



# ST. MARY ACADEMY BAY VIEW

## **Starting Strong, Staying Focused**

Planning for the 2020–21 Academic Year  
June 2020



## ST. MARY ACADEMY - BAY VIEW

# Planning for the 2020–21 Academic Year

## Overview

St. Mary Academy – Bay View is actively planning for the reopening of school on our campus beginning this August. Our plan is informed by all health precautions and mandates determined by the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), Governor’s Office, and Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Our faculty and administration are working together to develop a plan that attends to our infrastructure, policies and practices so that the health and safety of our students and staff remain our first priority. We understand that there is an evolving body of knowledge and community conditions that will require Bay View to respond by adjusting its plans. We stand ready to do that.

Our work to prepare for the opening of school begins now, and we will continue to respond to these changing conditions throughout the summer and school year. For now, this document serves as a blueprint of where we are headed. Additional details will be added as we approach the start of the school year.

### **PLANNING FOR INTERRUPTIONS**

Current advice recommends that schools prepare for a resurgence of COVID-19 at some point during the school year. Should such a moment arise, we will move to our Virtual Learning Program for that period. Bay View is also able to offer Virtual Learning to families who, by need or desire, prefer to have their daughters learn remotely alongside their peers on campus. Families that choose St. Mary Academy – Bay View must be prepared for a year of challenges that will be navigated in partnership with a team of experienced and caring teachers and administrators. Together we will stay strong!

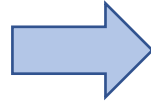
***Bay View has been investing in the power of educating girls and young women for 145 years and counting. Our Academy positions its students to achieve academic excellence in an environment steeped in the core values of compassion and service.***

*— Marybeth Beretta, RSM*

## Reopening Planning – *How will school start in the fall?*

Rhode Island has lifted statewide school closure mandate.

**NO**



School starts with the Virtual Learning Program until statewide school closure mandate is lifted.

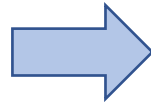
**YES**



Bay View opens within the In-Person Framework, with one of the three models in effect (see slide 6), and an optional Virtual Learning Program.

As a family, you determine you are comfortable with your daughter(s) returning to campus.

**NO**



Your daughter remains home and learns virtually with the Virtual Learning Program, participating alongside her In-Person peers.

**YES**



Your daughter returns to campus within the context of Bay View's In-Person Framework, which aligns with the health and safety requirements. In the event of a state-ordered closure, all students revert to the Virtual Learning Program until the Governor lifts the school closure mandate.



The Health and Safety of every student, teacher and staff member is our first priority as we navigate the “new normal” and unexpected challenging conditions. We follow closely the guidance issued by the RIDOH and the CDC to ensure that we have the most current information available to inform our practices and expectations for interactions. At a minimum, the following is being planned:

- Expanding and increasing school cleaning processes.
- Reviewing and revising student and staff health policies as guided by the CDC.
- Equipping each building with cleaning supplies, disinfectants and necessary health office supplies.
- Installing some hands-free devices.
- Designing classrooms to maximize healthy distances between students as informed by state and national guidance.
- Planning for safe and controlled movement on the campus.
- Minimizing the use of shared materials, surfaces and other opportunities for illness to spread.

## **Families As Partners for Health**

Our first step in keeping our campus healthy and open depends on our ability to maintain strict policies for attendance and daily home screenings before sending your daughter to school. These policies will help us minimize the spread of sickness or potentially exposing others to COVID-19.

Families should have plans **in advance** for their child when she is unable to attend school.

# Bay View Is Prepared for Changing Conditions



Bay View demonstrated that we have the ability to be flexible and nimble this past year when schools were ordered to close due to the COVID-19 pandemic. That spirit and ability will carry into our reopening plan. Each family will have the ability to choose how they want their daughter to participate in Bay View's rich academic and cultural programming. They may choose to have her attend school on campus or virtually through a hybrid model. We also know that we must anticipate another period when we will be required to pivot to Virtual Learning should the virus surge in the fall or winter months. A full and improved Virtual Learning Program will go into effect at that time.

