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Dear Nazareth Parents and Guardians,

We have continued to plan for the reopening of school. It has been a daunting task, but so worth the effort for the health, safety, and well-being of our students, faculty, staff, families, and volunteers.

As I mentioned in previous memos, our **Core Committee for the Reopening of Nazareth** has been developing creative strategies and procedures for different scenarios to ensure a safe, smooth, and successful start to the 2020-2021 school year.

- We have been closely reviewing all guidance documents issued by the NYS Education Department (NYSED), the NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH), and the NYS Office for Religious and Independent Schools (SORIS).
- Communications from these various agencies have been frequent as guidelines and requirements changed based on new statewide and regional data.
- I Zoomed with the faculty this month to share updated information and to receive more input from them.
- We have been working with faculty subcommittees on several areas in the planning stages.
- We have been collecting input from you through our parent survey. *(Thank you for your participation. If you have not completed the survey yet, please do so today.)*
- I have been in communication with several nonpublic school principals in Monroe County.

The decision we have come to, and will submit as our first choice in our comprehensive plan to NYSED and NYSDOH later this week, is that **we will be ready and able to welcome students back to school full-time at Flower City Park in September**. Our smaller enrollment and large size classrooms, cafeteria, and gym make it possible to bring all back safely. We will be moving some rooms around to accommodate the social distancing requirements and will be using two additional rooms that the parish has occupied until now. We are reviewing staff needs and most likely will need to bring on more support beyond the classrooms. All decisions being made are based on the mandates from NYS Education Department, the NYS Department of Health, and the State Office for Religious and Independent Schools.

We have to wait for approval of our plan from the NYSED and the NYSDOH, but Governor Cuomo will make the final decision about the reopening of schools early in August. All schools have to submit more than one scenario. Here are the options we have planned for the 2020-2021 school year:

- **Full-time, in-person instruction:** All students will attend school at Nazareth every day. Enrollment at each level is being monitored closely, and we have set class limits so there is appropriate social distancing in the classrooms for each student.

Note: If you have not registered yet, I encourage you to do so as soon as possible. If you are worried about the registration fee at this time, please contact Mrs. Cathy Cerame in our Business Office. *You do not want to lose a spot for your child.* Two classes are already at or very close to capacity. Grade 2 is at capacity; if we get more registrations, we will split the class into two smaller ones. (*Start recruiting!*)

- **Distance learning for specific reasons:** Distance learning may be an option for a few of you whose child is unable to return to school for medical reasons or serious family concerns. This would only be until early November, the end of the first quarter. At that time, the decision to participate in distance learning versus on-site will be re-evaluated.

Parents who opt for distance learning will be responsible for their child's *daily* sign-in required for attendance recording. They must also ensure that the child will keep up with assignments *daily* via Google Classroom. The key word is *daily*. Before you make a decision, I encourage you to wait until our plan is submitted to NYS. You will then find it posted on our website. I think the action steps already taken and the planned procedures and protocols in the development stages now will ease your mind.

- As required by the NYSED, we have to be prepared with a plan for **distance learning for everyone** should that be the governor's decision for every school in September, or if we have to close at any time during the year. We will be ready to build on the knowledge and experiences from the winter/spring closure and continue to provide a quality program to meet the needs of all our children.

Whatever the final plan, the goal remains that each student will continue to learn and grow in all ways. At Nazareth, faith, love, and learning will continue to thrive!

Thank you for your ongoing support and trust. We will continue to chart this new territory together. Once our plan is approved, there will be more specific details to share via email, website, and possible Zoom meetings.

Wishing you peace of heart and many blessings this summer. Please stay safe and well! You are in my daily prayers. I truly believe God is walking with us on this unique journey!

Sr. Margaret Mancuso

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Principal