



2020-2021
Safe Return to School Plan





2020-2021 St. Francis Catholic High School: Safe Return to School Plan

June 26, 2020

Dear St. Francis Families,

Thank you for your continued support as we navigate the implications of the COVID-19 outbreak together and plan for a rigorous and dynamic 2020-21 school year.

An incredibly dedicated team of St. Francis parents, teachers, administrators, technology and facilities members have been diligently exploring options to create the best plan for reopening school in August. The team considered safety guidance from the county and state, the needs expressed by of our students and teachers, technical and physical campus resources, and discussions happening in local school districts and private schools. Potential plans were presented to a larger group of teachers representing all academic disciplines.

Their review criteria focused on maximizing student instructional minutes and student-teacher contact points, teacher office hours and availability for students, teacher prep and collaboration time with peers, reducing student numbers to ensure compliance with physical distancing practices, as well as ease of adaptability for a full distance learning model if needed at any point in the year. The overwhelming response from the team and administration was that a new 70-minute synchronous hybrid learning model would net the best results for our students.

The health and safety of our students, families, and staff is always our primary concern, and we are closely monitoring the COVID-19 situation. As a faculty and staff, we are especially empathetic to our students who are missing some of the traditional St. Francis High School experiences. Our goal is to continue to support the whole student – academically, spiritually, and emotionally. We are aware of the mental toll that this transition may take, and our Wellness, Campus Ministry, and Guidance teams are continuously collecting support resources for our community and are ready to serve your daughter when school resumes in August.

As of this writing and our current realities, we have outlined our initial plans for the 2020-21 academic year in this document. Undoubtedly, plans may be updated by future developments in public health and governing guidelines. We will continue sending the Principal's weekly newsletter throughout the summer and posting updates outlining more details as they become available.

Thank you for allowing us the privilege of educating your daughter(s) in an environment that embeds faith, excellence, leadership and service into all that we do.

In the spirit of Pax et Bonum,

Theresa Rodgers
President

Elias Mendoza
Principal

2020-21 School Year Assumptions

We continue to monitor all facets of this dynamic COVID situation, recognizing that planning will evolve as the science and circumstances do. Despite the uncertainty, we are developing plans for the 2020-21 year based on the following assumptions:

1

School campus will reopen in the 2020-21 academic year with the probability that Sacramento and neighboring counties will experience continued outbreaks of COVID-19 that may force us to revert to earlier phases of the shelter in place order. We must prepare for the potential of localized, rolling closures of approximately 14-28 days triggered by additional waves of infections.

2

Our physical campus and social habits will require modifications based on guidance from local, state and national health officials, which includes physical distancing, masks, wellness checks, frequent disinfecting of classrooms, as well as intermittent transitions to instructor-led distance learning.

3

We will NOT be returning to a pre-COVID “normal” for some time and physical/social distancing is here for the foreseeable future.

