responsibility for their own belongings and contributing to cleaning their workspaces are additional ways that students can be accountable to each other for maintaining the community’s health.

- Where supplies must be shared, such as science lab equipment, computers, or math manipulatives, etc., only one group of students will use those supplies at a time.

- Lockers will not be used between classes to avoid student clustering in hallways and at lockers. When students must use lockers at the beginning of the day, before lunch, and at the end of the day, access will be staggered to ensure proper social distancing.
- When students use spaces that may be used by others, they will wipe down the space with a disinfecting wipe after they use it.

Students will return to switching classrooms, when appropriate, as they have in the past for different subjects. We will closely monitor the impact of these procedures on student health and make adjustments, including returning to teachers switching classrooms instead of students, if necessary.

FOOD SERVICE AND RECESS

Food service, including lunch and snacks, and recess are important opportunities for students to socialize and exercise during the school day.

Lunch and Snacks

Students will have the opportunity to purchase lunch each day. The menu will continue to be reduced so that it can be easily placed on the cafeteria tables where students will have lunch. Students **MUST** order exactly what they are having each morning in homeroom. A monthly menu will be sent home. Careful attention must be made to what is being offered. Students in grades PreK – 5 may bring a snack each day. Students should be able to open their own snack containers.

For this year, birthday snacks, if desired, must be a pre-packaged manufacture-wrapped item such as Rice Krispie Treat, Fruit Snack, Goldfish, bag of pretzels, etc. Snacks that do not meet this criterion such as Dunkin Donuts, homemade cookies, cupcakes, or items in a plastic bag, etc. will be sent home. Birthday treats must come to school with the student in the morning. Goodie bags are not permitted. Students may wear alternate dress on their birthday.

Recess

- Students will have the opportunity to go outside each day, weather permitting. Students will remain with their homeroom during recess and will be designated a space.
- Students will not be required to wear masks for outdoor recess or breaks. They may wear them if they feel more comfortable doing so.
- Students will participate in outdoor recess by homeroom. Students from different homerooms should not come within 6 feet of each other.
- Each homeroom will have its own bag with equipment to use during recess. Students may also continue to use the *Peaceful Playground* to promote non-contact activities. We will limit the use of playground and sports equipment; however, we are in the process of developing a *Peaceful Playground* to promote non-contact activities. Students will wash or sanitize their hands after recess.
- Students will wash or sanitize their hands after recess.

BEFORE CARE AND AFTER CARE

We will continue to offer before care and after care. In order to promote social distancing, we ask that **ONLY** those families who **MUST use** these services do so. Before and after care are not to be used for convenience or time with friends. Students in before care and after care will be grouped with family members or members of their homeroom class to reduce the number of interactions across groups of students.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Visitors to the School

Visitors to the school during the school day will be limited to individuals with official business at the school (e.g., contractors, service, sales). All visitors to the school will be required to provide their name and contact information and will be required to wear a cloth mask and maintain social distance while on the premises at all times.

Volunteers

Adults who give their time to participate in the critical activities of the school will be allowed to volunteer as needed. Volunteers will be required to wear a mask at all times regardless of vaccination status if the regional risk level is high or there is evidence of transmission of COVID-19 in school. (Such as the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year.) When a mask mandate isn't in place unvaccinated volunteers must wear a mask.

HEALTHY FACILITIES

An important part of maintaining the health of the school community is ensuring that the school grounds and systems support the health of students and employees. Assumption Regional Catholic School will continue our attention to the cleanliness of the school grounds, facilities, and environment.

Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfection

We have developed protocols to ensure that all areas used by students or staff are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected every day.

Classrooms will be cleaned and disinfected at the end of each day. This includes:

- All desks, tables, and chairs
- Bookshelves, windows, and blackboards/whiteboards
- Carpets (vacuum) or floors (mop)
- Frequently touched objects, (pencil sharpeners, coat hooks, door handles, light switches)

For classrooms used by multiple classes, including shared use spaces, frequently used objects (e.g., doorknobs, pencil sharpeners) and all student seating (chairs, desks, tables) will be

disinfected after every class. Students will disinfect their desks/seats with a disinfecting wipe before the next student uses them.

Bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected twice daily, including at the end of the day.

Cafeteria will be disinfected between each lunch group and cleaned at the end of the day.

If the school building or classrooms are used by other groups after normal school hours (e.g., parish religious education), then surfaces will be cleaned by students at the end of the day as they would after a class and professional cleaning will occur after the building has been vacated by all groups for the day.