- At the start of the 2020–21 school year, every student K–12 will have a device to support her learning. The Lower School students (Grades 1–5) will purchase Chromebooks. Middle and Upper School students (Grades 6–12) will either have iPads or use a device of their own choosing. This is a new approach at Bay View to provide families with choice.
- The campus will upgrade its wireless capacity in order to accommodate the increased demand for connectivity.
- An integrated platform, such as Google Classroom will be used campus-wide so that communication and a single-site learning platform will assist students, families and teachers in a flexible educational model.
- Bay View will invest in technology to support the filming of instruction in classrooms. The livestreaming of instruction will provide opportunities for students who are at home due to quarantine, illness or choice to continue to participate in school.
- Professional learning is planned for families and students at the start of the school year to ensure that they are comfortable using the technology during Virtual Learning.
- Faculty are working this summer to take stock of what we have learned this year and improve teaching and learning for the upcoming school year.

# In-Person Framework



Bay View is planning for different scenarios in order to respond to changing requirements from the RIDOH and the recommendations from the CDC. Each scenario maintains the health and safety protocols noted previously. In addition, each option allows students to learn from home within the Virtual Learning Program if necessary. Our top priority is to stay healthy and remain open!

## **CLASSROOM MODEL**

Students will remain, as much as possible, in stable groups in designated classrooms. There will be no gatherings of students in larger groups or mixed grade levels. Classrooms will be designed to maintain social distancing. In some cases, classrooms will be moved to larger spaces on campus. Recess and outdoor learning will be coordinated and scheduled. Lunch will take place in the classroom, and specific bathrooms will be assigned. Enrichment teachers will move to class for instruction. Movement will be significantly controlled around campus to reduce community spread or exposure.

## **SCHOOL MODEL**

The School Model will be implemented when it is safe to allow gatherings with fewer restrictions. Students will be allowed to have more interaction within their grade span. Students will be allowed to move to different classrooms within their building for shared experiences.

## **CAMPUS MODEL**

We will return to the full use of the campus for gatherings and classes, and movement around campus will be allowed under this model. Social distancing restrictions will decrease while the school maintains heightened hygiene and cleaning practices to maintain health and safety.

# Welcoming Students Back to Campus



Regardless of the learning framework and model used, all students—both those new to Bay View and those returning—will come back after many months of not being physically present in a school, having experienced some level of trauma due to CCOVID-19, and potentially entering with some level of anxiety. We want to provide a thoughtful re-entry for every student and will do this beginning Monday, August 24 in a series of half-day meetings. All grades will begin instruction on Monday, August 31, 2020.

<b>Date</b> (Full Calendar on Our Website)	<b>Morning Sessions from 9–11:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Afternoon Sessions from 12:30–3 p.m.</b>
Monday, August 24	Grades PK/K and 6	Grades 1 and 7
Tuesday, August 25	Grades 2 and 8	Grades 3 and 9
Wednesday, August 26	Grades 4 and 10	Grades 5 and 11
Thursday, August 27	Grade 12, Class of 2021	
Monday August 31	Instruction Begins	

# Virtual and In-Person Learning: A Hybrid Framework



The past year taught us that there are both community and family needs that must be considered. Each family must make decisions about what is the best learning framework for their daughter. There may be instances when it is possible to return to campus, but an individual family's circumstances may require extra caution. Our Hybrid Framework allows for this type of flexibility so that there is a seamless transition for students when learning on campus or virtually.

## **How will this work?**

Classrooms will be equipped with technology so that instruction can be livestreamed to students who are learning from home. Students on campus will continue to learn in their classroom with their teacher, while others learn virtually.

## **When might this be needed?**

- Families who have someone in the home who is high risk may prefer to have their student be more socially distant.
- If there is a need to be in quarantine.
- If a student needs to remain out of school due to a fever or other illnesses.
- A family decision that necessitates a student remaining outside of school for some period.





While specific guidance will be available June 19, we are anticipating some changes to the school day in order to maintain health and safety. We are learning from other schools across the country and around the world to identify best practices. The following captures some of the ideas that are under consideration.

- Changes to campus access for visitors and families.
- Increased frequency of cleaning and sanitizing routines.
- Updated requirements for in-person school attendance in line with screening guidelines.
- Age-appropriate recommendations for face coverings based on guidance from the CDC and RIDOH.
- Scheduling recess in the Lower School by class with cleaning in between.
- Aligning class schedules between in-school and virtual learning.
- Expanded virtual learning options for students.
- Use of space that maximizes social distance and outdoor learning.
- Pre- and post-school time on campus will be minimized.