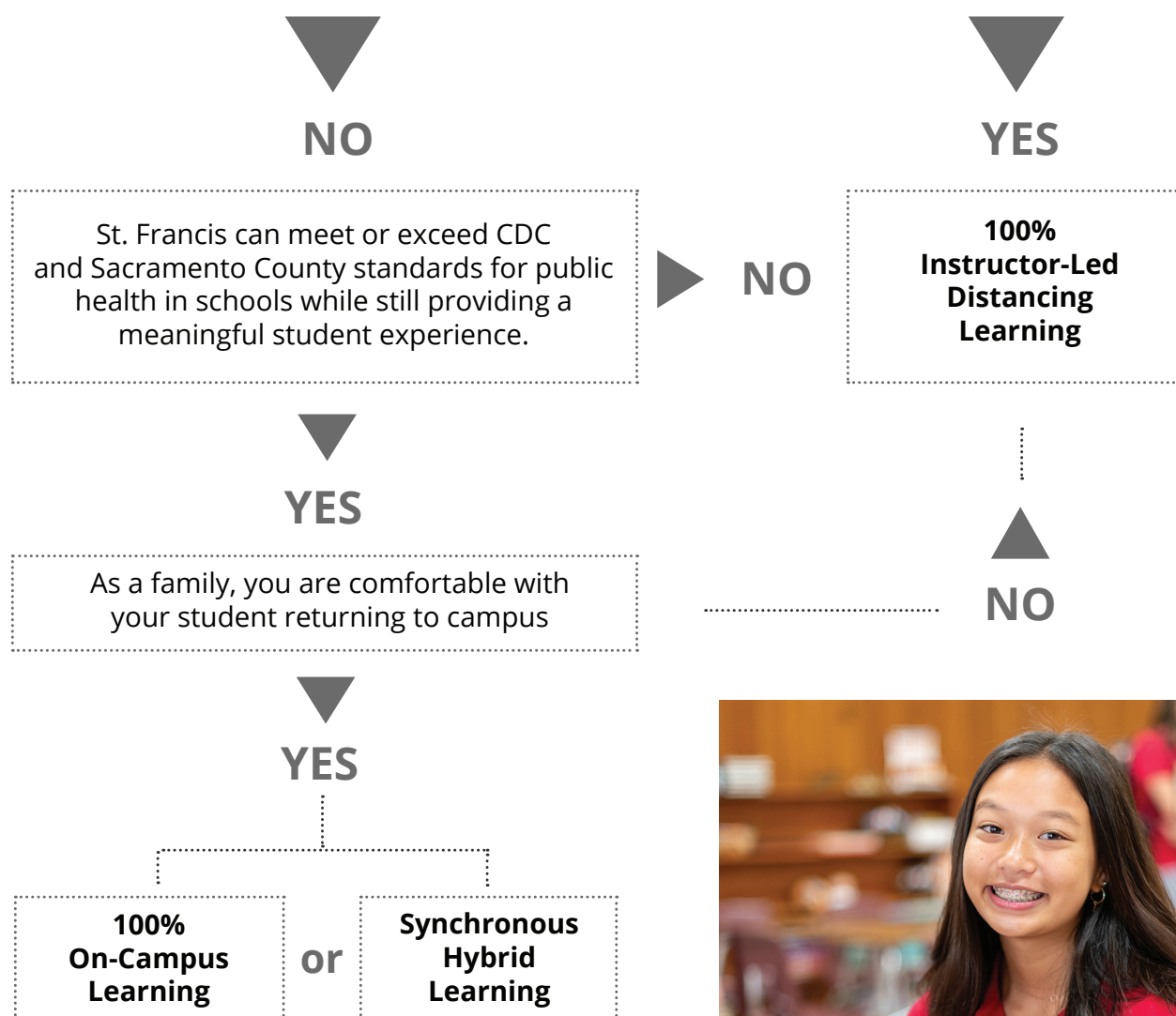


Three Re-entry Scenarios:

The committee has developed three different re-entry scenarios that will be flexible and adaptable based on local, state and federal guidelines as well as individual needs.

These scenarios include: **100% On-Campus, 100% Instructor-led Distance Learning, or Synchronous Hybrid Learning (partially on campus and partially Distance Learning).** We are currently preparing campus to support students with a synchronous hybrid learning experience in August.

Sacramento County has a shelter-in-place order



All Scenarios will ensure that St. Francis:

- Maintains the rigor required to push student learning and prepare students academically for college and beyond.
- Allows for personal circumstances.
- Continues to offer UC-approved courses and curriculum.
- Employs researched best-practices.
- Provides differentiated instruction and assessments based on students' varying needs.