PART II: MANAGING POTENTIAL SICKNESS

Assumption Regional Catholic School is taking the precautions above to limit the transmission of sickness, especially COVID-19. However, we recognize that some students and/or staff may still show symptoms of COVID-19, or students, employees, or their family members might be exposed to or test positive for COVID-19. Our response will be conducted in collaboration with the Atlantic County Department of Public Health.

RESPONSE TO COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

Students and Employees who Show Symptoms of COVID-19 in School

Any adult or student who shows symptoms of COVID-19 upon arrival at school or at any time while they are in the school building will enter a protocol to protect them and other members of the school community that will result in their leaving the school building as soon as practicable.

- Students, employees, and any other adults in the school will enter an isolation area if they show symptoms of COVID-19.
- All students, employees, personnel, and others in the isolation area will wear a mask and gloves and maintain a 3 foot distance from each other as practicably as possible.
- A parent, guardian, or authorized adult will be called to pick up any student who shows symptoms of COVID-19.
- Students will be isolated safely and respectfully, with continued supervision and care and respect for their privacy, until an authorized adult can pick them up. The isolation area will be thoroughly disinfected after it is used by symptomatic students.
- If symptoms appear after the school day has begun, the teacher and students will wash their hands thoroughly and immediately. The class will meet in an alternate location until the room is disinfected.
- The Atlantic County Public Health Officer will be notified that an individual with symptoms that are potentially due to COVID-19 has been sent home. This contact will be made confidentially to protect the individual.

- The Atlantic County Public Health Officer will advise the school about whether or not any additional steps, such as asking other students to self-quarantine, need to be taken. It is important to understand that such decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, depending on the circumstances. Not every case of an individual with symptoms that are potentially due to COVID-19 will lead to self-quarantine for other individuals, a class, or the school.
- Students and staff who show symptoms that could be attributed to COVID-19 will be advised to seek the advice of a physician about whether isolation is necessary and will be required to have show proof of a negative COVID-19 test before returning to school.

Students and Employees who Show Symptoms of COVID-19 Outside of School

Students or employees who show symptoms of COVID-19 outside of school that are not explained by a known, noncontagious prior condition, should not come to the school and should visit a physician to determine the cause of the symptoms. Symptoms include:

- At least two of the following symptoms: fever of 100.4 or higher, chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion or runny nose; OR
- At least one of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell.

Students or employees, who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms, whether at home or in school, must show proof of a molecular/viral/PCR or antigen COVID-19 test before returning to school.

- Students or employees who show symptoms of COVID-19 and receive a negative COVID-19 test, and whose doctors do not also prescribe another confirmatory test, may return to school with the negative COVID-19 after 24 hours have passed without symptoms, including fever-free without medication. If the absence is longer than 3 days, the individual is required to provide a doctor's clearance to return to school.
- Students or employees who show symptoms of COVID-19 and receive a positive COVID-19 test may return to school after 10 days from the date the sample was taken, if they have been symptom free for 24 hours, including fever-free without medication.

If a member of the school community receives a positive test for COVID-19, it is imperative that the individual (if an employee) or his or her parent (if a student) contact the school so that the school can conduct proper contact tracing and inform the rest of the school community. The school principal, nurse, or other staff will send a letter to the school community confirming that someone who has been in the school tested positive for COVID-19 and will conduct contact tracing (see below) to determine whether any students or adults are considered close contacts and recommended to quarantine. Any student recommended to quarantine will be contacted separately by the school.

CLOSE CONTACT WITH COVID-19

Close Contact at School

If someone who has been in the school building tests positive for COVID-19, the school will conduct contact tracing in collaboration with the Atlantic County Department of Health. Some students and/or teachers may be considered close contacts and advised to quarantine for a number of days, depending on the date of the contact and the regional risk level at the time of contact. The beginning of the quarantine period will generally be the date of last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19. Close contact is considered to be:

- Within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for at least 15 cumulative minutes over 24 hours, regardless of whether masks were worn
- Provided care at home to, or visited, someone who is sick with COVID-19
- Direct physical contact with the person (touched, hugged, or kissed them)
- Shared eating or drinking utensils
- They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you

During times of low or moderate risk, individuals who are advised to quarantine by a physician or a public health official are expected to stay in the home for a period of 10 days, or 7 days with negative test results collected at 5-7 days. During times of high risk, the quarantine term will be 14 days. Quarantine may be longer if the individual shares living space with a person diagnosed with COVID-19. Students who do not show symptoms during this period will be expected to participate in school remotely.

Students and staff members who are fully vaccinated will not be required to quarantine unless they show symptoms of COVID-19.

