



## Sacred Heart Catholic School - Turlock

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July 24, 2020

Dear Sacred Heart School Families,

I hope and pray this finds you and your family healthy and safe. I want to share with you our plans for the start of the new school year. Despite our best efforts, prayerful hopes and extensive preparation to have students return to campus on August 11<sup>th</sup> for the beginning of the 2020-21 school year, we have been informed by the state and county that this opening date will not be likely.

The state mandate requires that counties be off their watchlist (a list of counties that have a higher than expectable number of COVID-19 cases) for 14 days before schools will be allowed to open their campuses. Therefore, Sacred Heart School has decided to push back our start date to August 24, with in-person classes planned for August 31. By starting in-person classes August 31 it will allow for:

1. more time for Stanislaus County to get off the watchlist,
2. us to be better positioned to resume in-person classes on campus on August 31
3. a better chance at not having to begin the year in distance learning.

Our school has a county-approved Reopening Plan. Our Reopening Plan contains all of the necessary protocols and equipment for the safety of students and staff. Should there be a change in the state's orders or the county's status, Sacred Heart School is ready for in person instruction.

On August 24, our county may still be on the watchlist and we would then open with distance learning on August 31. If that is the case, starting August 24 and continuing throughout the week, teachers will be conferencing on campus with each student and his/her parent(s) at a scheduled time, following physical distancing protocols. This one-on-one conference will allow for the opportunity to meet and start a partnership with your child and family. We will be distributing textbooks, learning materials and Chromebooks for student use. Teachers will walk through a few key elements of the distance learning structure and go over the daily learning schedule. Academic goals for the year, as well as for the weeks of August 31 and September 7, will also be discussed. We will troubleshoot any anticipated concerns for the student/family and answer any questions. All scheduling will be done remotely; further information will be provided next week.

A safe return to campus remains a priority at both the school and diocesan levels, and we continue to prepare for the day we can return. The Catholic Schools Office is working closely with all principals and county officials to prepare the necessary documents to expedite the process.

Fr. Pat and I feel strongly that pushing our start date back to August 24 will hopefully allow the time needed for Stanislaus County to get off the watchlist, not be required to begin the year in distance learning and ultimately, benefit your children's educational experience.

Thank you for your understanding, prayers and support as we continue to keep our students, staff and families' safety in mind

Mrs. Michelena  
Principal  
Sacred Heart School, Turlock