



From the desk of

Mrs. Laura Bernauer



June 30, 2020

Dear St. Albans Parents,

Happy Summer to each of you! As you are aware, we are planning to be on campus for in-person instruction beginning August 19, 2020. I know how anxious you and your students are to hear details about our upcoming school year, so below you will find an outline of some of the **key measures we are taking to ensure the health and safety of all St. Albans students and community members.**

This information is also included in the Summer Packets being mailed this week. Please keep in mind that we anticipate making continued changes and updates as school approaches.

- To minimize the chance of illness, we will keep students in "cohorts"; each grade level will constitute a cohort and will not mingle with other classes. By keeping our students in smaller groups, this allows us to minimize the spread of sickness by decreasing the number of people any individual student has contact with.
- At drop-off, students should be wearing a mask prior to exiting the vehicle and follow the designated one-way walkways. At the classroom door, each child will be symptom screened and have their temperature checked with a touchless digital thermometer prior to entering the classroom. If their temperature is equal to or greater than 100.1, they will be sent to the office to have their temperature re-checked using a digital thermometer. If again the child's temperature is 100.1 or greater, the student will be sent home. Additionally, all teachers and staff members will undergo symptom screening and temperature checks each morning.
- Desks will be placed 3 feet apart and individual desks have been ordered for Kindergarten. Students will remain in their classrooms for most classes; Music/Drama, P.E., and Computers will still take place in auxiliary classrooms. The upper grades will remain in their homeroom classrooms for much of the day but will move for Science, P.E., Music/Drama, and Computers. Eighth grade students will also move for 2 additional periods during each week.

- The Playground will be separated into 4 areas. A painted yellow line demarcates the black-top area and each grade level will be assigned an area. Recess will be staggered for the lower grades and each class will have an area of the playground to play. The upper grade students will be given areas in which they can go. For the lower grades, teachers will be on yard duty and for the upper grade kids, 3 teachers will be on the playground.
- A handwashing station will be placed outside of the snack bar area and another station will be located at the end of 5th grade. The bathrooms will also be utilized for handwashing. All lower grade classrooms have handwashing sinks located within each classroom.
- Handwashing schedules will be central to our infection-control measures. Please review proper hand-washing techniques with your children. Each classroom will have hand sanitizing stations and every time students and teachers enter or leave the room, they will use it. Upper grade students will wash hands using bathroom sinks instead of sinks in classrooms.
- Computer class will have sneeze guards between the computers. Upon entering, students will use sanitizer. When students leave the room, all keyboards, mice and chairs will be sanitized. Music/Drama class will be held in Taber Center where students can be spaced out and Mrs. Shiro will focus on activities where social distancing can be maintained.
- Cleaning will go on periodically throughout the day; Clorox wipes, sanitizing solutions and/or sprays will be utilized. We have electrostatic sanitizing machines that will be used at the end of each day for deep cleaning. These machines will also be used in Pre-K and K when students go out to recess to ensure that highly touched surfaces, such as toys, are cleaned frequently.
- Our hot lunch food will be prepared in our kitchen and masks and gloves will be worn by anyone in the kitchen. Lunches will be delivered to the classrooms and each individually boxed lunch will include utensils, napkins, and condiments inside the box. Students will eat either inside their classrooms at their desks or outside in designated areas. All students will wash their hands before and after eating and desks will be wiped before and after eating. After eating, students will proceed outside to play in designated areas and they will be monitored outside by our usual playground staff. They will be kept in their "cohorts."
- As of right now, we will not have any after school clubs or activities because these involve students mingling with other students outside their cohort. The appropriateness of clubs and activities will be reassessed as the year moves ahead and will be based on state and county recommendations.