100% On-Campus Scenario

St. Francis will follow specific health precautions in accordance with our local, state, and federal requirements. Specific decisions and plans regarding on-campus modifications will be finalized over the next few weeks and months and communicated. Some precautions and modifications will include:



The use of masks
on campus



Modified capacity limits to
allow for social distancing



Enhanced sanitizing and
cleaning processes



Social distancing
measures
and enforcement



Modified visitor
policies



Modified programming and
events to allow for social
distancing and compliance
with crowd size limitations

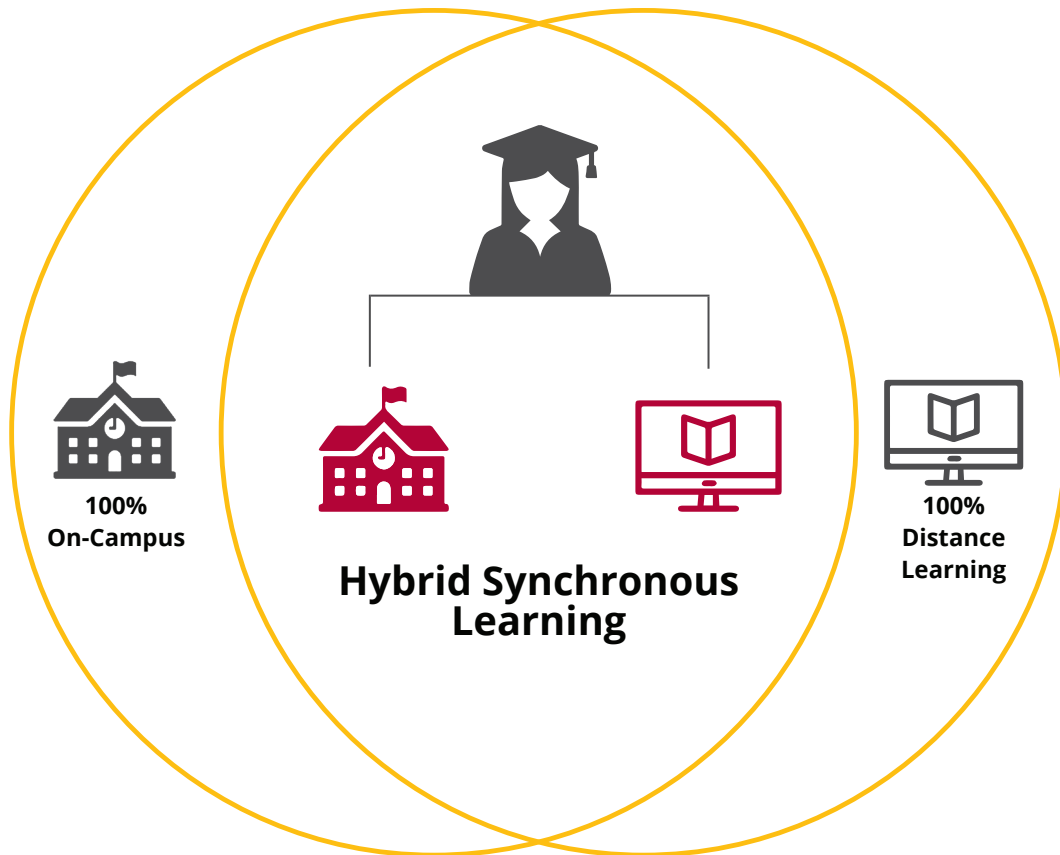
100% Instructor-Led Distance Learning

In this model we will be 100% Distance Learning and will continue to teach your daughter(s) how to be critical thinkers and leaders who are prepared to serve others. This option also provides flexibility for our community to continue to learn while sheltering in place, and will continue to be an option for students who are not comfortable being on campus when we return. Our Distance Learning model does not change our mission or graduation outcomes.

Synchronous Hybrid Learning

Partially on-campus and partially distance learning

While details continue to be finalized, our hybrid experience will include a mix of Distance Learning and on-campus learning designed to maximize our St. Francis Experience while maintaining the health and safety of our community.



We are currently preparing campus to support students with a synchronous hybrid learning experience in the fall.

