

Return to School Plan - Holy Ghost Lutheran School, 6630 Luther St., Wheatfield, NY 14304

As a private Lutheran school in New York State, serving PreK-8th grade students, Holy Ghost Lutheran School's mission is to nurture children academically and spiritually and help students produce a life of witness and service in Christ. This mission continues to be our greatest purpose as we safely reopen for the 2020-2021 school year. We will learn from our progress in the last several months and navigate our changing world while offering a safe and exceptional educational platform.

A "Pandemic Committee" has collaborated in July, 2020 with the purpose of planning the safe reopening of Holy Ghost Lutheran School. The committee has reviewed recommendations provided by the CDC and NYSDOH, expressing expectations as stakeholders of the school community. This committee serves under the Board of Education, who will review recommendations and approve the final plan.

Those serving on the Pandemic Committee are: Kevin Gundell, Gail Carrier, Bill Oliver, Michael Davis, Mark Boesken, and Michael Ostolksi.

Listed below are the safety precautions Holy Ghost will be taking for the students and staff to return to school. These plans may change as the COVID19 pandemic evolves. Any such changes would be communicated to the families, students and staff, and be posted on the school website.

Day to Day Operations/Facility

- Students/ staff/ visitors will wear acceptable face coverings/ masks when unable to maintain social distancing. Students may wear masks all day, with the exception of eating, if requested, in writing, by a parent or guardian.
- Students/ staff will keep an extra mask at school at all times in a ziplock baggie for potential use. Once used, the student/ staff will take it home and replace it with a clean/ new mask.
- Building is professionally cleaned and disinfected daily. All cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted per NYSDOH guidelines. Custodian will provide documentation of cleaning completion.
- Classrooms, bathrooms and drinking fountains will be disinfected mid-day.
- Large groups of students will gather only if adequate spacing and ventilation can be maintained.
- Playground will be open with precautionary measures taken. Masks will be worn when students are unable to maintain social distance. Students will be given an opportunity to remove masks in a socially distant designated area.
- Hazard drills (lockdown, fire, etc.) will be conducted in compliance to NYS guidelines. Students/staff will wear masks and/ or maintain social distancing during these drills to the best of their ability.
- A social distancing plan will be in effect in the restrooms.
- Personal, refillable water bottles will be required. Water fountains will only be used to refill water bottles.
- Parents should take their own child's temperature, each school day, prior to bringing them to school. Parents should keep students home if the temperature exceeds 100 degrees (F) or if any other symptoms of sickness are observable.
- Gym, recess, and other physical activities will be hosted outside as much as possible.

Signage/Training

- Signage concerning handwashing, cough/sneeze etiquette will be posted as well as instructed by staff.
- Students and staff will be trained on COVID-19 symptoms, proper hand and respiratory hygiene, and proper use and maintenance of PPE.

Food Service

- Lunch service will be modified to minimize student movement throughout the building. Lunches will be eaten in the classroom setting. A designated area will be assigned for students with food allergies.
- Birthday treats and food for school activities will be commercially packaged. Students will not share food.

Classrooms

- Classrooms will be ventilated every day.
- Classrooms will be arranged with sufficient spacing/distancing. (i.e. positioning and orientation of desks...).
 - rooms with group seating will have clear plastic dividers between student seating which will be reduced per table
 - rooms with desks and chairs will be arranged with 6 feet of spacing between them
 - extra furniture will be removed from the classroom when necessary to accommodate proper spacing
 - a maximum number of students will be determined for each classroom based on social distancing standards
- Classroom teachers will periodically clean commonly touched items, including but not limited to light switches, door knobs, pencil sharpeners, etc., on a daily basis.
- Sharing of items will be limited and/or wiped between uses. Students will be assigned their own materials to the greatest extent possible (ie. chromebooks, supplies, etc.).
- Middle School teachers will rotate classrooms to teacher students of different grades when possible.

Entry/Exit

- Temperature screening will be required of students, staff, and classroom volunteers, and visitors, upon entry daily. Any member of the school with a temperature higher than 100 degrees (F) will not be allowed entry. Parents should also take the temperature of their child before leaving their home daily.
- Masks will be worn as students enter and exit the building. Additional protocols for arrival and dismissal will be established to practice social distancing.
- Hand hygiene will be required upon entry to the building.

Health/Administration

- The principal of the school bears the responsibility of implementation of all reopening protocols.
- Staff will respond daily to a health screening questionnaire. Responses will be documented.
- Students will respond to periodic health screening questionnaires. Responses will be documented.
- A student/staff member is not permitted to stay at school with a temperature of 100 degree (F) or if they appear visibly ill. Students and staff must stay home if they are sick.
- Hand hygiene will be done before entering the classroom and at several other times during the school day, including but not limited to: after bathroom use, as well as, before and after eating.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in all classrooms and building entries.
- Gloves will be supplied in each classroom for teacher and/or student usage.
- School will maintain a log that indicates the date, time, and scope of cleaning/disinfecting.
- Attendance will be taken daily, regardless of instructional setting (In School or Distance Learning).
- Spiritual well being will be promoted through the study of God's Word, devotions, religious instruction, and prayers throughout the school day.
- Coordination with the local public school district will be facilitated to provide social and emotional well being services.

Communication

- Parent/school communication will take place by phone, Fast Direct email, virtual, or scheduled appointment.
- Communication will be sent home regarding signs and symptoms of COVID19.

Illness: For all purposes of reporting a student health situation, Mrs. Michele Male, Administrative Assistant, is the point of contact: 716-731-3030; or office@hgl.school

In the event of a student or staff member testing positive with COVID19

- School will notify families, staff and local health officials while maintaining confidentiality.
- The infected person is to remain home following the NYSDOH's recommendations before returning to school.
- The infected person must submit documentation from a health care provider following evaluation, negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result, and symptom resolution, or release from isolation.
- School work will be provided for each student.
- Additional instructional support for students may be offered by the teacher at their discretion.
- All cleaning and disinfecting protocols will be followed.

In the event of an immediate family member testing positive with COVID19

- Family will inform the school office of any positive COVID19 result.
- School will notify families, staff and local health officials while maintaining confidentiality.
- All students in that household shall stay home for the duration of quarantine and follow NYSDOH's guidance.
- School work will be provided for the students.
- Additional instructional support for students may be offered by the teacher at their discretion.

In the event of a student getting sick during the school day (persistent cough, fever, etc.)

- Temperature will be taken. Students with a temperature greater than 100 degrees (F) will be sent home.
- A mask will be worn by the student while waiting in the designated area for transportation home.
- Students will not be allowed to ride the bus home.
- Classroom will be cleaned and disinfected.
- Student may return to school when he/she is fever free for 24 hours (without medication), shows improvement of symptoms, and/or cleared by a health professional with documentation.

In the event of a school closure

- Families should be aware that there may be circumstances requiring a temporary distance learning environment.
- Distance learning will commence through Zoom, Google Classroom, learning packets, and other means.
- School will be cleaned and disinfected.
- Technology will be readily available to be loaned out to students as determined by need.
- School-wide expectations will be communicated concerning Distance Learning. A Distance Learning agreement will be shared and signed by teacher, student, and parent.