

Dear Families of Divine Mercy Catholic School-

Today has been a whirlwind of planning and strategizing. We are hopeful that our preparations will support you and your children over the next few weeks. As you may be aware, the Governor of Minnesota has closed all schools through March 27<sup>th</sup>. In the spirit of solidarity, we are honoring this edict and moving our students to e-learning as of March 18<sup>th</sup>. I understand that the public system is not delivering content to their students until after the 27<sup>th</sup>, but we believe that students will be best served through a learning environment that starts now. We have always had high expectations of ourselves and our students and this unprecedented environment calls us to do as much as we can to keep their learning constant. It is my sincere hope that we will return to some normalcy soon. However, this is not guaranteed, and we want to make sure that our students continue to learn and progress as much as possible. We know that this is not an ideal way for our young students to complete their schooling and that face to face instruction is preferred, but we are committed to giving our best to you. Outlined below are our strategies.

#### CARE FOR CHILDREN OF ESSENTIAL WORKERS:

We are committed to providing care for children (12 and under) of those who are listed as essential workers by our government. This care will begin on Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> and take place on each school day from 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM. Essential workers may be asked for verification of their employment. These workers fall into the following categories:

- Health care providers and systems, including hospitals and clinics
- Post-acute and long-term care facilities, including nursing and assisted living facilities
- Other health systems and organizations, such as:
  - o Home Care workers
  - o Personal Care Assistants
  - o Ambulance/emergency
  - o Direct Care and Treatment
- Other emergency staff, including:
  - First responders
  - Firefighters
  - Personnel providing correctional services
  - Essential Court personnel
  - Minnesota State Veterans Homes staff
  - State and local public health agency employees
  - MNsure Navigators
  - County financial/eligibility workers
  - County case managers
  - Or any county staff in emergency management or health and human services

If you fall into one of these categories and need care for your child, please contact the care coordinators at the emails below. They will need to know your child's name, class, days care is needed, and estimated time for each day.

**School Age Care:** Katie Healy at [khealy@dmcs.cc](mailto:khealy@dmcs.cc)

**Preschool Care:** Elodie Metro at [emetro@dmcs.cc](mailto:emetro@dmcs.cc)

## ELEARNING/FLEXIBLE LEARNING

Our teachers have been working to develop plans for your child for the next few weeks. We have planned through March 27<sup>th</sup>. Please continue to monitor news for new information as it becomes available for the plan ongoing.

Preschool will be sending home packets of activities for children.

Kindergarten will be using SeeSaw and packets.

First Grade will be using SeeSaw and SUPERKids access.

Second Grade will be using SeeSaw and Zoom.

Third Grade will be using packets for students and IXL.

Fourth Grade will be using Google Classroom and Zoom.

Fifth Grade will be using Google Classroom and Zoom.

Please watch for and pay attention to emails coming from your child's teachers with details on Tuesday afternoon. Our specialists will also be providing content and resources for our students. Expect emails from them outlining learning plans or information from them shared through your child's teacher. You can be assured of the commitment of our staff to provide meaningful and relevant learning activities for your child.

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE:

Daily attendance will be taken based on completion of work assigned and attendance at required Zoom Classroom Meetings. Please email the teacher or me if your child becomes sick or is unable to attend 'class'.

## FOOD SERVICE:

We expect to be providing a grab and go breakfast/lunch bag for children. We are working to gather a bit more information about this from the Minnesota Department of Education and will be clarifying how to request and receive this benefit soon.

## PRESCHOOL:

The Governor has stressed that childcare centers should remain open but has given the Department of Human Services until Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup> to establish guidelines for this to occur. As soon as we get these guidelines, we will be responding to them and opening up what we are allowed to open. Please stay tuned.

## DEVICE CHECK OUT:

We have a limited number of devices and encourage you to use what you have at home if you are able. If you have a need for a device, please notify your child's teacher and we will work to accommodate you. Parents will need to sign a waiver and take responsibility for the device before we

loan it out. We are working to get these ready and will notify those who have already contacted us when they are available.

#### PICK UP OF MATERIALS

We will be open tomorrow from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM (**Kindergarten parents please wait until after 10 AM**) for parents to pick up their child's school things. Teachers have worked today to get initial packets and student books/workbooks ready for this. We are offering both a drive up (through the drop-off and pick-up lane) or a come in option. You should have communicated with your child's teacher how you prefer to gather your belongings.

For those of you who need to gather medicines, you may stop in at the nurses' office or email your child's teacher to ask for pick-up of your child's medication. We will do everything we can to help you.

Beginning on Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> we will be providing times each day for drive up pick-up or drop-off of materials. Stay tuned for more information.

Forgive me for the long email. This is what I know after our first day of strategizing. I am sure we will learn much over the next few days. Thank you for your willingness to work with us as we work for you and your children.

May God watch over us all-

With prayers,

Mrs. Ashley