

**Immaculate Conception Catholic Academy in Astoria**  
**21-63 29<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Astoria, New York, 11105**  
**School Re-Opening Plan and Logistics**  
**August 2020**

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**I. Executive Summary**

- For the 2020-2021 School year, there are various scenarios for the opening of school. In all scenarios there is an understanding that the coronavirus will remain a threat and will be in circulation with limited availability to medical treatment and without a vaccine.
- Immaculate Conception Catholic Academy in Astoria (“Academy”) plans to fully open for in-school learning in the Fall of 2020. However, we must comply with the NY Governor’s mandates and the NYS Department of Health’s guidance for in-person instruction. The decision to re-open will be based on consistency with all required governmental instruction.
- Those responsible to oversee the Academy Re-opening and the policies and protocols plan are the principal, assistant principal, board members, and a newly established Re-Opening Input Team, comprised of parents, teachers, board members, and other key constituents. The responsible party for this plan is Brother Joseph Rocco, sc, Ed.D who is the Academy’s Principal and the Covid-19 Coordinator.
- The practices and protocol details in this plan will be disseminated to all Academy teachers, staff and families. The plan will also be made available on the school’s website.
- If all relevant governmental guidance provides a green light, the Academy’s re-open timeline is: a) Teachers and staff will report to the Academy on September 8, b) the Students’ first day of school will be according to the following schedule: September 9 (Grades 6-7-8); September 10 (Grades 3-4-5); September 11 (K-1-2), September 14 (all grades and Nursery and Pre-K for All).

- The physical plant of the building, both in square footage and classroom design, allows the Academy to meet the requirements of social distancing to provide maximum possible protection from spreading the coronavirus. It is not necessary to rearrange or re-purpose space. There will be no impact on fire code compliance, inspections, emergency exits, or other general facility code issues.
- The Academy will be ready to protect students, teachers and staff.

## **II. Creating well defined entrance protocols for students, teachers, and visitors**

The following describes the Academy entrance/dismissal protocols:

### Students:

- Three designated doors will accommodate Academy entry each day at 7:50 am.
  - a. Front Doors of the School: Nursery and PreK- for All*
  - b. Side Doors near Church: Kindergarten and Grades 1-3*
  - c. Gym Door (Grotto side): Grades 4-8*
  - d. Children waiting to enter will be on line marked with 6 feet markers*
- Temperatures will be taken upon entering the building. Parents will receive instructions on steps to be taken at home for signs of illness and temperature screening and report the results to the school prior to the child's arrival.
- Students with fever of greater than 100.0 degrees F will be sent home or isolated in Room 3 until a parent/guardian can pick them up.
- Face coverings (provided by parents) must be worn (see details in Section IX).
- Students will be asked to use a hand sanitizer available at each entrance before entering the building. Hand sanitizers will also be available at the entrance of each classroom.

- Careful concern should be given to students who are considered “high risk” due to any physical conditions noted on the student’s medical history.
- Dismissal Procedures:
  - a. *Nurse Morning Program 11:00 am - Front doors of school*
  - b. *Nurse Full Day 2:30 pm - Front doors of school*
  - c. *Pre-K for All 2:20 pm - Front doors of school*
  - d. *Kindergarten 2:45 pm - Church side door*
  - e. *Grades 1 through 8 3:00 pm - Gym Door –Grotto side*

Teachers:

- An Administrative representative will take the teachers’ temperature upon entering; all teachers will enter through the front doors of the school. Teachers with temperatures greater than 100.0 degrees F will not be allowed to enter the Academy.
- Face covering must be worn; gloves will also be provided (see details in Section IX for face coverings).
- Teachers will be asked to use hand sanitizer available at the entrance before entering the Academy. Hand sanitizers will also be available at the entrance of each classroom.

Visitors:

- Visitors to the Academy will be greatly limited; all visitors must enter through the Front Door; deliveries will be accepted at the front doors of the school only. Parents must make an appointment before entering Academy.
- Temperatures will be taken before entering the building.
- Face coverings must be worn at all times.
- Visitors will be asked to use a hand sanitizer available at the Front Door entrance before entering the building.

### **III. Developing routines for daily health checks**

Teachers, staff and students will be asked to stay home if they are sick or have come in contact with someone that tested positive for Covid-19.

#### Students

- A daily screening questionnaire for students (Parents to respond at home) will be created and administered.
- Teachers and staff will have readily available thermometers for temperature checks, if there are any indication of symptoms.

#### Teachers:

- A daily screening questionnaire for Faculty and Staff will be created and administered.

#### Nurse's office:

- A dedicated Nurse's Office is located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the school building.
- The Nurse's Office is equipped with a cot, thermometers, medical supplies, private telephone line, bathroom facility.
- The nurse will be monitoring the health protocols especially for those who show any symptoms. Referrals (calls) will be made immediately to the parents and notification to the Academy administration.

