

**Saint  
Mary's  
SCHOOL**

**2020-2021  
School Opening Plan**

**You've got this.**

July 2020

The 2020-2021 academic year is just around the corner and Saint Mary's School has spent the summer months preparing for a school year unlike any we have experienced before. In a COVID-19 world, we have thoughtfully designed a plan to both deliver an excellent educational experience and be responsive to changing circumstances.

The following pages provide a comprehensive overview of Saint Mary's plan to safely open the school this fall. Please read through this document carefully. As we get underway in August, a resource page on our website will provide you with more detailed information about Binder Health Center protocols, guidelines for boarding students as well as any updates regarding schedules, protocols, and school activities.

For the health and safety of our community, it is vital for all community members to follow Saint Mary's guidelines and protocols. To ensure a successful school year, we all must strive to stay positive, be flexible, and support one another during this unprecedented time.

We've got this.

## **CONTENTS**

Campus Preparations	2
Campus Safety	3
Learning Plan	4
Virtual Learning	5
On-Campus Learning	7
On-Campus Guidelines	9
Digital Platforms	11
Residential Living	13
Tuition	15
Contact Us	16

## Campus Preparations for Fall 2020

Saint Mary's School has spent the last months preparing the campus for the return of students in the fall of 2020. Various leadership groups and committees have collaborated to consider multiple options and devise a plan to support the health and wellness of our school community while ensuring students continue to learn and advance. Planning has been informed by the following guiding principles:

- A focus on the health and safety of the Saint Mary's School community
- Feasible, practical, and acceptable guidelines for our unique school community
- Human-centered and equitable design
- Excellence in all programs

Topics discussed include, but are not limited to:

- Safely returning to learning in accordance with state and local guidelines
- Establishing guidelines and protocols for keeping classroom, residence halls, and all campus environments safe
- Determining the best technology support and practices
- Reviewing and devising the best scheduling options
- Discussing cultural-competency and equity issues
- Assessing and developing opportunities for community building and social interactions in the midst of physical distancing

**In addition, we have consulted with and continue to study guidance from the following resources:**

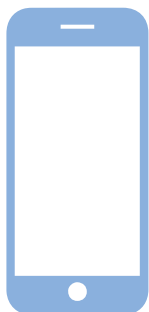
- North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS)
- The Center for Disease Control (CDC)
- The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)
- The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS)
- Oberlin Road Pediatrics (Saint Mary's School healthcare provider)
- Eurofins Scientific

### STUDENT MEDICAL AND HEALTH INFORMATION

Parents are reminded to update their daughter's health information by logging into Magnus or calling the Magnus Parent Helpdesk at 877-461-6831. For questions, please contact Binder Health Center Director Sharon Holmes, R.N., at sholmes@sms.edu. Saint Mary's will work with families to determine appropriate accommodations for those students identified as being high risk for the COVID-19 virus.

## Campus Safety Information

The Saint Mary's School community relies on all its members to abide by safety and health guidelines to maintain a healthy school environment. Some important guidelines include:



### MOBILE APP HEALTH CHECK-IN

All students and employees will self-screen and report daily for symptoms or exposure related to COVID-19 using a school-sponsored app. All community members will submit complete information, including temperature checks, at least 30 minutes prior to departure from their on-campus or off-campus residence and no later than 8 a.m. each day. Day students and employees with identified symptoms, known exposure, or a temperature of 100.0° or greater should stay at home per instructions provided on the app; if they are on campus when symptoms/fever develop, they will be asked to return home. Boarding students with identified symptoms, known exposure, or a fever of 100.0° or greater must avoid all contact with others and call the Binder Health Center for instructions. *Note: Binder Health Center appointments will be required to limit exposure to those in the health center for non-COVID-19 related concerns.*



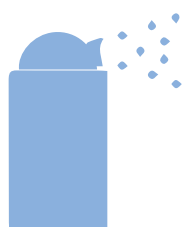
### SOCIAL DISTANCING ON CAMPUS

All community members are expected to practice six-foot social distancing throughout campus. Program modifications will be made to allow for social distancing in campus facilities and on school vehicles including the reconfiguration of classroom spaces and adjustments to class sizes. Floor markings, signage, and directional markers will be placed in common areas and high traffic areas to help with enforcing social distancing practices. Indoor mass gatherings such as assembly and chapel will be adjusted to ensure adherence to mandated state and local guidelines.



