



**Our Mission:** *Saint Joseph Catholic School, a coeducational parish school for grades K4 through 6, exists for the purpose of providing Catholic education of the highest quality to the children of parishioners and other residents of the Columbia area. Central to the school program is a dedication to spiritual development and academic excellence based on Gospel values. Through opportunities to worship, to learn and to grow in character, Saint Joseph students are prepared to be lifelong learners who practice and live their values in the Catholic, Christian tradition.*

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# Distance Plan for Learning

## Remote & Digital Learning in the PreK-6 Environment

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# Introduction to Saint Joseph Catholic School Distance Plan for Learning

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We are committed to making sure that students continue to experience the care and commitment of our faculty and the routine of daily learning, even in the event of school closure. We must acknowledge that our approach to distance learning **cannot replicate the magic that happens when school is in regular session!** The invaluable social interactions and mediation, real-time, in-person feedback, community and extracurricular events, and more are what make SJCS a special place. We also firmly believe that quality learning can continue, even from a distance.

The purpose of this document is to describe the actions Saint Joseph Catholic School will take to continue instruction in the event of an extended campus closure. We endeavor in our Distance Plan for Learning (DPL) to accomplish three goals PK4 - 6th grade within a flexible framework:

- Live Student-Teacher Contact Time
- Offline & Online Content Delivery
- Online Monitoring of Student Progress/Student Assessment

Our intention with the DPL is to continue to support the well-being and growth of the whole child as set forth in our school's mission, vision, and strategic plan.

If Saint Joseph Catholic School's campus is closed and this DPL is implemented, the Principal will send email communications to both parents and faculty/staff announcing a timeline for implementation. An exact date will be designated when distance learning will begin for Saint Joseph Catholic School students.

The principal will periodically send email updates to parents and faculty/staff apprising them of any pertinent information about when Saint Joseph Catholic School might reopen for regular classes. As with the decision to close campus, the decision to reopen school for regular classes will be made with close consultation with the Diocese of Charleston and the Department of Health.

This DPL describes specifics of Saint Joseph Catholic School's approach to distance learning, including online platforms employed by grade level, communication channels, and the roles and responsibilities of faculty, parents, and students. The DPL guidelines describe how parents/guardians can support their children's learning, and priorities and considerations for making the best of challenging circumstances.

Our DPL seeks to ensure equity. This includes doing our best to provide students with devices if they do not have access to a computer at home. We also will be happy to help families access online tutorials as we are able through email and phone contacts. While we will not be able to help families troubleshoot all problems, we will do our best to make sure all students have equitable access where we have control.

# Technology Systems to Support Distance Learning at SJCS

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Below is a description of the systems Saint Joseph Catholic School will use to communicate with faculty, staff, parents, and students in the event of an extended campus closure. Note that some of the channels of communication are the same as those used for typical information sharing.

**Email:** Faculty, Staff, Parents, Students

Email will be used for all major communications and announcements, including those from the principal and teachers. Faculty will also use email to communicate, although they will use other platforms to interact with their students as well. Please make sure all parent emails are up to date and correct.

**FACTS Family Portal:** Faculty, Staff, Parents, Students

FACTS Family Portal will be used for grading and communications from teachers and principal. We will also be using e-mail for educational links.

**Edmodo:** All students

Edmodo will be used for class assignments, assessments and communication.

**Zoom:** All students

Zoom is an online video conferencing platform that allows for live group meetings, hosted by teachers. All Zoom meetings will be password protected and teachers will control all entrants into the meetings. All students will remain in waiting rooms until the teacher grants access.

**IXL:** All students

IXL provides math; ELA; science; and ss assignments to students.

**Epic:** All students

Epic provides a digital library for students with books and educational videos.

**Formed.org** All students

Formed is a digital resource for Catholic material.

**Pearson Realize** All students

Pearson Realize is an online learning platform for math resource with practice activities, games and tutorial videos.

**BrainPOP Jr** All students

BrainPop Jr is an online collection of educational instructional videos.

**Loom.com** All students

Loom.com is an online platform for recording teaching with power points.

**Social Studies Weekly** All students

SS Weekly provides read aloud videos and online quizzes of the weekly news papers that align to SS curriculum.

**Flocabulary** All students

Flocabulary is a library of songs, videos and activities for K-12 online learning.

**Jack Hartman** PK- 2

Educational videos and songs on a variety of topics on YouTube.

**Bookflix** K- 3rd grade

BookFlix is an online platform that reads aloud on a variety of topics.

**Reading A-Z and Raz-kids** K- 3rd grade

Reading A-Z and Raz-kids provide leveled books

**PebbleGo** K- 3rd grade

PebbleGo is an online curricular connected research tool designed for elementary students.

