

Memo to: Parents and Guardians
Memo From: Sr. Margaret Mancuso
November 25, 2020



Dear Parents and Guardians,

This is a follow-up to my memo of yesterday. We have been working diligently on the process for bringing back in-person instruction as soon as possible. Maintaining the safety and good health of our children and staff, and ensuring that the children continue to grow academically, spiritually, socially and emotionally, remain our top priorities.

To Recap: Based on Monroe County's infection rate, Governor Cuomo announced earlier this week that parts of the county are determined to be Orange Zones effective today. Schools located in these Orange Zones are required to close campus for four consecutive calendar days, which will be tomorrow through Sunday. After the mandatory four-day closure, we can begin the process of reopening the school for in-person instruction.

What is the process for returning to in-person instruction?

Schools are required to test 100% of their in-person students, faculty, and staff members in order to reopen. We have chosen to follow this requirement for the sake of the children and parents.

- As with the 20% testing recently completed at Nazareth, the COVID rapid test kits come through the Monroe County Health Department at no cost to us.
- This test is the simple, rapid test. Just a quick nose swab. Not the highly invasive one. Same one as last week.
- Sr. Marlene and another trained staff member will test all faculty and staff on Monday morning, November 30.
- **They will test all students Monday afternoon and Tuesday, November 30 and December 1.**
- Those who were part of the 20% recently tested will need to test again.
- *You will receive information on the exact times for testing this Friday or Saturday.* Sr. Marlene is working out the details to divide the student population so the process can run smoothly and we can adhere to social distancing.
- *We will allow one parent, if you wish, to come into school to be with your child while s/he is being tested. The test itself only takes about 10 seconds at the most. There will be a brief wait inside in another room until it is your child's turn. We will have staff present to guide the process along and keep everyone socially distant.*
- You will receive an email later in the day with the test result if negative. The nurse will call if the test is positive.
- Once everyone is tested, the state guidelines say that schools can return to in-person learning. **Our plan is to have the students back on campus Wednesday, December 2.**

- Seven days after reopening, schools, while continuing to follow their strict protocols, will have to test 25% of their population weekly as long as the orange zone remains. Once out of the orange zone, the testing requirements will change. Our recent 20% staff and students tested had all negative results!

As with the recent testing, Nazareth will only test students whose parents have consented. ***For those who did not consent the last time but wish to take advantage of this opportunity now, the consent form is available here: <https://forms.gle/viuSGN5BwWuKNL8cA>. We need to know if you have agreed or not.***

Note: Any student who does not get tested will be required, by county and state mandates, to remain at home engaged in distance learning until we are provided with a recent negative test result from another testing provider, or until we are no longer designated as a Micro-Cluster Zone. The time for remaining home and learning remotely could be weeks or more. If you wish to have your child tested at another site, that is fine, but your child cannot return until we have the paperwork with negative results. It cannot be a test done previously.

As a faculty, we have observed the academic, social, and emotional growth in our students since returning to school in September, and we have recognized the learning gaps from being home for three months in the spring. We want to avoid further gaps in learning as much as possible.

Despite the brief temporary closure next week, we assure you that instruction will continue without interruption. Teachers will be providing lessons through Google Classroom and Zoom meetings on Monday and Tuesday. Again, **we will be back on campus for in-person learning on Wednesday, December 2.** Our office has been in contact with the Transportation Departments of the districts that bus our children regarding next week.

Thank You!

The faculty, staff, and I are most grateful for your ongoing commitment to Nazareth and for your consistent efforts to make this a wonderful year of learning, growth, and joy for all.

Peace and prayers during this special week! Do have a safe and happy Thanksgiving! Please follow all of the CDC guidelines and recommendations for the health and safety of all this holiday week.