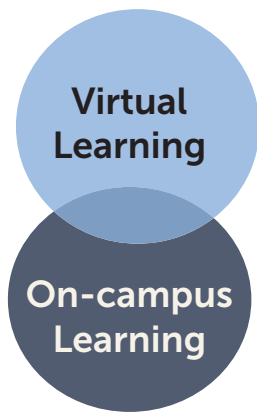
### USE OF FACE COVERINGS IN PUBLIC GATHERING SPACES

The coronavirus is spread primarily by person-to-person contact as respiratory droplets from coughing, sneezing, or talking. Face coverings and masks reduce the risk of infection. Face coverings will be required indoors at all times, except while eating or within a student's own dorm room or residence. Students must provide their own masks or cloth face coverings. Every student should have a new paper mask or a freshly laundered cloth face covering for each day she is on campus. Masks/face coverings will not be required outside as long as a six-foot social distance is maintained. Masks will be available for purchase in shop1842.



### SANITIZING AND CLEANING MEASURES

All classrooms will have a hand-sanitizer unit, disinfectant bottle, and paper towels. Per the recommendations from the CDC, hand washing is one of the best means of protection from getting sick. The class schedule allows time for regular hand washing throughout the day. Saint Mary's campus disinfection protocols have been increased to promote a healthy environment, like the use of room-sanitizing misting equipment.



**Saint Mary’s School remains committed to our mission to prepare girls for college and life. To that end, a learning plan has been designed to ensure the continued delivery of a premier, college-preparatory education.**

The plan is a two-pronged approach providing both virtual and on-campus learning. It provides continuity and the flexibility to adjust to changing circumstances should they arise.

The goal is to minimize any interruptions to learning as best as we can. Student schedules remain the same whether learning virtually or on campus; however, class times may be adjusted to accommodate a virtual or on-campus experience.

In early November, Saint Mary’s School will provide an update to families regarding virtual and on-campus learning for the second semester.

## The Plan

### VIRTUAL LEARNING

#### August 24-September 4, 2020

- The first two weeks of the school year will have virtual classes.
- The virtual learning period allows day and boarding students to self-quarantine for 14 days prior to the start of on-campus classes in accordance with state guidelines and Saint Mary’s protocols.

#### December 1-18, 2020

- The last few weeks of the fall semester will be virtual.
- By going virtual for these weeks, Saint Mary’s strives to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 spread following travel by students and families over the Thanksgiving break.

### ON-CAMPUS LEARNING

#### September 8-November 20, 2020

- Campus protocols have been developed and spaces altered to provide for social distancing on campus.
- A team of faculty members will be responsible to monitor a virtual learning plan and assist those students unable to be physically on campus, including those students who are delayed in arriving to campus due to international travel issues.

# Virtual Learning

The first and last weeks of the fall semester will be virtual learning to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in our school community. Should there be a stay-at-home order or other circumstances related to COVID-19 necessitating the closure of Saint Mary's campus for any length of time, the school will pivot and return to a virtual learning environment.

**The health and wellness of our school community will be assessed continually, and local and state COVID-19 infection data will be monitored.**

## VIRTUAL LEARNING DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE

During virtual learning periods, students will receive their learning in a synchronous online learning environment facilitated by the use of the Microsoft Teams Software. Classes are 55 minutes in length and meet Mondays through Thursdays, with Fridays used as workdays for students and professional development days for faculty. Students are familiar with working in this virtual space, including Saint Mary’s newest students who participated in our accelerator program this summer. In addition, time will be set aside for students to continue mastering technology tools.

The virtual learning schedule will continue to follow the usual A-Day/B-Day rotation. The rotation schedule will be available on the school’s website.

