



St. Helen in Person Reopening Plan
August 2020
Revised August 23, 2020

Since the release of this plan, the Archdiocese has issued new guidance for schools, allowing each school to offer remote learning to their own students. We have also revised our morning drop off procedures after hearing feedback from stakeholders and in light of additional guidance from the Archdiocese. We rescheduled our opening day for August 31 to give our teachers additional time to plan a rigorous curriculum that is aligned with Archdiocesan standards and is consistent for both our in-person learners and our remote learners. We have postponed before school care for the first trimester due to the increased need for cleaning and preparation on the part of our teachers. While our core principles that govern the reopening plan remain the same, a few things will change. I have noted these changes in blue.

Please take note of changes in drop off times and locations.

Be assured that while safety remains our highest priority, we are also committed to delivering a high quality education to all learners regardless of which type of learning environment they choose for the first trimester. This is an ever-evolving situation and we appreciate your flexibility and patience.

I am happy to present our reopening plan for 5-day in person instruction during these challenging times. As our state, city and communities are in Phase 4, we have been planning non-stop for reopening St. Helen School in the safest way possible. I recognize many of us have concerns as the school prepares to reopen. As we continue to learn more about how to keep our community safe, St. Helen will continue to adapt the plan according to guidelines from medical and educational experts. I ask each of us to commit to supporting St. Helen School as a united community, following our reopening plan so that we can keep ourselves and each other safe and also remain healthy as the

academic year progresses. I recognize that the new procedures will take some getting used to, and I welcome your help following the reopening plan and procedures.

As we open St. Helen School, I offer the following as guiding principles for our St. Helen family. If we follow the guidelines, we have the ability to foster a healthy in-person learning environment, and will then begin to envision our future together after the pandemic:

1. The safety and well-being of students and school employees is our primary concern. We will do what we must so that everyone in our school feels safe and undeterred.
2. Everything possible is being done to reopen school buildings and provide a faith-filled education.
3. The progress of the COVID-19 pandemic in Illinois remains unpredictable, and there remains the potential that students and personnel will need to sporadically quarantine and that school buildings may be closed again if a significant rise in cases were to occur.
4. Faithful citizenship is key – we expect our families to take personal responsibility for the common good as well as their own safety.

Our St. Helen reopening plan is based upon:

1. The State of Illinois and City of Chicago guidance and phased reopening plan throughout the spring and summer
2. The [Archdiocese school reopening plan](#)
3. Feedback, insight and research from the newly formed St. Helen Academic committee, newly formed St. Helen Health and Safety committee, faculty and staff, parents of SHS students, questions asked throughout this process, publications and research cited by the State of Illinois Board of Education, the CDC, the IDPH, and Archdiocese of Chicago.

Opportunities to practice and talk to your children before school opening

- Please limit your contact with people outside your family as school approaches.
- Wear a mask whenever you are unable to physically distance in public.
- Talk to your child about wearing a mask and practice so they can get comfortable wearing a mask for longer periods of time.
- Talk to your child to help them understand drop off and pick up procedures. They will be helped out of the car by a St. Helen's teacher or aide - parents will not be allowed into the building.

- The only people allowed in the building for the foreseeable future are students registered at St. Helen's School and faculty and staff of St. Helen's School.
- Talk to your child about how this school year will be different so they know what to expect in the classroom and the building and we can help them through this transition.
- Please don't travel to any of the places on City of Chicago Mayor Lightfoot's Travel Ban list in the weeks prior to school opening - please keep in mind that the list changes as states are seeing surges.
- Opportunities to get acquainted:
 - Tuesday August 11 at 6:30pm I will hold a Zoom for preschool families that will include me and the preschool teachers.
 - Wednesday August 12 at 6:30pm I will hold a Zoom for kindergarten families that will include me and the kindergarten teachers.
 - On August 21, we invite preschool and kindergarten students to come meet their teachers outside in the school parking lot at the following times:

(Students, parents and teachers may only come at their assigned time)

9:00-9:30	Ms. Eva's class (preK)
9:30-10:00	Mrs. Gallery's class (preK)
10:00-10:30	Mrs. Rose's class (preK)
10:30-11:00	Mrs. Kucharski's class (preK)
11:00-11:30	Mr. Allen's class (kindergarten)
12:30-1:00	Ms. Schreiber's class (preK)
1:00-1:30	Ms. Sulaiman's class (preK)
1:30-2:00	Ms. Hoffman's class (preK)
2:00-2:30	new kindergarten teacher (still interviewing)

The purpose of these meetings is to help ease the transition to the first day of school.