Close Contact Outside of School

It is critical that any member of the school community who has had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 outside of school alert the school as soon as possible. The school will work with the Atlantic County Public Health Officer, while maintaining confidentiality, to determine the length of any quarantine period necessary. This includes employees of the school, students, volunteers, and family members of students.

Students and staff members who are fully vaccinated will not be required to quarantine unless they show symptoms of COVID-19. However, even if a student or staff member who is a close contact of someone who tests positive for COVID-19 is fully vaccinated, it is important that the individual inform the school.

PART III: SUSTAINING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Academic excellence is a hallmark of Catholic schools. We will adapt and continue some changes to instruction for the 2020-2021 that were effective in helping all students learn. Most

students will be in classrooms, onsite for the 2021-2022 school year, with temporary remote learning available only for students who are positive for COVID-19 or must quarantine due to close contact. It is also possible that the progression of COVID-19 in our community and/or in the state may require us to transition to full time remote learning for all students temporarily as we did during the 2019-2020 school year. The instructional plan leverages technology so that instruction and learning are as fluid and transferrable as possible between onsite and remote learning.

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Continued strategic use of technology will allow teachers to personalize learning and also provide instruction that is fluid across onsite/in classroom learning and at home.

Hardware

- Chromebooks, laptops, and iPads are available for student use, but we are not currently 1:1. To assist in being able to have each student have his/her own device, students who have their own personal device (Chromebook or laptop) may bring them to school each day. Cell phones may not be used as educational hardware in school.
- An amendment will be made to the Acceptable Use Policy for students who use their own devices during the school day.

Software

The use of instructional software will aid teachers in understanding student progress and learning, personalizing learning, and organizing assignments for students.

- All students in Grades 1 - 8 will use Google Classroom during the school day. Some classes will use platforms such as Jamboard and Flipgrid.
- Students in PreK and K will use Class Dojo as their platform.
- Google Classroom will be used to organize instruction during the day for students in school and those learning at home temporarily due to COVID-19 exposure.
- All students in Grades K - 8 will use Freckle, a differentiated learning platform, as a regular part of their in-school learning experience and for homework.
- Login information for all student accounts will be shared with students and parents to ensure access.

CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND INSTRUCTION

- Assumption Regional Catholic will continue to follow the curriculum for the Diocese of Camden.
- There will be some adjustment to instructional time to allow for health and safety protocols to be implemented.
- Students will travel for some minor classes, while some minor classes will be taught in homerooms.
- All students, grades 1-8, will participate in the Star Assessments in Reading and Math to help teachers identify their growth and customize their learning.

- Teachers will incorporate blended learning into their classrooms. Blended learning incorporates technology into instruction to assist teachers with personalizing instruction for all students. Blended learning in the classroom can also help prepare students for learning at home, if necessary.

REMOTE LEARNING

We anticipate that there may be a need for temporary remote learning during the 2021-2022 school year for students who have a positive COVID-19 test or who have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19. Therefore, we will support temporary remote learning when necessary for students who are in need of it so that students learning at home can stay as up to date with their learning as possible.

Temporary Remote Learning Criteria

Students who are informed by the school or a public health officer or department that they need to quarantine due to exposure to COVID-19, and those who have tested positive for COVID-19 but are healthy enough to participate in class, will be able to participate in temporary remote learning.

Temporary remote learning is intended to serve students who are out of school for COVID-19-related isolation or quarantine only. Students who are out sick with COVID-19 symptoms but do not yet have test results will not have access to live remote learning. Temporary live remote learning will also not be available for students who are home sick for non-COVID reasons, for students who travel, or for any other reason. The school reserves the right to request verification of the need for temporary remote learning (e.g., positive COVID-19 test result for a family member) before approving it.

Temporary Remote Learning Process

There will be a two-day (school days not weekends) transition period to participate in temporary live remote learning once it is determined that the student needs to remain out of the school building. This transition period will allow teachers to prepare and/or adapt their schedules and lessons to accommodate the students who will be participating remotely. Students may access daily work through Google Classroom during the two-day transition to live remote learning.

The intent of temporary remote learning is to ensure continuity of education for students who are out of school. Teachers will do their best to ensure that students are as up to date as possible with their learning while they are quarantined.

- Each classroom is set up with videoconferencing capabilities so that students can be “live” in the classroom through Zoom.
- Students who are learning remotely and in the classroom with both have access to lesson materials using Google Classroom
- Teachers will schedule their classes as consistently as possible every day so that students who may be learning remotely will be able to follow the schedule to participate in class.
- Schedules, assignments, time for remote students to be “live” in the classroom, and approaches will vary according to the age and grade level of the students.