### VIRTUAL LEARNING Daily Schedule with 55 Minute Classes

A-Day		B-Day	
Period 1	9-9:55 a.m.	Period 5	9-9:55 a.m.
Period 2	10:05-11 a.m.	Period 6	10:05-11 a.m.
*Advisory/Community	11:05-11:30 a.m.	*Advisory/Community	11:05-11:30 a.m.
LUNCH	11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.	LUNCH	11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
Period 3	12:15-1:10 p.m.	Period 7	12:15-1:10 p.m.
Period 4	1:20-2:15 p.m.	Period 8	1:20-2:15 p.m.
Tutorial/Office Hours	2:15-2:45 p.m.	Tutorial/Office Hours	2:15-2:45 p.m.

*\*Advisory on Monday and Wednesday / Community Time on Tuesday and Thursday*

*Community Time may include club meetings, Student Life meetings, chapel, assembly, class meetings, SGA, individual tutoring sessions, affinity groups, social gatherings, and meetings with counselors.*

# On-Campus Learning

Saint Mary's on-campus learning begins on Tuesday, September 8, 2020. Guidelines will be followed in accordance with state and local health agencies and the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

Across campus, protocols have been established to keep individuals six feet apart. All community members will be required to wear masks in classes and areas of shared spaces. Ample time has been built into the daily schedule to allow for regular handwashing. Additional cleaning protocols have also been established.

**COVID-19 exposure and infection information must be reported to Saint Mary's Binder Health Center at [binderhealth@sms.edu](mailto:binderhealth@sms.edu) or by calling 919-424-4043.**



## DAILY ON-CAMPUS CLASS LEARNING SCHEDULE

Student class schedules and student class sizes have been adjusted to support health, wellness, and social distancing. Below you will find the schedule for the on-campus learning portion of the school year.

The schedule will continue to follow the usual A-Day/B-Day rotation. This rotation schedule will be available to students and parents on the school's website.

**7:30-8 a.m.** | Students assess and report their health information using the Magnus mobile app. If asymptomatic with no known exposure related to COVID-19, students wash hands, secure clean mask, and proceed to school/class.

**8-8:30 a.m.** | Students prepare for day, secure mask, wash hands, etc.

**8:30-8:45 a.m.** | Advisory

**8:45 - 9:45 a.m.** | A-Days: Period 1 | B-Days: Period 5

**9:45-10 a.m.** | Break (Handwashing, travel to/prepare for class)

**10- 11 a.m.** | A-Days: Period 2 | B-Days: Period 6

**11 a.m.-1 p.m.** | Lunch and Community Time\*

*This time will allow small groups of students to connect as they move safely between lunch and community time activities and access different venues across campus that allow for social distancing.*

**1-2 p.m.** | A-Days: Period 3 | B-Days: Period 7

**2-2:15 p.m.** | Break (Handwashing, travel to/prepare for class)

**2:15-3:15 p.m.** | A Days: Period 4 | B-Days: Period 8

**3:15-3:30 p.m.** - Tutorial

*\*Community Time may include club meetings, Student Life meetings, chapel, assembly, class meetings, SGA, individual tutoring sessions, affinity groups, social gatherings, meeting with counselors.*

## ON-CAMPUS GUIDELINES

Below are highlights of campus requirements and steps that have been taken to support our community's health and safety on campus. All community members are expected to follow these simple guidelines. Cooperating and working together in this way, we can help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and protect ourselves and others. Community members will:

- submit daily health screening information through school-sponsored app;
- abide by social distancing practices;
- wear face masks in classrooms, hallways, and all common spaces, including restrooms and outdoors when within six feet of others;
- follow seating instructions in classrooms configured to allow for social distancing;
- wash hands thoroughly and frequently throughout the day;
- use stairways, instead of elevators whenever possible.

Non-essential visitors to campus will be limited. Any visitor to campus must complete Saint Mary's COVID-19 screening form prior to entering campus and will be required to wear a face covering and to social distance while on campus.

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Today's students face uncertainty and stress, and Saint Mary's is here to help. We are committed to providing the resources and support our students need to navigate their feelings and the challenges they are facing. Whether in a virtual environment or on-campus, our academic support, chapel, counseling, and physical health programming will be available to our students. The Student Life section of our website has detailed information.