2020-21 St. Francis Experience: A Synchronous Hybrid Learning Model

What we know at this stage of the planning is that we will not return to our pre-COVID “normal” for some time and physical/social distancing will be required. In evaluating our limited 20-acre physical environment, we know that we will not be able to have all students on campus together at any one time. But we also know that we will not have to be in a full-time instructor-led distance learning mode as we were in the spring of 2020. With that said, we will introduce a new “Synchronous Hybrid Learning Model” to accommodate the needs of our nearly 1,100 students.

Our goal is to ensure the continuity of learning no matter what environment the student is assigned to on a given day. The new St. Francis “Red and Gold Hybrid Learning Model” will primarily leverage synchronous learning whether in the physical classroom or through distance learning channels with some asynchronous projects and activities, including group activities. This combined approach not only allows students and teachers to maintain their strong relationships, but it also allows students to work on material with their peers.

What is synchronous learning?

Synchronous learning is the kind of learning that happens in real time with a hands-on teacher. This means that students, their classmates, and their instructor interact in a specific virtual place, through a specific online medium, at a specific time. In other words, it's not exactly anywhere, anyhow, anytime. Methods of synchronous online learning include video conferencing, teleconferencing, live chatting, and live-streaming lectures.

What are the advantages of synchronous learning?

Because classroom engagement continues, students participate in active discussion, receive immediate feedback, and gain the personal familiarity that comes with real-time interaction. This is an especially important distinction as students have had to make the transition during these times from the traditional classroom to an online setting. The personal contact that St. Francis students get through live video conferencing, lecture broadcasts or messenger chatting can make it a lot easier to make the transition. Students do their best work with the help of accessible and supportive instruction.

Because we want Synchronous Hybrid Learning to be as meaningful as possible, we will regularly reevaluate our program based on feedback from students, teachers, and parents.

Distance Learning and in-person learning will continue to include:

- Unrivaled academics
- Personalized student support
- Faith-Formation
- Service
- Meaningful co-curricular experiences

The St. Francis “Synchronous Hybrid Learning Model”

Overview:

- All students will be broken out into one of two groups: Red Group or Gold Group
 - Siblings will be in the same group.
 - Groups will be finalized by the first week of August.
- Each group will meet on campus for two consecutive school days, followed by two Distance Learning days. When the Red Group is on campus, the Gold Group will be accessing class content via our distance learning program, and vice versa. This will help maintain no more than 50 percent of students on campus on any given day.
 - Synchronous learning will be taking place each class block so that whether students are physically in the classroom or participating via distance learning that day, they are all seeing, hearing and learning the same information at the same time each day.
 - Teachers will use interactive video conferencing to ensure that students at home and students in the classroom are seeing the same information synchronously.
- We will use a block schedule of 70-minute blocks with no more than four blocks per day.
 - Schedule 1: A-D Blocks
 - Schedule 2: E-H Blocks
- Students will rotate between a Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 day throughout the week on a continuous rolling basis. See example below:

Day	On Campus	Distance Learning	Schedule
Mo	Red	Gold	Schedule 1 (A - D Blocks)
Tu	Red	Gold	Schedule 2 (E - H Blocks)
We	Gold	Red	Schedule 1 (A - D Blocks)
Th	Gold	Red	Schedule 2 (E - H Blocks)
Fr	Red	Gold	Schedule 1 (A - D Blocks)
Mo	Red	Gold	Schedule 2 (E - H Blocks)
Tu	Gold	Red	Schedule 1 (A - D Blocks)
We	Gold	Red	Schedule 2 (E - H Blocks)
Th	Red	Gold	Schedule 1 (A - D Blocks)
Fr	Red	Gold	Schedule 2 (E - H Blocks)

- The “C” and “G” blocks will incorporate a student lunch break when on campus. These blocks will be split (e.g., C1/C2 or G1/G2) to minimize the number of students gathering at any given time.
 - Determination of which classes fall into which lunch block will be based on physical campus zones to minimize disruption during the passing period from class to lunch, or vice versa.

