



**Fall 2020**

**Beginning the Year in Distance Learning  
A Handbook for Parents**

**St. Madeleine Catholic School**  
**PK3, TK4, Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade**

This document outlines guidelines related to starting the school year in Distance Learning. We reserve the right to make additions, amendments, and deletions at any time.

**According to the correspondence from Superintendent Paul Escala sent July 17, 2020:**

*“All three counties served by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles are currently on the state’s monitoring list and are likely to remain through August. The criteria for the return to in-person instruction is based on the state’s local health jurisdiction (LHJ) monitoring list. If a county is placed on the state’s monitoring list, the schools in that county will not be permitted to conduct instruction in-person. **Once the LHJ has been removed from the state’s monitoring list for 14 consecutive days, in-person instruction will be allowed to resume – this is when we will return to campuses.**”*

As **St. Madeleine** prepares to **Welcome Back** our students with Distance Learning in late August, efforts are underway to prepare to Welcome Back our children for in-person instruction as soon as we are cleared. In the meantime, Starting the School Year Smart, is the guiding document to ensure that all health and safety mandates are met. With the collaboration of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the Department of Catholic Schools and the Los Angeles Department of Public Health, this document outlines in detail what school sites must comply to in order to mitigate the transmission of COVID19 and ensure our school environments maintain a high standard of health and safety for students, parents, teachers and staff.

In the Spring of 2020, we transitioned rapidly to distance learning and we all learned together how to navigate this new instructional landscape. As we begin the 2020-2021 school year in distance learning, we are able to build on what we learned during the spring and make adjustments and refinements for our school's distance learning plan.

### **What is Distance Learning?**

According to the California Department of Education (2020), “distance learning means instruction in which the student and instructor are in different locations. This may include interacting through the use of a computer and communications technology.”

Students receive instruction remotely through synchronous and asynchronous engagement. Synchronous learning occurs in real time using live lessons led by the teacher. Asynchronous learning happens on one’s own time using materials provided by the teacher.

## Distance Learning Mission Statement

Our mission to **Educate and Empower Our Future Catholic Leaders** has not taken a hiatus. If anything, our convictions are stronger to support students academic progress and spiritual development by making Distance Learning effective, engaging and supportive of every child's needs. Leaders are borne from unforeseen circumstances and their ability to be flexible yet continue with the mission; Catholic education.

As we support our children, we support our parents in their efforts to manage their jobs, families and child's education. We commit whole heartedly to be flexible and reach out to our parents, taking the time to know their realities and adjust as needed.

Our distance learning plan is designed with the following key features:

- **Asynchronous** learning to ensure the opportunity to learn for all students based on schedule and connectivity
  - **Whole group instruction**
  - **Small group instruction**
  - **1 on 1 instruction**
- **Synchronous** video conferencing to support learning and socio-emotional needs of students through social interaction with peers and teachers
- A commitment to monitoring and improving this plan during the time of its implementation

While Distance Learning does not replicate onsite learning, teachers can deliver powerful instruction based on a robust curriculum that allows students to meet expected grade-level standards in an online environment aligned with the mission of our Catholic schools.

## Office Schedule

The office will be open **Monday – Thursday from 8am – 1p**. When visiting the office please remember to wear a mask and maintain social distance.

When **Lesson Plans** and **Resources/Packets** are ready for pick up, a text will be sent out via **Grade Link** and the office hours will be posted on the text if they are different from above. **Pick-up** and **Drop-off** of lesson plans and student work always takes place at the **school front gate**; the gate will be open, tables situated outside the gate and baskets marked per grade level for a **no contact pick up or delivery**.

## Instructional Schedule

We have developed distance learning instructional schedules that take into consideration the traditional school schedule, developmental age, and instructional minutes guidance.

Each day will have a minimum of 180 instructional minutes (including all synchronous and asynchronous work).

### **PK3, TK4, Kindergarten: 180 minutes (3 Hours)**

- *ELA 90 minutes (English/Language Arts)*
- *Math 30 minutes*
- *Religion 30 minutes*
- *Science/Social Studies 30 minutes*

### **1st – 5th Grade: 240 minutes (4 Hours)**

- *ELA 120 minutes(English/Language Arts)*
- *Math 60 minutes*
- *Social Studies/Science 30 minutes*
- *Religion 30 minutes*

***St. Madeleine Administration and Teachers take the following into Consideration:***

- ***Synchronous Blocks of Time:***
  - *Utilizing the time to maximize opportunities for **small group instruction** (the model can be delivered asynchronously through a pre-recorded video)*
  - *Implementing shorter time frames for any **whole group instruction***
- ***Asynchronous Blocks of Time:***
  - *The amount of time students will take to complete their **independent** and/or collaborative work*
  - *Utilizing choice boards or play lists for student work to provide differentiated support*
- *Allotting time for multiple, synchronous small group meetings within a given subject area to include sufficient time for transitions (both for you and the students/families).*
- *Brief “**brain breaks**” for students within each block and throughout the day to ensure time away from the screen.*
- *If some students/families are unable to attend small group synchronous opportunities, consider:*
  - *Having a late start day once or twice a week and offering a later time in the afternoon (e.g. 4pm or 5pm) for those students to participate.*
  - *Connecting with students at an earlier time (e.g. 7:30am) prior to the start time of the school day.*
  - *Have one-on-one conversations with families to identify alternative opportunities and supports for the student.*
  - *Having one half day or full day out of the week that is more asynchronous and more intentionally focused toward SEL opportunities for students (e.g. “Wellness Wednesday”).*