### **For New Students**

Building connections and a support network for our new students is of utmost importance. Before arriving on campus, each new student will connect with her Sister Saint - a returning student who will act as a guide and resource for her, her advisor, and a school counselor. When new students begin the school year, they will have established relationships and resources to help smooth their transition to Saint Mary's School.

### **Building Community**

In the face of changing circumstances, social distancing, and other COVID-19 realities, it is critical to provide opportunities for our students to spend time together and celebrate school traditions that are important to them. Saint Mary's Student Life team is carefully evaluating group sizes, campus spaces, and calendar considerations as it plans activities and events for the fall semester. While experiences may look different, we will have many opportunities to preserve our traditions and engage as a community in active and meaningful ways.

### **Community Expectations**

For the health and welfare of our community, it is important for students and employees to follow all school protocols when on campus and abide by the expectations of behavior set forth by the school for those times students are off campus. All students and parents will be asked to sign a pledge committing them to following Saint Mary's health and safety guidelines and expectations for on- and off-campus practices and behavior.

## DINING ON CAMPUS

Our dining services provider, FLIK, is following strict regulations around food preparation and service. Self-service food distribution will be temporarily discontinued. Food service employees will wear personal protective equipment at all times and follow FLIK health and safety policies.

The dining hall will provide lunch for all students and employees. Breakfast and dinners will be provided for boarding students and residential faculty only. Meals will be provided in a location(s) where social distancing is possible. While in the dining hall, students are expected to maintain a six-foot distance from others, follow floor markers and directional arrows at all times.

## CAMPUS ACCESS, CLUBS, CO-CURRICULAR AND AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Saint Mary's campus ministry, counseling offices, Kenan Library, fitness center, Long Student Center, and shop1842 will be available for use in accordance with school health protocols including mask wearing and social distancing.

**Clubs and co-curricular activities** will remain a focus for the student body. Activities will be planned and organized to allow for community interaction within the parameters of Saint Mary's health and safety protocols.

### **Athletics and Physical Fitness**

Saint Mary's School is committed to providing a comprehensive athletic program this fall and opportunities for girls to safely participate in physical fitness activities. Informed by guidelines provided by the North Carolina Independent School Athletic Association (NCISAA) and state and local officials, Saint Mary's plans to begin its fall sports season on Tuesday, September 8 with conditioning, skill building, and individual workouts for student athletes. Physical fitness offerings through Triangle Fitness will also begin on September 8. Decisions regarding ongoing athletics programming will be informed by what is best for the Saint Mary's community and will adhere to the school's health and safety protocols.

# Digital Platforms

Saint Mary's teachers and students are equipped with tools to transition seamlessly between on-campus and virtual learning. Every Saint Mary's student is equipped with a Lenovo tablet. This powerful tool gives students the opportunity to continue their learning while on campus and when they are in the virtual learning portion of the year.

**Given the uncertainty of COVID-19, significant measures have been taken to ensure the delivery of the excellent Saint Mary's education in both environments. Consistency across disciplines is key and allows for flexibility, structure, self-regulation, and accountability between students and teachers. Saint Mary's is dedicated to providing a safe and open environment for students to discuss their questions and concerns.**

**Saint Mary's utilizes various technology application tools to assist students and teachers in the learning process - both while learning on campus and virtually. The main tools are listed and explained below and provide ample opportunities for communication and collaboration between students and with teachers.**

### MICROSOFT TEAMS

Microsoft Teams will be the primary source for online classes. This platform was used in the spring and students are familiar with it. Using this platform, your daughter will have access to shared files, and will be able to complete assignments, participate in virtual classes, and communicate with faculty, staff, and other students.



### ONENOTE

OneNote Class Notebooks have a personal workspace for every student, a content library for handouts, and a collaboration space for lessons and creative activities. Saint Mary's School has used OneNote for several years allowing assignments and courses to be organized in each student's own digital notebook. OneNote integrates with Microsoft Teams, making it just a click away for students and instructors.