**Khan Academy** 4th - 6th grade

Khan Academy allows teachers to assign videos and online practice questions for their classes.

**Quizlet:** 4th - 6th grade

Quizlet is an online learning forum for flashcards, review games, and quizzes to assess learning.

# Eight Distance Learning Guidelines for Teachers

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*The transition to distance learning will not be simple or easy. Teachers will need to think differently about how to communicate, give instruction, and provide feedback, how to design lessons and assignments that are authentic and meaningful, and how to ensure students continue to collaborate and communicate with others. The eight guidelines provided below are intended to help teachers across all grade levels reflect on challenges they'll confront in shifting to distance learning.*

## **1—At Saint Joseph Catholic School we know our students and they know we care**

Our commitment is to nurture relationships and demonstrate deep care for our students and one another. Implementation of distance learning may prompt some students to be stressed or worried. It's important to consider students' mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing. How are they doing? How are their families?

## **2—Evaluate your students' conditions for distance learning**

While most students will have reliable online access at home and the necessary devices to shift to distance learning, others will not. Teachers are encouraged to remember that family circumstances may vary with regard to technology. Ask your students and/or their parents whether their online access is reliable and what devices the student has at their disposal. Determine which students will need to sign out a device. The general goal of this guideline is to initiate and maintain a dialogue with students and families about existing supports for distance learning.

## **3—Stick with the familiar**

Teachers are encouraged to use established communication channels with students, especially in the first weeks of moving to distance learning. In other words, **stick with what's familiar to your students**. It is important to remember that some students may struggle with distance learning. In the event that the school remains closed for a longer period of time, it may become necessary to explore new or different learning platforms that provide different experiences.

## **4—Less is more**

A distance learning challenge confronting teachers is how best to streamline content and elevate the most essential learning for students. In other words, teachers need to take a less-is-more perspective, including the pacing of lessons and volume of assignments and assessments.

## **5—Seize the moment; embrace new opportunities and possibilities for your students**

Years or decades from now, how will your students remember the emergency that resulted in school closure? While distance learning should attempt to bring some normalcy and routine to students' lives, teachers shouldn't ignore the opportunities resulting from school closure either. Teachers might require students to keep a daily journal or diary for the duration of the crisis. Personal journaling and/or other creative writing assignments can help students process their thoughts, worries, and emotions, particularly in times of crisis. Students might use other media as well, including video, drawing, painting, and music. Moreover, the crisis might also provide other real-life opportunities to study scientific phenomena associated with the crisis, and media/government responses.

### **6—Design asynchronous learning experiences**

When school is closed and students are learning from various locations, teachers can still connect them asynchronously (not all students at the same time). For example, 5th and 6th grade teachers can use familiar discussion forums/thread or tools to allow for student responses and dialogue during a set time period, knowing that students might not all be online at the same exact time.

### **7—Design synchronous learning experiences**

When it comes to student engagement and learning, relationships matter as much online as they do in person. If Saint Joseph's campus was closed, students could gather for synchronous learning times via Zoom, an online video conferencing platform. Collaboration remains important and there are many ways teachers can foster it through synchronous (all students at the same time) learning. This is a good time for discussion, class meetings, sharing, show and tell, and more.

### **8—Think differently about assessment**

Some traditional assessment methods do not fit distance learning formats and should be avoided. Teachers are encouraged to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of a skill or information through methods that leverage the strengths of distance learning. Examples include engaging in writing assignments, designing infographics, making video presentations, and participating in oral assessments via video chat. In general, teachers are encouraged to think differently about the frequency and form of assessments in ways that provide positive experiences for all students.

# Ten Guidelines for Parent Support of Distance Learning

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*The transition to distance learning can be challenging for families. Parents will need to think differently about how to support their children; how to create structures and routines that allow their children to be successful; and how to monitor and support their children's learning. Some students will thrive with distance learning, while others may struggle. The ten guidelines provided below are intended to help parents think about what they can do to help their children find success in a distance learning environment.*

## **1—Establish routines and expectations**

From the first day Saint Joseph Catholic School implements its DPL, parents need to establish routines and expectations. We encourage parents to set regular hours for their children's school work. We suggest students begin their studies at 8:00 a.m. Keep normal bedtime routines for children of all ages (no staying up late and sleeping in late!). Your children should move regularly and take periodic breaks as they study. It is important that parents set these expectations for how their children will spend their days starting as soon as distance learning is implemented, not several days later after it becomes apparent a child is struggling with the absence of routine.