#### **Isolation Room:**

- First floor Room 3 of the Academy will be used as an isolation room.
- Any student displaying a COVID-19 symptom will be immediately sent to Room 3; parents will be notified to pick the child up from the Academy; the Academy will follow up with the parents on the status of the medical condition of the student in the coming days until the student is cleared to return to school (i.e., condition not COVID-related or tested COVID-negative)

#### **IV. Developing protocols for social distancing in the classroom**

The Academy's building one-time accommodated 1300 students, hence the building is large enough to accommodate the approximately 250 students expected to be enrolled.

- The average size classroom is 29' x 30' square feet and the Academy's average class size is expected to be between 15 to 20 students, hence, well beyond the 6-foot social distancing guideline/student.
- Seating will be in rows and facing the front of the classroom so that the teachers can observe all students.
- Students will be assigned to the same seats each day in the same classroom; lockers or bins will be clearly labeled with the student's name.
- Teachers, staff and students showing fever or symptoms will be sent to the school nurse who will isolate the person and request they be sent home.
- With grades 5 – 8 (departmental classes) the teachers will change rooms while students remain in their homeroom to eliminate unnecessary movement.
- Students will be required to bring all materials to their desks so as to avoid any movement around the classroom and in the halls.
- Students will receive continual instruction on proper hand washing, use of hand sanitizers, importance of covering nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing.
- Classroom teachers should be aware of any students with special needs, especially regarding all the protocols in place.
- The large windows in the classrooms will be kept open to allow fresh air to continually circulate.
- Students will be escorted outdoors for a fresh air" break; masks may be removed, always abiding by the 6-foot social distancing rule.

**V. Developing a plan for social distancing outside of the classroom in highly populated areas like hallway/locker areas, restrooms, locker rooms, lunchroom/cafeteria, the library, etc. This includes a plan for Mass and extra-curricular activities.**

- Hallways and staircases will be clearly labeled with specific directional arrows for movement and distance markers denoting spaces of 6 feet.
- Students will be required to wear face covering when in common areas such as the hallways, lunchroom, restrooms, etc.
- Bathrooms will be used as a class under the careful supervision of the teachers; 4 students will be limited to the bathroom at one time.
- Students at the Academy bring their own lunch from home. Options being considered:
  - a. Our large auditorium/lunchroom may accommodate a lunch period with students social distancing and remaining within their class/cohort groups. After each lunch period, the lunch tables/room will be sanitized.
  - b. Classes/cohorts will remain in their assigned class to eat lunch.

An outside break for fresh air will be worked into the lunch schedule (with 6-foot social distancing in place.)
- When possible, Physical Education classes will be held outside where students can socially distance; if held inside, the Academy has a large regulation size gym which can easily accommodate 12-foot social distancing.
- The Academy will limit what students can bring to school in the “back packs” – to include necessary books, school supplies, lunch and snacks.
- Careful social distancing (6-foot separation and face-coverings worn during all drills) is planned during “fire drills” and “emergency drills,”-e.g. lockdowns, silent evacuations, bomb threats.

- Our Parish church, which may accommodate over 1,000 people is already well-prepared with specific markers in each pew where a person may sit, hence Mass celebrations may be safely accommodated.
- For school activities, if permissible, (clubs, extensive day learning program, early morning drop-off), the teachers/moderators/supervisors must adhere to all the protocols established for the regular school day, including temperature checks, required face coverings and following social distancing guidelines.
- Signs citing healthy hygiene practices will be posted in high visibility areas: entrances, bathrooms, classrooms, offices, hallways.
- Large gatherings of students will not be permitted anywhere in the building - No class assemblies, large events, and fields trips will be permitted.

#### **VI. Developing scheduling options to facilitate reduced capacity at school**

Plan 1: Given large building and small class sizes, the Academy plans to be fully open with all protocols in place: social distancing, face coverings, proper hand hygiene, temperature reading, tracing, etc. The Academy believes the building can more than adequately meet all the protocols for a safe re-opening for students, teachers and staff.

Plan 2: If for some reason, restrictive mandates are imposed that require an alternate to a full opening, the Academy is prepared to implement a hybrid learning schedule. The Academy will introduce a 6 days cycle: Days 1-3-5 (Nursery, PreK, Grades 1-3); and Days 2-4-6 (Grades 4-8). Days that students are not in the building, remote at home learning will take place.

Plan 3: If the Governor mandates that schools delay opening, the Academy is fully prepared for Distance Learning.

Based on the results of the recent family survey, parents overwhelming support in-school learning. However, if remote instruction occurs once again, teachers will continue the instructional alignment with the NYS Learning Standards; regular and substantive interaction with the teacher, and with instruction for students and families with additional operational support required in a remote learning

environment. Families will receive IT assistance and instruction in accessing ZOOM, and Google Classroom.