Before School Care

- Due to the increased time needed to clean and prepare classrooms, we will not be providing before school care for the first trimester.

First Day of School

- The first day of school is Monday, August 31. (drop off times discussed below under “Morning Procedures”)
- Preschool and kindergarten students will dismiss at 10:00.
- Grades 1-8 will dismiss at noon.
- No lunch will be served, nor will there be a lunch period, on the first day of school.
- There will be no before or after school care on the first day of school.
- “Morning Procedures” will be followed on the first day.
- Tuesday September 1 will begin full days of school for grades 1-8. PreK and K will dismiss at noon for the first week of school.
- Arrival on the first day will follow the normal arrival procedure covered below.
- Dismissal will follow this schedule:

- **9:50-10:10 front doors kindergarten**

Christy

Emily

Darlene

courtyard doors

Eva

Kathy

Lisa

- **11:35-11:50 front gym doors grades 6-7-8**
- **11:35-11:50 courtyard grades 1-2 Sassetti**
- **11:35-11:50 front doors grades 4-5 Poth**

Morning Procedures

- Aides and non-homeroom teachers will be outside the building to take student temperatures and do a wellness check in cars and help them out of the car.
- Parents must remain in the car at all times. The aide and non-homeroom teacher will unbuckle any child who cannot unbuckle themselves. If you as a parent turn around to say goodbye to your child or unroll your window, please wear a mask.
- There will be a designated spot in the parking lot for walkers and bicycle riders to have their temperature taken and do a wellness check.
- Homeroom teachers will be at their classroom doors to welcome students into the classroom each day.
- Students will be temperature checked, be asked a series of questions about their health that day, and confirm that they are wearing a mask.

- Any student with a temperature above 100.4 will not be allowed to exit their car
- A walker or bike rider with a temperature above 100.4 will need to return home with a parent immediately.
- The adult who does the temperature check will give each student a stamp on their hand to verify that they are safe to enter the building. Classroom teachers will check for hand stamps once students arrive at their doors.
- Students must arrive at their assigned times. We will not have the extra personnel to take temperatures and escort students to their classroom if they arrive late.

Drop off times and Locations

Please stay off cell phones and say goodbye to your child before approaching the drop off point so we can be as efficient as possible.

We will have Community Police Officers on site the first week to help with arrival and departure.

Arrival procedures

- **There will be six (6) cones set up along the front of the school, along Augusta. Cars will drive down the alley adjacent to the school, turn right (east) onto Augusta and pull up to one of the cones where an adult will help your children out of the car.**
- **Students will have their temperatures taken right next to their car. If any child has a temperature of higher than 100.4 they will be asked to return to their car and not attend school that day.**
- **In addition to temperature checks, students will be asked a series of questions about their health that day and we will confirm they are correctly wearing their mask. This is their wellness check.**
- **At the door of their classrooms, students will sanitize their hands before entering the room.**

- Aides and teachers will direct students to one of three entrances: the main front doors, the courtyard or the front gym doors. There will be additional adults present at all entrances to direct students.
- Students must have a mask on upon exiting their car and must keep their mask on as they proceed into the building and to their classroom.
- Please use the drop off time of your OLDEST child. This is a change from the first plan. This revision allows for students to go directly to their classrooms with no gathering or congregating in the gym or outside the school, which is not allowed at this time. This revision also allows families to drop off together, rather than managing separate times for each child.

4th-8th graders must be in their classrooms ready to begin class at 8am.

Therefore, our first wave of drop off is as follows:

Grades 4-8 drop off between 7:35 and 7:55.

Drop off is along the front of the school. Please pull your car up to one of the six cones along the curb. Parents must stay in the car and wear a mask at all times.

There will be adults at every entrance to direct students to their classrooms.

If your younger child arrives with an older sibling, they will be directed to their classroom and be supervised by their teacher until their school day begins.

PreK-3rd grade drop off is from 8am-8:25.

Please pull up to one of the cones along the front of the school, on Augusta. An aide will help your child out of the car, check their temperature, conduct the wellness check, confirm they are correctly wearing their mask, and direct them to their entrance.

- Adults will be at each door to help direct students to their classrooms.
- Students will sanitize their hands at the door of their classrooms, prior to entering the room.

Walkers and bicycles riders: there will be an adult at the alley and an adult at the driveway of the school parking lot to do the wellness check for walkers and bicycles riders coming from either direction. Once the student has been checked, they will be directed to their entrance.

