

Good afternoon,

As this new normal continues to unfold, I hope your family has had time to do some fun things together at home. I am spending more time via FaceTime with my grandchildren and face-to-face time with my dogs and cattle! (My husband is still working at his job.)

E-Learning Update:

Dr. Weiss, Supt. of Catholic Schools, as well as ISBE, (IL State Board of Education) have made their recommendations for schools to follow. The main focus of E-Learning is to provide learning opportunities for all students. The emphasis for schoolwork assigned, reviewed, and completed during the remote learning period is on learning, not on compliance.

E-Learning will resume March 31 and will continue until further notice.

All students will have new assignments in their grade level folder each day, just as they did on our trial E-Learning day. All assignments will be placed in the folders by 8:00 p.m. the preceding evening. Again, go to our school website <https://school.stmaryspontiac.org/>, click on K-8 E-Learning Lessons, click the appropriate date, and your child's grade level folder.

Assignments:

Assignments will be due the next day. For example, Tuesday, March 31, assignments will be posted Monday, March 30, by 8:00 p.m. Students will have all day/evening on March 31, to complete assignments. The assignments will be due Wednesday, April 1, by 8:00 a.m.

Teachers have been creating a variety of lessons for your child to be engaged in learning. Students may be asked to submit assignments using Google Classroom or by taking a picture of the assignment and emailing it to the teacher. Some of the activities will involve live chats with students, using the platform Google Meet.

The ISBE has issued the following recommendations and guidelines as suggested minimum and maximum times of engagement by each student in remote learning activities.

Grade Level	Minimum	Maximum	Recommended Length of Attention Sustained
K	30 minutes/day	90 minutes/day	3-5 minutes
1-2	45 minutes/day	90 minutes/day	5-10 minutes
3-5	60 minutes/day	120 minutes/day	10-15 minutes
6-8	Class: 15 minutes/day Total: 90 minutes/day	Class:30 minutes/day Total: 180 minutes/day	1 subject are or class

Contact Hours:

Teachers will have specific "contact hours" when they are available to help your child if they need extra support. If you have a question or concern, please email your child's teacher. Please do not text the teacher as many of our teachers are parents with children at home, too.

Attendance:

Per the directive of the Diocese, attendance will be taken. Students need to complete assignments by the due date. **IF** your child is sick on a given day, please contact your child's homeroom teacher so they know to mark your child absent.

Grades:

Dr. Weiss and ISBE have stated grades will be taken, but they will not have a negative impact on your child's academic standing. The emphasis for schoolwork assigned, reviewed, and completed during the remote learning period is on learning, not on compliance.

Tuition:

We realize some families may be facing lay-offs or furloughs during this time. If your family is experiencing financial hardship, please contact me.

Scholarships:

As a reminder, the deadline to apply for Spalding scholarships for the 2020-2021 school year is April 15. No exceptions will be made to this deadline. If you have applied for a scholarship through Empower Illinois, do not limit yourself to this one scholarship opportunity. Detailed scholarship information can be found on our website at <https://school.stmaryspontiac.org/tuition-assistance.html>. If you have financial need, please take advantage of all opportunities available.

DrawDown:

The 29th Annual DrawDown will be postponed to Fall of 2020. Watch for more details to come.

Fine Arts Night:

Our annual Fine Arts Night event, originally scheduled for April 23, has been cancelled. As decisions are made about the remainder of the school year, we will determine if this event can be rescheduled.

In closing, if you need assistance with anything, please contact me by emailing me at jones.karen@stmaryspontiac.org. I miss seeing your children each day. Please know I say daily prayers for each of them. Thank you for your continued support of St. Mary's. Blessings to each of you; take care and stay safe.

Mrs. Jones