Families will receive the assistance and necessary equipment needed to ensure that every student has access to technology.

## **VII. Creating a plan to handle confidentiality issues/Special accommodations**

- If a student or teacher in a cohort class is diagnosed with COVID-19, the students in that class will be asked to obtain a COVID-19 test and remain home for 14 days. These students will participate in an online learning program with the assigned teacher(s) until a medical professional clears them to return.
- In case of a positive report of a student, teacher or staff member with a Covid-19 diagnosis, the school community will be notified and the school may be closed for at least 24 hours. All the classrooms, offices and common areas will be disinfected with approved CDC disinfectant products by the Schol Cleaning Company.
- Complying with the State, City and Health agencies, parents will be notified should there be a situation regarding Covid-19 while maintaining confidentiality.
- The Academy will encourage parents to self-report to the school if they or the student have any symptoms or have been in contact with anyone has tested positive for Covid-19.
- Students, parents, faculty and staff with recent travel (international or within a state with widespread transmission of Covid-19 as designated by the NYS Travel Advisory) must quarantine before entry into the Academy building.
- The Academy will be in communication with the local health department of any serious situation which may warrant an immediate closure of the Academy. The responsibility rests with the Principal and the Assistant Principal.

- Should the State and City, in collaboration with the local health department, initiate on-site testing of all students, faculty and staff, the results will be shared with the school community while maintaining confidentiality.
- Students experiencing social and emotional issues will be assisted by a counselor from the Program for the Development of Human Potential (PDHP) who will be providing counseling services to the Academy.
- The more vulnerable school population that includes students and faculty and staff, will be provided all health and safety protocols as mentioned, along with additional measures of protection that may include further social distancing, face shields, desk dividers or plexiglass work stations and flexible work schedules.

**VIII. Procuring the necessary supplies for hygiene like hand sanitizer, wipes with bleach, etc.**

The Academy administration has been in consultation with various vendors regarding the purchase of the necessary hygiene productions for the opening of the Academy.

- Every classroom and office will have the following:
  1. Hand sanitizer
  2. Disinfectant wipes
  3. A supply of face coverings (however, students will be required to bring their own)
  4. Paper towels /tissues
- Several thermometers will be located on each floor of the Academy building for teachers/aides.
- Hand sanitizing equipment will be located at every entrance
- Bathrooms will have proper hand soap as well as sanitizer

**IX. Creating a plan for deep-cleaning of facilities and high touch areas daily, between alternate schedules, in the case of evidence of positive cases, etc.**

One-time Deep cleaning and disinfecting:

- The entire building will undergo a deep cleaning and disinfecting in late August before the students, faculty and staff return for the September opening. A special company has been commissioned by the Diocese to undertake this process.

Daily professional cleaning:

- Schol Cleaning Company has been engaged to perform a daily cleaning and disinfecting of the entire building, including all classrooms, offices, etc.
- In case of a positive report of a student, teacher or staff member with a Covid-19 diagnosis, the school community will be notified and the school may be closed for at least 24 hours. All the classrooms, offices and common areas will be disinfected with approved CDC disinfectant products by the Schol Cleaning Company.

Academy Custodian:

- The school custodian will dedicate much of his time during the day to sanitizing the following items: doorknobs, light switches, handles, bathroom sinks, toilets, auditorium/lunchroom tables.
- The custodian will be required to keep a daily log which includes date, time and the scope of cleaning and disinfection.

The nurse's office will be cleaned after each use of the cot, phone, sink, chairs and, if necessary, the bathroom.

**X. Developing any necessary protocols for wearing facemasks including creating plans for students with sensory issues**

- Students are required to wear face coverings when in the school building and maintain appropriate social/physical distancing. Students should bring an appropriate face covering from home. The school will have surgical masks available for students as needed.

- Faculty and Staff shall be required to wear masks. Masks will be provided to all staff members by the Academy. Choosing to wear a mask of their own is equally acceptable. In addition, face shields will be provided upon request, but they are not to be used in lieu of a mask.
- All visitors to the school for any reason will always be required to wear a face covering while on school grounds or in the school building.
- All masks for faculty, staff, and students are subject to approval by the principal and Office of the Superintendent of Schools. Masks should be plain and free of any objectionable statements or support for any group, product, political view, and so on, other than the name of their Parish School or Catholic Academy.
- Non-disposable mask should be washed daily.
- NYS Department of Health Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at PK – Grade 12 schools during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (July 13, 2020 ) recommends that if face coverings are to be worn by all individuals at all times, students should be allowed to remove their face coverings during meals, while outside in the fresh air, and for short breaks so long as they maintain appropriate social distance. The Academy will be following this recommendation.
- CDC recognizes that wearing cloth face coverings may not be possible in every situation or for some people. In some situations, wearing a cloth face covering may exacerbate a physical or mental health condition, lead to a medical emergency, or introduce significant safety concerns. Adaptations and alternatives will be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a cloth face covering or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading if it is not possible to wear one.