### CANVAS

Canvas is the school's learning management system (LMS) and has been used at Saint Mary's for several years. Teachers post lessons and assignments on Canvas; in addition, student progress can be followed on Canvas as grades are posted there regularly. While students have access to the LMS, parents can also view their daughter's progress through Canvas. Canvas is accessible via a link on the parent and/or student portals. Specific directions on how to access Canvas will be available to parents at the start of school year.



### GOOGLE DRIVE

Google Drive is available to all students and it provides access to a word processor, spreadsheet, and presentation tools. Google also offers many other tools in its suite of applications and, depending on the teacher, some additional applications are used. The real power of Google Drive is in its sharing and real-time collaboration features. The Google suite is second to none in the ability for multiple users to collaborate through the share feature.



### ZOOM and WEBEX

Saint Mary's School will continue to use Zoom and WebEx as our digital platforms for video conferencing. Each of these platforms provides a variety of features designed to support online engagement with small and large groups of our school community.

## Residential Life

Saint Mary's residence halls - Penick Hall, Cruikshank Hall, and Smedes Hall - will open for boarding students traveling by air or mass transit between August 19-20, 2020. Local boarding students traveling by car will return to campus between September 4-6. This staggered schedule allows the school to begin the school year with virtual classes while also following recommended quarantining protocols before beginning on-campus classes on September 8.

**Boarding students will be housed in double rooms and quad suites which will be considered dorm cohort groups. This allows students to live together without having to social distance or wear face coverings in their dorm rooms or suites. Quarantine decisions will be applied to dorm cohort groups as necessary.**

## BOARDING GUIDELINES

In order to minimize the risks of COVID-19 spread at Saint Mary's School, boarding students will be required to adhere to additional health and safety protocols in the residence halls. These will be outlined in more detail in the 2020-2021 Residential Life Guide which will be posted on the school's website in the coming weeks.

### AN OVERVIEW

- ATPs (About Town Permissions) will be permitted in accordance with the school's policies which are informed by local and state health guidelines.
- Sleepover and day student visitations to residence halls and dorm rooms will be suspended during the fall semester.
- Lower Smedes, shop1842, and the Long Student Center remain open and available to both day and boarding students.
- Off-campus overnights will be allowed within parameters set by the school, including a health screening process and possible quarantine upon return to campus.
- Boarding students will not need to wear masks when in the room with their roommate/suite-mates.
- Visiting other rooms within a student's own dorm will be permitted and subject to specific guidelines outlined in the 2020-2021 Residential Life Guide
- Inter-dorm visitations will not be permitted.

More detailed information will be provided in the 2020-2021 Residential Life Guide available on our website.

## TUITION INFORMATION

We have created a plan to enter the school year as close to normal as possible and to deliver our program with excellence. Our budget is based on full tuition and fees due from families according to their specific contracts. It is not possible at this time to predict how or when disruptions may occur or how they might affect our budget.

We anticipate increased expenses related to health and safety guidelines required by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) and the national Center for Disease Control (CDC). Some of these increased expenses may be offset by reduced expenses in other areas. Therefore, we are opting for a responsive rather than proactive budgetary approach this year. At the close of the 2020-2021 school year, we will assess the impact on expenses during the course of the year and make any appropriate yearlong credit adjustments at that time.



# Questions?

## Office of the Head of School

Brendan J. O'Shea  
Head of School  
boshea@sms.edu  
919-424-4139

Carol Killebrew  
Assistant Head of School  
ckillebrew@sms.edu  
919-424-4066

## Academics

Leslie Owen  
Dean of Teaching and Learning  
lowen@sms.edu  
919-424-4072

## Student Life

Tim Healy  
Dean of Students  
thealy@sms.edu  
919-424-4014

## Residential Life

Abby Wahlstrom  
Director of Residential Life  
awahlstrom@sms.edu  
919-424-4108

## Binder Health Center

Sharon Holmes, R.N.  
Director of Binder Health Center  
sholmes@sms.edu  
919-424-4043

## Business Office

Sally Woods  
Chief Financial Officer  
swoods@sms.edu  
919-424-4123