- All HVAC system air-filters are being changed to the OSHA recommended Merv 13 filters and will be replaced every three months. Classrooms will also prop doors open, as much as possible, to allow for fresh air flow.
- We ask that parents in grade 2 and older not walk their child to their classroom (unless you are a new St. Albans family); this will help to decrease crowding during the busy morning. All adults on campus must wear a face mask at all times. To minimize crowding in our office, we ask that you send Mindy or Susan an email or place a phone call whenever possible. We will place pdf files of frequently used forms on our website.
- We are continuing to work on our overall plan for Day Care. At this point, it looks as if Day Care will only be available to students who sign-up on a weekly basis. We need to know how many students from each class are actually attending so we can plan for the space needed as well as how many Day Care workers will be required. Once again we will be keeping students in "cohorts" to minimize the contact between groups of students as much as possible. We may also have certain times of the day that students in day care will be required to wear masks but parents will know in advance.
- If you receive a phone call from the school to let you know that your child is running a fever, IT IS IMPERATIVE that they are picked up ASAP. They will be kept in a separate room and will be given a mask to wear.
- As you know, Governor Newsom has ordered everyone in the State of California over the age of two to wear a face covering when out in public. We know that all students will need to wear a mask when arriving and when leaving, because the numbers of people in one area would far exceed what is allowable. We also believe that there are activities that will require masks, such as singing or while participating in upper grade science labs but we are uncertain of what other measures we will be required to take. We do not know if the requirements will be the same for every grade level either and this will be determined as we get closer to the start of school. So, while we are a private entity and do not receive any funding from the government, we still have to abide by recommendations given by state and public health to minimize the spread of COVID-19 so that we can stay open. We recommend that you find a proper fitting face masks for your children and have them practice wearing it. A proper fit is essential to prevent the child from touching his/her face with frequent adjustments. Children are highly adaptable and with practice will become accustomed to wearing it.

Many parents have asked what would **Distance Learning** look like if the state issues a shelter-in-place order again or a class has to be placed on distance learning due to sickness in that one class.

As you know, during this last distance learning we staggered zoom sessions in many classes to try to accommodate families who had issues with the number of devices available. However, moving forward, we have made significant changes to what our model will look like and classes across grades and grade levels will meet simultaneously. Here are a few of the changes:

- We have purchased a Zoom Education Account and all users will now be required to sign into Zoom with their stalbans.org Google account before Zoom will allow them to join a meeting. This is another layer of security to prevent unwanted people outside of our school to invade a meeting in progress. All students who have already used their stalbans.org Google account to join meetings this past spring will be prompted to consolidate their account. All St. Albans Zoom users will also be required to have a camera on during all sessions for the duration of the class to ensure that the St. Albans student is actually the person attending the class.
- We've also purchased a new malware and website security management system, iBoss, and you may notice that if your child attempts to log on to outside websites at home with their school account, restrictions may block where they are attempting to visit. This is in addition to our GoGuardian security.
- With a Zoom Education Account, teachers will now be able to easily record and save lessons. Mrs. Gast has created google classroom accounts for all students which will allow teachers to communicate schedules, lessons and assignments to all parents in one place. Upper grade students will continue to utilize Google Classroom to manage all assignments and lower grade students will use this tool, too, but in an age-appropriate way.
- Should it be necessary, all lower grade teachers would begin teaching each day at the same time and would teach and review concepts daily. They will introduce what the students should be doing next and then students will have the opportunity to work independently. Then, students will have a zoom session with an auxiliary teacher, a time to work, and then another session with their classroom teacher. Their day will alternate between zoom sessions and independent work times. All auxiliary teachers will be included in the schedule; Spanish, Library, Music/Drama, Art, and PE will be included. Additionally, Classroom Aides will be meeting with students one on one so that reading fluency, reading skills, and math skills can be worked on in a more personal way with each child. There will be a "wrap-up" session at the end of each day with the classroom teacher.
- The upper grade schedule will be similar to what was done this last spring however some adjustments will be made to the number of times students meet with each teacher to allow for more frequent interactions. Once again, just as with the lower grades, times will not be staggered so devices will need to be available. They will continue to use google classroom for assignments and will see multiple teachers each day.

- It is important that families make sure that devices are available for their children should this be necessary.
- Teachers will attend training sessions on how to use the new zoom platform as well as additional tools that can be used to best meet the needs of students at each grade level. This will occur before school begins on August 19.
- Additional technology has been purchased for both teachers and aides to ensure they have the correct hardware to deliver curriculum.

Though I know we all wish life was "back to normal" - I am confident in the thoughtfully researched approach we have created for this coming school year.

I think you might also find the attached guidelines for schools, created by the American Academy of Pediatrics, a helpful and reassuring resource: [COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry.](#)

See you soon!

Sincerely

Laura Bernauer
Head of School