Cloth face coverings will not be placed on:

- Children younger than 2 years old.
- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious.

- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

Appropriate and consistent use of cloth face coverings may be challenging for some students, teachers, and staff, including:

- Younger students, such as those in early elementary school.
- Students, teachers, and staff with severe asthma or other breathing difficulties.
- Students, teachers, and staff with special educational or healthcare needs, including intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, and sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity.
- While cloth face coverings are strongly encouraged to reduce the spread of COVID-19, CDC recognizes there are specific instances when wearing a cloth face covering may not be feasible. In these instances, parents, guardians, caregivers, teachers, and school administrators should consider adaptations and alternatives whenever possible. They may need to consult with healthcare providers for advice about wearing cloth face coverings.

### **Clear Face Coverings or Face Shields**

Teachers and staff who may consider using clear face coverings or face shields include;

- Those who interact with students or staff who are deaf or hard of hearing, per the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#)
- Teachers of young students learning to read
- Teachers of students in English as a second language classes
- Teachers of students with disabilities

*Face shields are not to be used for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings because of a lack of evidence of their effectiveness for source control.*

## **Practical Recommendations to be Instituted**

- Include cloth face coverings on school supply lists and provide cloth face coverings as needed to students, teachers, staff, or visitors who do not have them available.
- Include clear face coverings on school supply lists for teachers and staff who regularly interact with students who are deaf or hard of hearing, students learning to read, students with disabilities, and those who rely on lip reading as a part of learning, such as students who are English Language Learners.
- Ensure that students and staff are aware of the correct use of cloth face coverings, including wearing cloth face coverings over the nose and mouth and securely around the face.
- Ensure that students, teachers and staff are aware that they should wash or sanitize their hands (using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol) before putting on a cloth face covering.
- Ensure that students, teachers, and staff are aware that they should not touch their cloth face coverings while wearing them and, if they do, they should wash their hands before and after with soap and water or sanitize hands (using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol).
- Ensure teachers and staff are aware that they should wash or sanitize hands (using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol) before and after helping a student put on or adjust a cloth face covering.
- Ensure that all students and staff are aware that cloth face coverings should not be worn if they are wet. A wet cloth face covering may make it difficult to breathe.
- Ensure that all students and staff are aware that they should never share or swap cloth face coverings.

- Students' cloth face coverings will be clearly identified with their names or initials, to avoid confusion or swapping. Students' face coverings may also be labeled to indicate top/bottom and front/back.
- Cloth face coverings will be stored in a space designated for each student that is separate from others when not being worn (e.g., in individually labeled containers or bags, personal lockers, or cubbies).
- Parents will be instructed that cloth face coverings should be washed after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled.
- Students and our school will have additional cloth face coverings available for students, teachers, and staff in case a back-up cloth face covering is needed during the day and to facilitate every day washing of cloth face coverings.

#### **XI. Reviewing and updated the Emergency Contact Plan**

- The Academy uses **Option C** as the alert system for all emergency contacts. Updates will also be given through the Academy's website and social media. Messages will be translated into the languages spoken in the school community.
- This plan will be updated by the administration and the Academy's advisory group prior to the opening of school in September.
- Parents will have the opportunity to receive a copy of our Covid-19 emergency plan.
- The plan will be monitored daily and adjustments made accordingly if necessary.
- The Principal will consult with local health authorities if cases increase in the Academy.

- The Principal will communicate to authorities, teachers and staff, and families regarding safety measures, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.
- The Principal or Assistant Principal will address student, parent, teachers and staff concerns.

**XII. Periodically surveying stakeholders to evaluate programming and support and make adjustments.**

- Those responsible to oversee the Academy Re-opening and the policies and protocol plan are the principal, assistant principal, board members, and a newly established Re-Opening Input Team.
- The Principal will call a meeting of the “Re-Opening Input Team” to evaluate the effectiveness of the re-opening plan and tap into this team as a resource for assessing the effectiveness of the plan and to make adjustments as needed.
- Parents, faculty and staff will be surveyed periodically on the effectiveness of the plan.
- Adjustments will be made in areas that need greater revision, etc.
- The Principal will provide families with communication and highlights of all the positive things that continue to happen on a daily basis at Immaculate Conception Catholic Academy in lieu of the pandemic.
- The Principal and the “Re-Opening Input Team” will initiate ways to promote the safety of our Academy to our current students and families, as well as prospective families.

Additional Resources:

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/>
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

**Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)**

3. <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>