## **2—Define the physical space for your child's study**

Your child may have a regular place for doing homework under normal circumstances, but this space may or may not be suitable for an extended period of time. : We encourage families to establish a space for their children to pursue school work in a "public" part of your home, not a child's bedroom, so you or other adults can informally monitor your child's school activities. It is important for the space to be quiet at times and, if possible, to have a strong wireless Internet signal.

## **3—Monitor communications from your children's teachers**

The frequency of communications with students and parents will vary by children's ages, maturity, and degree of expected independence in completing school work. We encourage parents of students in 5th and 6th grade to ask their children to talk with them about their teacher's communications and to describe online platforms teachers are using. Teachers and administrators welcome communications from parents and will respond as soon as possible. Please remember that email and other forms of communications are at a heightened level of activity during closure of the campus.

## **4—Begin and end each day with a check-in**

Parents are encouraged to start and finish each day with a simple check-in. In the morning, ask your child what he or she will be learning today. How will they spend their time? What will they need to be successful with their school work? Older students may not want to have these check-ins with parents (that's normal!), but they should nevertheless. Parents should establish these check-ins as regular parts of each day. Not all students thrive in a distance learning environment; some struggle with too much independence or lack of structure. These check-in routines need to be established early, before students fall behind or begin to struggle.

## TEN DISTANCE LEARNING GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS (CONTINUED)

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### **5—Take an active role in helping your children process and own their learning**

In the course of a regular school day at Saint Joseph Catholic School, your son or daughter engages with other students or adults dozens if not hundreds of times. These social interactions include turning to a peer to exchange a thought or idea, participating in small or large group discussions, asking questions for clarification, collaborating on group projects, and countless other moments. While some of these social interactions will be re-created on virtual platforms, others will not. In addition to the check-ins recommended at the start and end of each school day, parents are encouraged to talk with their child at any time about what they learning. Look for opportunities to deepen and extend your child's understandings as part of strengthening their ownership of learning. Avoid completing assignments for your child.

### **6—Establish times for quiet and reflection**

Families with more than one school-age child often find it challenging to manage all of their children's daily needs. There may be times when siblings need to work in different rooms to avoid distraction. If possible, parents may wish to try noise-cancelling headphones (no music necessary) to help a child block out distractions.

### **7—Encourage physical activity and/or exercise**

Make sure your children remember to move and exercise. This is vitally important to their health, wellbeing, and to their learning. It is important for parents to model and encourage exercise! Think also about how your children can pitch in more around the house with chores or other responsibilities. Don't let your children off the hook – expect them to pitch in!

### **8—Remain mindful of your child's stress or worry**

Moving from regular participation in classrooms on a campus to classrooms organized through distance learning will trigger stressful moments for everyone, including children and parents. A key parent role here is to help your child manage the worry, anxiety, and adjustment to a new situation. Difficult though it may be, do your best not to transfer your stress or worry to your children. They will be out of sorts, whether they admit it or not, and need as much normal routine as parents can provide. Please reach out to your child's teacher or contact us should you feel your child needs a counselor if they are expressing extreme worry.

### **9—Monitor how much time your child is spending online**

Saint Joseph Catholic School does not want its students staring at computer screens for 7–8 hours a day. We ask that parents remember most teachers are not experts in distance learning and that it will require some trial-and-error before we find the right balance between online and offline learning experiences. Administrators or teachers will periodically check in with you to assess what you're seeing at home and what we need to adjust. We thank you in advance for your patience and partnership!

### **10—Keep your children social, but set rules around their social media interactions**

There's always excitement and uncertainty when there is a significant change to a routine, like school. The initial excitement of the school campus being closed will fade quickly when your child starts missing regular in-person contact with friends, classmates, and teachers. Help your children maintain contact with friends and see them in person when circumstances permit. Please also monitor your children's social media use. Older students will rely more on social media to communicate with friends. Remind your children to be polite, respectful, and appropriate in their communications and to represent your family's values in their interactions with others.



# Roles & Responsibilities During Distance Learning

Many stakeholders will contribute to the effective implementation of this DPL. The roles and responsibilities of students and parents are delineated below.