# Athletics, Events and Gatherings



Bay View families and students value those activities that address education wholly—sports, shared liturgy and community engagement, among others. These features allow us to build a culture that is strong and attends to the Mercy core values. Our planning prioritizes maintaining gatherings within our own community. We must be prepared, however, to adjust these opportunities to health and safety concerns that require us to approach things differently. Some changes that may occur at various times throughout the year include:

- Schoolwide assemblies and liturgies being held through virtual connections within classrooms around campus.
- Canceling field trips and other out-of-school experiences.
- Rethinking before and after school care so that students are not mingling across grades.
- Athletic programs and events restricted or canceled as guidelines dictate.
- Events being rescheduled to different times in the year to allow for outdoor venues.
- On-campus activities occurring for within-grade-level groups and guided by social distancing guidelines.



## **Must Bay View follow what all the public schools do?**

No. While we must and should follow what is required under emergency orders, state regulations for non-public schools, and public health guidance from the RIDOH and the CDC, there may be choices that public school districts have to make that are based on their local needs, size and context. Bay View’s size—both in population and space—allows us to approach our reopening plan creatively.

## **Will children have to wear face coverings and masks?**

While at this time there is no guidance addressing this issue specifically from the RIDOH, the following is released guidance for RI Summer Camp programs: “Cloth face coverings may be used if tolerated by children older than age two. However, wearing cloth face coverings for long periods of time is uncomfortable and could hamper speech and social development. As face coverings are not recommended when children are at home with family members, it is reasonable to not require them, even of older children, in childcare when interactions are limited to only children and adults in the stable group. Face coverings could be considered for children older than age two, as tolerated, in common areas of the center and at drop-off and pick-up times when there may be some unavoidable close interaction between the stable groups.” We anticipate communicating school specific advice and expectation about this topic as we get closer to the start of the school year.



## **When will we start the school year?**

Our plan is to start opening the school year on Monday, August 24, 2020, with a staggered start by grade levels during the first few days of school to help students acclimate to the new school year and changed conditions that may be in effect depending on what framework and model is implemented. Instruction begins for all students on Monday, August 31, 2020. The Reopening Team is reviewing the entire school calendar to determine if any adjustments need to be made to school vacations, etc. in anticipation of potential disruptions due to the seasonal flu and COVID-19. The complete calendar will be shared on our website at the end of June.

## **What will my daughter's classroom experience be like?**

While we don't have a detailed guidance at this time, we are thinking deeply about the teaching and learning environment for whatever set of conditions we are under. We are mindful that the students will be returning after many months away from school and will need us to be as ready to support their social and emotional needs as their academics. Our classrooms will continue to be student-centered, joyful places where students are asked to think deeply, apply their learning, and become active learners. We are creating structures and routines that will allow us to maintain the culture and rhythm of school whether we are together in a building or learning from home.



## **Will there be a refund or reduction in tuition for next year?**

No, Bay View is not able to offer a reduction in or a refund of tuition for in-person or virtual learning. The actual per student cost for every student attending Bay View exceeds the cost of tuition and is supplemented by fundraising, donor and foundation support. Approximately 90% of our costs are fixed as we begin the school year. Contracts, personnel decisions, student materials and education supplies are all determined with little flexibility to realign once we begin the year. The additional requirements needed to respond to COVID-19 introduces new financial burdens on the school. It is essential that families commit to their decision this June with an awareness that there may be periods of time when there are inconveniences imposed by the health concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Is there an opportunity for additional or emergency financial assistance?**

You may ask for a reconsideration of your financial aid package if your family has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please submit this request in writing to the Bay View Financial Aid Committee.

## **What will busing be like?**

Busing is controlled by each local public school district who works to determine policies, protocols and coordination of all busing for non-public school students. Contact your local public school administration for more details but anticipate that decisions on busing and protocols around COVID-19 planning may not be determined until more specific guidance is known from RIDE and RIDOH.

# Questions & Answers



## **How will lunch be handled?**

The current plan is to have students eat lunch in their classrooms rather than moving to the cafeteria. This will allow us to minimize movement around campus and keep students within a small group for as much of the day as possible. We will also suspend our school food services for the year. This means that students will have to bring their own snacks and lunches every day.

## **How can I help?**

There are many ways for families to help prepare our school for reopening. We will be assembling opportunities for families to support the school's ability to stay strong and focused this year. You might consider adopting a classroom in order to supply anything from additional cleaning supplies to gifting a technology package that would provide cameras for students who need to learn from home for all or part of the year. We also need your help as we continue to develop and refine our plans. We will be sending a survey to all Bay View families to gather your input and ideas. We want our plan to comply with what we must and offer innovative ideas where we can!