Grades	Entrance
Kindergarten	main front doors
Ms Sulaiman's class	main front doors
Ms Darlene's class	main front doors
Ms Emily's class	main front doors
Ms Eva's class	courtyard doors
Ms Gallery's class	courtyard doors
Ms Kelly's class	courtyard doors
1-2	Courtyard doors
Mr Sassetti's class	Courtyard doors
Mr Poth's class	main front doors
4-5	main front doors
6-7-8	front gym doors

These changes make it possible for families to drop off their children at the same time and eliminate the need for any class to gather in any space in the school.

Attire

- Until **September 30**, students will be allowed to wear their uniform, their gym uniform or St. Helen "spirit" wear; (see pictures below of gym and spirit attire).
- Students should wear a clean set of clothes each day - in the past, jumpers, sweatshirts etc. are often worn multiple times throughout the week before laundering.



In the Classroom

- Students must wear their masks in the building at all times.
 - Please have a back-up mask in your child's bag.
 - Each day, wear and bring a clean mask. Disposable masks can be used once. Cloth should be washed each use/day. Masks should not have distracting patterns or imagery.
 - Students will be allowed to remove their mask for snack and lunch, and only when 6 feet apart. At that time, each mask will be stored in a separate paper bag. Each student will receive a fresh paper bag each week.
 - We will utilize the cohort model and students will remain with their homeroom cohort during the day - specials teachers and subject area teachers will come to each classroom rather than students moving around the building.
 - Specials teachers will wear a mask and maintain physical distance from students wherever possible.
- Students may have a closed water bottle with them at all times - water fountains will only be accessible for refilling bottles, not for drinking. Only water is allowed in bottles in the classroom.
- Students will not be allowed to share materials. Consider purchasing a caddy or larger pencil box type container for your student to hold supplies that they used to be able to borrow from a teacher. Often classroom teachers had bins of markers, glue sticks, scissors, etc. That will not be the case just now - students will need their own supplies that they do not share. Teachers will communicate with you about what type of caddy they would like (if any).
- Encourage your child to bring a silent reading book from home once their class has silent reading time, since sharing of books from a classroom library will be very limited.
- Snack happens in preschool, kindergarten, and first grade. For this year, we are asking each child to bring their own snack each day. We will not have a rotating snack schedule. Snacks must still comply with school guidelines (on the Documents Center page) and recognize class allergies. If teachers in older grades allow snacks at the beginning of the year, the teacher will communicate this with the class. Any snack that comes into the classroom must follow school guidelines (please note: the snack list is being updated)
- Preschool students have the option to go home at 12:30pm. Please let the office know by Wednesday August 19 if you would like to pick up your child at 12:30pm. Preschoolers nap in the afternoon, so if you pick up your child at 12:30pm they can nap at home. Noon dismissal will not be an option this year.

Please decide between 12:30pm or end of the day (2:30-2:45 dismissal). (Our reasoning is we need to develop a process that accommodates physical distancing during naps, need to wear a mask during nap, use of personal items, and cot cleaning and storage.) You may change from 12:30 dismissal to end of the day dismissal at the beginning of each month. If you choose this option you will still be charged full tuition rates.

Faith Instruction

- School masses and preparation for sacraments will begin as soon as the church and school feel it is safe to do so. Religious instruction will continue in the cohorts as a specialty class.
- Each class will still have religion class as usual. Teachers incorporate faith into their classroom practices each day.
- Once we have settled into the new routines, we would like to have small groups participate in mass once a week. St. Helen's Church is big enough for social distancing, students can do the readings and petitions, and we can live stream or tape the liturgy for the rest of the school to watch in their classrooms. This will be a way for the school community to practice being in church while remaining safe.

Outside Time

- Teachers in all grade levels are planning their schedules to allow for several outside breaks, for both movement and instruction. It is important especially in the first months of being back to school for students to be outside, where they can remove their masks safely and still socially distance. We have identified many spaces around St. Helen's that can be used for outside instruction, as well as for movement and play.
- Students will have a paper bag (as mandated by the Archdiocese) to store their mask in when it is removed. Please keep an eye out for communication from your teachers - they may ask for paper lunch bags to be sent in for this purpose.
- Teachers are planning to take students outside on a regular basis so students should be able to dress in layers according to the weather.