Student Roles & Responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish daily routines for engaging in the learning experiences (e.g. following your daily schedule or establishing an 8:00 a.m. start)</li> <li>• Identify a comfortable, quiet space in your home where you can work effectively and successfully</li> <li>• Regularly monitor online platforms to check for announcements and feedback from your teachers</li> <li>• Complete assignments with integrity and academic honesty, doing your best work</li> <li>• Do your best to meet timelines, commitments, and due dates</li> <li>• Communicate proactively with your teachers if you cannot meet deadlines or require additional support</li> <li>• Collaborate and support your Saint Joseph Catholic School peers in their learning</li> <li>• Use digital citizenship including expectations for online etiquette</li> <li>• Proactively seek out and communicate with other adults at Saint Joseph Catholic School as different needs arise (see below)</li> </ul>	
For questions about ...	Contact
a course, assignment, or resource	Relevant teacher
technology-related passwords	Mrs. Katie Rogers Krogers@stjosdevine.com
Hardware	Mr. Donovan Yarnall Dyarnall@stjosdevine.com
access to programs	Mrs. Marguerite Pittman Mpittman@stjosdevine.com
a personal or social-emotional concern	Mrs. Lisa Leonard, School Counselor Lleonard@stjosdevine.com
an academic concern	Mrs. Shauna Kinsey, Student Success Skinsey@stjosdevine.com or Mrs. Mary Margaret Roy, Dir Student Support Mmroy@stjosdevine.com

### Parent Roles and Responsibilities

Provide support for your children by adhering to the 10 Guidelines for Saint Joseph's Parents

- Establish routines and expectations
- Define the physical space for your child's study
- Monitor communications from your children's teachers
- Begin and end each day with a check-in
- Take an active role in helping your children process their learning
- Establish times for quiet and reflection
- Encourage physical activity and/or exercise
- Remain mindful of your child's stress or worry
- Monitor how much time your child is spending online
- Keep your children social, but set rules around their social media interactions

# PreK - Fourth Grade School Priorities & Considerations

- After receiving initial notice from the principal about school closure and timelines, families will receive an email from their homeroom teacher with specific information.
- The primary tools for communication between teachers and families will be newsletters via email, video and assignments emailed to families.
- Students will have both off- and on-screen learning activities designed to engage learners in experiences that connect to the current curriculum. Students should be visible for live lessons.
- Resources will vary by class and lesson, but will include links to videos, graphic organizers, scanned material to read and engage with, independent research material via online sources and reading materials including ebooks.
- Learning tasks and activities will provide direction to families on how best to support student learning and the expected level of adult involvement. It is expected that students in grades PK–3 will need higher levels of support than students in grades 4-6.

## Elementary School: Approximate Daily Time Frames for Learning (varies by lesson)

(PreK)		
30 Minutes	ELA	Monday - Thursday
15 Minutes	Parents reading to/with their children	Monday - Friday
30 Minutes	Math	Monday - Thursday
15 Minutes	Religion	Monday - Friday
20 Minutes	Enrichment	Monday - Friday
30 Minutes	Science and Social Studies	Friday only

8a -2p Teacher scheduled one-on-one and small groups - Fridays  
Daily office hours outlined in Weekly Notes

Kindergarten - 4th Grade		
60 minutes	ELA	Monday - Thursday
60 minutes	Math	Monday - Thursday
20+ minutes	Read Aloud	Monday - Friday
15-30 minutes	Religion	Monday - Friday
45 minutes	Science and Social Studies	Friday only
20+ minutes	Enrichments	One per day
8a -2p	Teachers one on one/small group	Fridays

Teacher will hold daily office hours - see teacher's weekly email

Academic concerns: contact Mrs. Shauna Kinsey or Mrs. Mary Margaret Roy

# Fifth and Sixth Grade Priorities & Considerations

- After receiving initial notice from the principal about school closure and timelines, families and students will receive an email from their homeroom teacher as well as class teachers with class instructions on Edmodo.
- The primary tool for communication between teachers and families is email.
- The primary tools for communication between teachers and students are email and Zoom. Students will receive an invitation to Zoom, should this be necessary.
- Learning experiences are designed to be completed independently or in collaboration with other students. Parents should not do the work for their children! Please consult with teacher in challenge areas and for accommodations.
- Resources vary by class and lesson, but will include links to videos, graphic organizers, scanned material to read and engage with, independent research material via online sources or our library databases, and reading materials including ebooks.
- Students are encouraged to be proactive in reaching out to teachers via email when they have questions or assignments are unclear.
- A virtual meeting with a teacher and/or support staff will be available to support students with academic, social, or emotional needs. Please initiate contact by email.
- Students are encouraged to be mindful of academic integrity when it comes to sharing ideas and working together. In order to avoid questions of plagiarism, whether it be intentional or accidental, please remind students that submitted work needs to be original, not identical to one of their peers. This is especially important in writing-based subjects such as Language Arts.