Additional Benefits of the Red & Gold Hybrid Learning Model:

- Teachers will see students in their class two or three times per week
- With only four classes per day, students and teachers minimize the exposure points they come in contact with.
- Students will be supervised at all times on campus to reinforce safety guidelines.
- A one-hour activity time is built in from 2:00-3:00pm daily.
 - This time will be flexible to accommodate teacher office hours, faith activities, community building, teacher planning and faculty/staff meetings.
 - A majority of students will be off campus by 2:00pm limiting prolonged exposure.
- Consistency in rotation.
- Can quickly be adapted to full distance learning if needed.

Professional development is being rolled out to teachers this summer in order to expand knowledge of Hybrid learning techniques along with increasing familiarity with a number of technology tools that can be used both in the classroom and online.

First Week of School

The new Synchronous Hybrid Learning Model will require flexibility and learning for everyone as we navigate between an on-campus and a distance learning experience. To help prepare all students for this new adaptive learning environment, the first week of school (August 10-14, 2020) will bring each grade level onto campus for one day (two for freshmen) to acclimate students to new procedures, expectations, and provide racial literacy training, all while incorporating some fun and bonding events that make SFHS a wonderful community.

Date	Day	On Campus
10- Aug	Mo	Freshmen Class Orientation
11- Aug	Tu	Freshmen Class Orientation
12-Aug	We	Sophomore Class Orientation
13-Aug	Th	Junior Class Orientation
14-Aug	Fr	Senior Class Orientation

Athletics, Arts and Co-curricular Programs

St. Francis believes education-based athletics, arts and co-curricular activities are essential to the physical, mental, and social well-being of students. We are awaiting guidelines and reviewing plans as they relate to the resumption of athletics, arts and co-curricular program. The California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) will be determining by July 20 if fall sports will continue as currently scheduled. The CIF is prepared to offer alternative calendars if it is determined by July 20 that fall sports will not start as scheduled due to ongoing public health and safety concerns.

Our arts and co-curricular teams are meeting to determine the best way to safely provide students an opportunity to participate in after school activities. We will keep our community apprised as plans and decisions are made regarding athletics, arts and co-curricular programs.

Student Support

As we shift to becoming a Hybrid learning community, we remain committed to the promotion of each student's well-being and will continue to offer all of the support services our students would receive while on campus.

- All teachers will host regular office hours and are available for one-on-one meetings.
- Wellness Counselors will continue to connect with their students on a regular basis in person or remotely in order to support student learning and socio-emotional well-being.
- Guidance Counselors are assigned by grade level and will continue to connect with all of their students on a regular basis.
- College counselors will continue to meet with Juniors and Seniors to provide information and guidance on the college decision and application process.
- Students can be matched with a peer who has successfully completed coursework in the subject area and receive one-on-one support.
- Students with documented learning differences are offered a Formal Education Plan (FEP) which provides appropriate in-class interventions based on the unique learning styles of each student. Students with diagnosed behavioral or medical challenges are also fully supported via a Medical Support Plan (MSP).

What are other schools doing?

Catholic elementary schools are hoping to form cohorts of students who will be together all day in a self-contained classroom. These students will not mix with other classes in order to limit exposure opportunities.

Folsom-Cordova will be doing a rotating program where 50% of students will come on any given day with one day off per week. When students are not on campus, they will be doing asynchronous learning through packets.

Sac City, Elk Grove Unified and many other local school districts have yet to announce plans.

Our Commitments to You



A continued commitment to partnership centered on St. Francis' belief that parents are the primary educators of their children.



Regular Communication with faculty and staff on school plans and student experience.



Choice over whether your student attends on-campus or remains remote.



Renewed community events--either in-person or remote to help parents stay engaged, informed, and connected.

Contact Us

Transparency and flexibility are paramount in this process and we are here to answer any questions you may have about how we are serving you and your daughter.



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