These schedules will begin **after the first week of school**. The first week of school will be used to orientate students and establish relationships. The schedule for the first week of school will be

### **August 24 – 27**

7:30a – 8:15a	Rise and Shine	Shower, Dress, Breakfast
8:30a	<b>Morning Prayer</b>	
8:45a	Getting to Know Your Activities	
10:00a	Recess/Snack	
10:30a	Assessments: Math, Reading, Writing – May be 1 on 1 or Small Group	
12noon	<b>Pray the Angelus</b> and then Lunch Break	
1:00p-2p	Reading	
2:00p-2:30p	Exit Tickets	
3:00p	End of Day – <b>Hail Holy Pray Queen</b>	

### **August 31 – End of Distance Learning – Monday - Thursday**

7:30a – 8:15a	Rise and Shine	Shower, Dress, Breakfast
8:30a	<b>Morning Prayer</b>	
8:45a	Religion	
9:15a	Math	
10:00a	Recess	
10:30a	ELA (Grammar, Writing, Reading, Vocabulary)	
12noon	<b>Pray the Angelus</b> and then Lunch	
12:50p	Science/Social Studies (Alternate Tuesday and Thursday)	
2pm	End of Day – <b>Prayer Hail Holy Queen</b>	

### **Friday – Parent Meetings**

Scheduled 1 on 1 Time with Every Parent

Scheduled 1 on 1 Assessment/Reteaching with Student

## Attendance

**Student attendance will be taken daily.** Teachers will take attendance using *a live video conference at 8:30a when students gather for Morning Prayer.*

Students who are **Late** for Morning Prayer will be marked "**Tardy.**" There also needs to be some evidence of completed student work in order to be marked "present" for the day. Teachers will record attendance by and record it in the school student information system.

If your child is unable to participate in the day's distance learning due to illness or other reasons, Please send a message to the teacher via **Class Dojo** and **an email to the school at [stmadeleinecatholicschool@gmail.com](mailto:stmadeleinecatholicschool@gmail.com).** If we do not hear from you, the absence will be marked as **Unexcused.**

## Communication

Communication will primarily be sent through three systems:

- **Grade Link Text Messages**, the school web page...**[www.stmadeleineschool.org](http://www.stmadeleineschool.org)** and **Class Dojo.**
- Each classroom will be using a Learning Management System (LMS) to communicate and organize student learning. Teachers will communicate with students through these platforms: *Google Classroom, Google Meet, Class Dojo, and Zoom.* **Weekly lesson plans, assignments and resources** will be picked up at the school office every two (2) weeks. A text message via Grade Link will be sent out with extended office hours. **Weekly Zoom and instruction schedules** will be **posted on Class Dojo by Friday afternoon** to allow parents to the opportunity to be organized and plan prior to the start of the following week.

Student **mastery** and **growth** will be **monitored** through specifically designed questions and assessment strategies. Teachers will be intentional about providing **regular feedback** to students on **progress** related to learning activities.

- Drop Off date and time for student completed work will be announced via Grade Link
- Student work may be dropped off at Parish Office mail slot
- All student work will be graded
- Assessments to include whole/small group and 1 on 1
- Exit tickets at end of lesson
- Friday Parent Meetings to review graded work and assessments
- Grades noted on Grade Link

- Progress Reports issued every two (2) weeks

Parents are asked to communicate with teachers via **Class Dojo**, **Google Classroom**, school **email** at **stmadeleinecatholicschool@gmail.com** or **calling** the front office at **909-623-9602** and leaving a message. Please remember that the teachers' priority is time with the students. Teachers will respond as soon as possible, but within 24 hours.

Teachers will also hold **virtual office hours**. The purpose of virtual office hours is for *parents who want to conference with the teacher, and to build a strong connection and relationship with each parent that supports student learning*. The virtual office will take place every **Friday via Zoom** at the request of the parent or teacher. Scheduled time will be shared with the parent by **Thursday evening**.

In addition, teachers will be available **Monday – Thursday from 5p-6p on Class Dojo** to answer any questions. Parents please send any questions or concern to the teacher prior to this time so they may prepare to address your questions.

The school administration will provide consistent communication via the school web page, Grade Link text messages and 1 on 1 meetings in the school office. (Social Distance and Mask required.)

### **Picking Up Resources**

We have established a schedule for families to pick up books, lesson plans and other resources. Once **lesson plans** are ready for pick up, a **text message** will be sent via **Grade Link** with the extended office hours and days. **Pick up** will take place at the **front gate** which will be open for **no contact pick up**. Lesson plans and resources will be placed in a basket clearly marked with the grade levels. We aim to ensure that all students and parents have access to needed materials.