## 5th and 6th grade: Approximate Daily Time Frames for Learning & Resources

### Fifth Grade

120 minutes	ELA	Mondays and Wednesdays
120 minutes	Math	Tuesdays and Thursdays
60 minutes	Science	Mondays and Wednesdays
60 minutes	Social Studies	Tuesdays and Thursdays
15-30 minutes	Religion	Monday - Friday
20+ minutes	Enrichments	One per day
8a-2p	Teacher scheduled student one on ones/ /small groups	Fridays

Teachers will have daily office hours - see weekly email

For academic concern:

Mrs. Shauna Kinsey, Student Success; [Skinsey@stjosdevine.com](mailto:Skinsey@stjosdevine.com)

or

Mrs. Mary Margaret Roy, Dir Student Support; [Mmroy@stjosdevine.com](mailto:Mmroy@stjosdevine.com)

## Sixth Grade

120 minutes	ELA	Tuesdays and Thursdays
120 minutes	Math	Mondays and Wednesday
60 minutes	Science	Mondays and Wednesdays
60 minutes	Social Studies	Tuesdays and Thursdays
15-30 minutes	Religion	Monday - Friday
20+ minutes	Enrichments	One per day
8a-2p	Teacher scheduled student one on ones/ /small groups	Fridays

Teachers will have daily office hours - see weekly email

For academic concern:

Mrs. Shauna Kinsey, Student Success; [Skinsey@stjosdevine.com](mailto:Skinsey@stjosdevine.com)

or

Mrs. Mary Margaret Roy, Dir Student Support; [Mmroy@stjosdevine.com](mailto:Mmroy@stjosdevine.com)

# Grading Priorities & Considerations

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The use of distance learning for the remainder of the current Saint Joseph Catholic School academic year requires some changes in our customary approach to assessment. The purpose of this letter is to provide information about how your child's progress will be graded for the end of the fourth quarter and at the end of the school year. The approach builds on guidelines from the Diocese of Charleston.

## **Grades – 4K through 4**

In Math and English Language Arts, teachers will provide a letter or numeric grade as well as narrative feedback. The narrative feedback will be a report of progress toward mastery of standards. This narrative will provide specific, skill/concept/competency-centered feedback on areas of strength and growth.

- Information on explicitly covered objectives/learning targets/topics that were part of instructional plans during the pandemic closure will be given.

- In addition, teachers will provide some information on focused skills for growth based on teacher-administered assessments, observations, and/or diagnostic tools such as MAP screening or those assessments built into digital curriculums such as IXL. This list of skills will be beneficial for future intervention/remediation/acceleration considerations for the child's transition into a new grade and academic year as well as equip you as parents for the transition. This focused skill work will be our "summer learning packet". More information about this will be sent out in the coming weeks.

Religion, Social Studies, Science, and all Enrichment classes will receive a satisfactory or unsatisfactory mark.

## **Grades 5 and 6**

At the end of the quarter, teachers will report progress utilizing the standard grading system implemented throughout the year. School leadership and teachers have worked closely to ensure that every grade earned can be substantiated based on equitable opportunities for learning, timely and appropriate feedback over the course of the academic term, and sustained and cumulative patterns of academic achievement. Therefore, if the teacher does not have 9 grades in the grade book, the teachers will also provide comments or a brief narrative that substantiates the grades based upon the data collected during the fourth quarter while utilizing the homebound learning format

Enrichment classes will receive a satisfactory or unsatisfactory mark.

In addition, Math and ELA teachers will provide some information on focused skills for growth, based on teacher-administered assessments, observations, and/or diagnostic tools such as MAP screening or those assessments built into digital curriculums such as IXL. This list of skills will be beneficial for future intervention/remediation/acceleration considerations for the child's transition into a new grade and academic year as well as equip you as parents for the transition. This focused skill work will be our "summer learning packet". More information about this will be sent out in the coming weeks.

Our administrative team and teachers have worked diligently to ensure that we are providing the very best opportunity for success and achievement during this unusual situation. We have worked equally hard to ensure we can provide an accurate report of your child's achievements and progress as well as suggest goals for your child's future success.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

**Final Note:**

All school closures are an ever-changing situation. This plan is subject to change. We understand that many of you are trying to balance work and your child's lessons. Please know that we are cognizant of this challenge. Do not hesitate to contact your teachers if you need more flexibility in the assigned schedule. Please stay in contact with the teachers and look for daily updates from them.

Our faculty, staff, and administrators will continue to pray for you and your children during these challenging days. We ask that you keep us and our entire school community in your prayers.

It is the little things we do that show how God is in us, with us, and working through us - "Faith to Move Mountains" Matthew 17:20.

Sincerely,

Donavan F. Yarnall, Ed. S  
Principal  
dyarnall@stjosdevine.com  
317-966-9120

The guidelines above are modeled on the DLP of the American International School of Japan and 'Iolani School, and Our Lady of Guadeloupe with our gratitude