Lunch

- **Some classes will eat in their classrooms if they can safely distance enough to do so. Other classes will eat in the lunch room, the bingo hall or the after care room. These areas will be sanitized in between lunch periods.**

- If your student orders hot lunch, it will be delivered to their classroom.
- As a reminder, the classrooms and building do not have refrigerator space for individual lunches. If you prefer an insulated bag and ice pack, please plan accordingly.
- **Students will not be allowed to use the microwave to heat up food this year.**

Bathroom Use

- On the first day of school, teachers will walk the students through their assigned bathroom and procedures, by cohort.
- SHS is adding sanitizer and soap for use after the restroom and before re-entering the classroom.
- Help your child practice washing their hands for 20 seconds at home so they are used to that when we return to school.

Dismissal

- Students will exit the building using the same door they came in.
- Parents must remain in their cars at all times
- **Please display the name placard you receive in your passenger side dashboard so we can easily identify your car and help your child dismiss safely.**
- **Please pull up to one of the six cones in front of the school. Your children will be called by an adult and helped into your car. Please do not get out of your car.**
- **Do not double park on Augusta.**
- **Please use the pick up time of your oldest child.**

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|-------------|-----------------|---|
| ● 2:35-2:50 | front gym doors | grades 6-7-8 |
| ● 2:35-2:50 | courtyard | grades 1-2 Sassetti |
| ● 2:35-2:50 | front doors | grades 4-5 Poth |
| ● 2:55-3:15 | front doors | kindergarten
Christy
Emily
Darlene |
| ● 2:55-3:15 | courtyard doors | Eva
Kathy
Lisa |

- Please note: preschool students have the option to go home at 12:30pm. Students who dismiss at 12:30pm will dismiss out the front doors.

After School Care

- After school care will begin on Tuesday, September 1st.
- After care ends at 5:30pm.
- Students will remain with their cohort during after care, but may be in larger spaces, just separated.

Other items of Note

- Parents cannot be allowed in the building. If your child has forgotten something at home, you must leave it outside and we will deliver it to them.
- Tardies/late arrivals:
 - Please do not arrive at another drop off time or later in the day. We will not have extra teachers or staff available to check temperatures or do the required health checks during the day. It is very important that students arrive at their designated arrival time so that we can get every child into the classroom safely and get our learning day started. These procedures will be difficult to get used to, and we need as much cooperation from everyone so that our teachers and staff can help manage during this
 - Appointments:
 - If you have a scheduled well-visit for your child (eg, annual checkup, dental/orthodontics) that cannot be scheduled for after school, please let the office know in advance (per the SHS handbook, regular procedures) and then call the office when you have arrived outside the front doors. Parents should remain in the car. The student should exit the car and staff will open the door and process their entrance, including temperature and wellness check.
 - Every effort should be made to schedule these visits outside of school hours to eliminate the need to enter or exit the building multiple times.

Facility Cleaning

- The school will be thoroughly cleaned every night before students and faculty return the next day by an outside cleaning service.
- In house cleaning staff will be cleaning bathrooms and high touch surfaces at regular intervals throughout the school day.

School Events

- All school wide and additional events will not be able to be held safely at this time, including and not limited to:
 - Carnival
 - School Book Fair and Grandparents Day
 - Welcome back nights and events for families and parents
 - After school clubs and classes
 - We will look for opportunities to celebrate these events virtually when it is safe to do so.
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Infection Protocols

- If your child shows symptoms of COVID-19, you should contact your doctor. Your doctor may ask that your child participate in a COVID-19 test. You should alert your school's main office and not send your child to school.
- If the symptoms occur during the school day, your child will be immediately sent to the office and you will be contacted to pick your child up from school.
- If your child does not have COVID-19, but has another illness, you should keep your child home until the illness' symptoms disappear. Your school will require you to provide a negative COVID-19 test and/or a doctor's note before your child can return to school.
- If a student or faculty tests positive for COVID-19 or does not seek medical attention, students must isolate and not return to school until they have met CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation. This includes:
 1. Three or more days without a high fever;
 2. A reduction of other COVID symptoms by at least 75 percent; and
 3. At least 14 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- Should any employee have COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19, we will follow the same protocols used for students (see above). If your child's teacher becomes sick and is unable to work, your school will provide a substitute teacher.
- If a student in your child's class tests positive for COVID19, we will make all parents aware that a student has tested positive for COVID-19. All students in the cohort will be monitored closely for COVID-19 symptoms. If one student tests

positive for COVID-19, it is likely that the entire cohort will be isolated (sent home) for at least 14 days. Students will be allowed to complete work virtually while the cohort is away from school.

Thank you for your support and flexibility as we reopen with safety and trust. If you have any questions I encourage you to email the Archdiocese at ReopenSchools@archchicago.org