### **Orientation and Community Building**

Each teacher will hold a **Meet and Greet the week of August 17** with each student and their parents. This Meet and Greet will take place at St. Madeleine following all health and safety requirements. The teacher will reach out to schedule this meeting. At this time, **student textbooks** and **initial lesson plans** will be ready to take home.

## Technology Support

St. Madeleine is committed to **support** parents and students with **technology** which *may include synchronous sessions and asynchronous sessions using Class Dojo, Google Classroom and Zoom.* It is ideal for each student to have a **dedicated device** (iPad, desk top computer, laptop, and internet access) that is not being shared with another sibling. **Please let us know if you need help with acquiring a device.**

## Norms for a Distance Learning Environment

To facilitate a successful distance learning environment, we have established these student and **parent norms...PLEASE**

- Be on time for a scheduled Zoom instruction
- Come prepared for instruction
- Siblings may not be in the learning environment – distracting
- NO eating or drinking while in “School”
- Use restroom before “Class” begins
- Instill in your child the importance of education and even though they are at home, they are in school.
- Enforce the importance of dedicating time to learning, reading and studying.
- Allow your child to explain their choices.
- During “Class time” on Zoom, do not interfere with the instruction – your child must be responsible and independent learners.
- Do not allow your child to “**Rush**” through work just to finish – Excellence takes time.

## How to be a Distance Learning Student

The teacher will be reviewing class specific guidelines, however, as a school, we have the following expectations:

- Be dressed for “school” (no pajamas) and ready for morning prayer
- Come prepared with white board, expo marker, eraser (an old sock)
- Come prepared with paper, clip board, pencils (sharpened) and erasers
- Come prepared with textbook (once they are distributed)
- Have a designated “Study Area” with a desk, comfortable chair,
- Learning space is quiet and removed from distractions
- Sign into Zoom session 5 minutes early – Turn on camera
- (No laying or sitting in bed)
- Have completed independent work

- Once instruction has begun just like in the classroom – No talking – Listen to the Teacher

### **How to be a Distance Learning Parent**

#### **To support the teacher, parents are asked to...**

- Create a space for learning – desk, lamp, supplies, dictionary, white board, marker, eraser, plain wide ruled paper, homework, etc...Teacher will give specific directions per lesson)
- Use teacher created lesson plan to monitor completion of all work
- Three (3) hours every day must be dedicated for instruction, independent work, studying and reading
- Monitoring student work – Check Quality of Work and ask student to redo work that is poorly done
- Support student progress by reaching out to the teacher for support and more specific directions

Here are additional tips adapted from <https://www.acs-schools.com/parents-guide-distance-learning>

### **Parent's Guide to Distance Learning**

#### **Establish routines and expectations**

It is important to develop good habits from the start. Create a routine and talk about how it's working over-time. Chunk your days into predictable segments. Help students get up, get dressed and ready to learn at a reasonable time. Keep normal bedtime routines, including normal rules for digital devices. Develop good habits right away.

#### **Choose a good place to learn**

Set up a physical location that's dedicated to school-focused activities. Make sure it is quiet, free from distractions and has a good internet connection. Make sure an adult monitors online learning. Keep doors open, and practice good digital safety. Ensure that all needed materials are nearby.

#### **Stay in touch**

Teachers will mainly be communicating regularly through our online platforms and virtual learning environments. Make sure everyone knows how to find the help they need to be successful. If you have concerns reach out.

### **Help students 'own' their learning**

No one expects parents to be full-time teachers or to be educational and content matter experts. Provide support and encouragement, and expect your children to do their part. Struggling is allowed and encouraged! Don't help too much. Becoming independent takes lots of practice.

### **Begin and end the day by checking-in**

In the morning, you might ask:

- What classes/subject do you have today?
- How will you spend your time?
- What resources do you need?
- What can I do to help?

At the end of the day you might ask:

- How far did you get in your learning tasks today?
- What did you discover? What was hard?
- What could we do to make tomorrow better?
- What can we do to organize you for tomorrow?

### **Encourage physical activity and exercise**

Living and working at home, we will all need some room to let off steam. Moving (independently and together as a family) is vital to health, wellbeing, and readiness for learning. Have your child complete chores; everyone help.

### **Manage stress and make the most of an unusual situation**

We are going through a time of major upheaval to our normal routines and ways of life, and there's a great deal of anxiety in the world right now. Emotions may be running high, and children may be worried or fearful. Parents may be stressed as well, and children are often keenly aware of trouble. Children benefit when they get age-appropriate factual information and ongoing reassurance from trusted adults. In these circumstances, it's often possible to reframe challenges as opportunities.

### **Monitor time on-screen and online**

Distance learning does not mean staring at computer screens seven and half hours every day. Teachers will aim to build in variety of on-line and off-line tasks. Work together to find ways to prevent 'down time' from becoming just more 'screen time.' Podcasts and audiobook (many free through library apps) are great options.

**Connect safely with friends, and be kind**

Help your children maintain contact with friends through safe online technologies. But monitor your child's online use. Remind your child to be polite, respectful and appropriate in their communications, and to follow school guidelines in their interactions with others. Report unkindness and other problems so that everyone maintains healthy relationships and positive interactions.