- Morning Prayer will be live-streamed each day.
- In an effort to create community and a sense of belonging, all remote learning students are asked to wear their ARCS polo shirt and be seated at a desk or table, as free from distractions as possible. Students' face must be visible on screen.
- While the schedule for temporary remote learning may look different based on grade level and subject, the following indicates how a day may look:
 - Each teacher will have a specific schedule for class time.
 - Each class will consist of an instructional component by the teacher and an independent practice component where the student attending remotely may choose to be offline. Additionally, each lesson may consist of small group instruction by the teacher and/or the use of Freckle, our differentiated learning platform.

Mandated Remote Learning

It is possible that during the 2021-2022 school year, one or more classes at Assumption Regional Catholic School, or the whole school, will be advised by public health officials to close temporarily due to the presence of COVID-19 cases so that members of the school community can self-quarantine. While we remain hopeful that school will be open each day, there may be a time that Assumption Regional Catholic School will be ordered to close temporarily due to the progression of COVID-19 in the region or state, as it was during the 2019-2020 school year. We are planning a "practice" remote day on **Monday, October 11** to ensure that we have everything in place should we need to temporarily close.

In the event that the school is advised or ordered to enter remote learning status, teachers and classes will adhere to the following guidelines:

- We will continue the use of Google Classroom (Class Dojo for PreK and K) established for in-class and remote learning. Using it in school regularly should make access to and completion of assignments at home easier.
- The schedule for the remote learning school day will continue as seamlessly as possible from the schedule for in-classroom learning, with live teaching (through Zoom) and learning scheduled every day.
- The same comportment expected of students while in school will be expected during remote learning. This includes the expectation that the students are dressed in their ARCS polo shirt, groomed and seated at a desk or table, as free from distractions as possible to create community and a sense of belonging despite distance.
- Chapter 192/193 services will continue during mandated remote learning, although may look different than when students are in school.
- We are committed to making remote learning, if necessary, as close to the classroom experience as possible to ensure that teaching and learning are continuous and students progress as expected regardless of the learning environment.

ATTENDANCE

The attendance policy will be adapted for the 2021-2022 school year to accommodate students who may be learning remotely. When in-classroom learning is occurring, attendance will be marked as: Present, if in school; Remote, if learning remotely (present for live teaching and

turning in assignments within class time expectations), or Absent, if home and too ill to participate.

If the school building is closed for all students due to advice from a public health official or an order, then attendance categories will be Remote or Absent. It is expected in this scenario that students learning remotely will attend all live instruction and submit all assignments on the deadlines expected. Students who are sick or who do not attend classes and do not submit assignments will be marked as Absent.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND SPORTS

It is our hope to offer extracurricular activities and sports when conditions permit. Many of the same protocols used during the school day will apply during extracurricular activities and sports. Protocols will be modified based on the activity.

To ensure the health and safety of our school community, volunteers who participate in extracurricular activities and sports must follow all protocols and procedures established for those events.



ARCS 2021-2022 SCHOOL PLAN SHARED AGREEMENT

As stated in our school theme, *Love God with all your heart, and love your neighbor as yourself*, God calls upon all of us to love and protect each other. As members of the ARCS school family, it is our duty and responsibility to work together to keep our community as safe and as healthy as possible. **This form MUST be completed and returned by Friday, September 10, 2021.**

FOR PARENTS:

We read and understand the policies and procedures outlined and defined in the Assumption Regional Catholic School Year Plan for 2021-2022. (This can be found on our school website.) We have also read with our child the student plan for the 2021-2022 school year (See below).

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date_____

FOR STUDENTS:

To achieve this goal I understand that I must:

- Tell my parents if I am not feeling well prior to leaving for school.
- Have my temperature checked before leaving for school.
- Make sure my “care box” has 2 extra masks, hand sanitizer, tissues, and wipes and is brought to school every day.
- Wear my school-appropriate face mask (per guidelines) while I am in the school building. (This may change based on guidance from the New Jersey Department of Health.) I may remove my mask if I am eating snack, lunch or taking a drink of water, or having a brief mask break while seated at my desk.
- Maintain proper social distance from my classmates and teachers.
- Wash (sanitize) my hands frequently throughout the day.
- Be responsible for my personal hygiene, belongings, and keeping my workspace clean.
- Be prepared for Remote Learning at any time by following the school schedule, wearing the school polo shirt, and being seated at a desk or table.

Student Signature _____ Date_____

Student Signature _____ Date_____

Student Signature _____ Date_____

Student Signature _____ Date_____