

Saint Agnes Academy

SINCE 1957, A CATHOLIC PARISH SCHOOL FOR PRE-SCHOOL TO GRADE 8
30 Carson Ave, Dalton MA 01226

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Dear St. Agnes Academy families,

I hope this email finds you well. As we all know, Governor Baker announced that school will be closed until the end of the year. Although the building is closed, our staff and teachers are still here to educate, help, and support your child. This is an important responsibility and this is what we do best at SAA.

Let me share a few updates with you regarding the following:

- **Remote learning**
- **Social and emotional support**
- **End of the year calendar**
- **Planning for next year**

Remote learning

Our teachers are in the process of communicating instructions about increased use of remote learning. For example, we now have an online license for Pearsons, the publisher of many of our textbooks. The teachers have started setting up the students with accounts in addition to the current use of Epic, Khan Academy, Vocabulary, and Google classroom.

Many teachers communicated a plan with you regarding virtual meeting with the students using one of the following(face-time / google meet / zoom) at least once a week. Starting next week, all teachers of all grades will be doing so, and you should receive further communication from the teachers.

We are keeping in mind that your family may have challenges regarding remote learning, and our teachers will work with your child individually. Please reach out to them and let them know. As we move more towards remote learning, we are preparing ourselves and your child for any similar situation if it arises in the future. With that in mind, our teachers will continue a mix of remote learning/textbooks material depending on each grade level, class dynamics, individual learning, and family needs.

We will continue to deliver a remote learning experience for the remainder of the academic school year, but SAA is fully committed to doing this in the most effective, compassionate, and supportive manner possible.

Please know that our Title I program is still supporting our students. Please reach out to them if your child needs extra help.

Here are my 3 top picks for remote learning resources at home:

1. PBS for MA educators : <https://mass.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/emergency-closings-collection/>
2. Epic with thousands of free books: <https://www.getepic.com>
3. Quiz hub with thousands of fun quizzes for all grades and all subjects : <https://quizhub.com> (Account Dalton / Password stagnes)

Social and emotional support

- We will continue our effort to bring students together in a safe place to meet. We will continue with regular zoom meetings for each grade secured with the highest level of security measures possible. All teachers will be communicating through Zoom, face-time or google meet.
- Our teachers sent an email asking parents if they like to share emails with other families in the same grade so our children can connect and communicate. We thank you for reaching out, giving your permission and connecting the children.

- Our PTO will continue to support the school effort .
- A group of our amazing students volunteered to write letters, set up touring sessions, record stories, and provide mentors to any younger child. If your child would like to connect with this amazing group, please let me know.
- This is a great resource with information on [Talking to Children about COVID, from the](#) National Association of School Psychologists
- Tools and Strategies to cope with Worry and Uncertainty - Lynn Lyons. Well worth a listen to the end. <https://youtu.be/5CFLRAlyztc>. Thanks to Father Chris for sharing!
- How to stay connected with social distancing. https://www.friendzy.co/friendly-freebies/how-to-stay-connected?utm_term=0_6bd68f40c1-5f0588421e-45475741

End of the year calendar

1. We have continued learning in a remote environment and a planned end date will provide the teachers the time they need to assure that all students have covered the materials they need to cover.
2. Our last day of school is scheduled for Jun 15.
3. The teachers will communicate to you process and dates for the returning of textbooks, collecting materials, cleaning up desks and lockers.
4. I will be organizing zoom meeting for all grades students to meet their new teachers. More information will be sent soon.
5. PTO will communicate end of year fun activities in the following few weeks.

We know the importance of normal year-end rites of passage for our students such as graduation, virtual field days, and honoring our students'

achievements in creative ways. We are committed to celebrating the accomplishments of our students. We will work with our local communities, following the guidance of our local municipalities to provide these important experiences for our students in ways that are responsible.

An important part of our planning for end of the year is graduation. Graduation is not just one day or one celebration. Graduation is the opportunity to honor our graduates' many years of hard work and dedication. However, we're currently living in unprecedented and unpredictable times due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and our graduation ceremonies and celebrations will have to change.

Graduation at any level of education is an event to celebrate and enjoy with family and friends, and it's more important than ever to honor our graduates.

I am working with Father Chris, our 8th grade teacher and parents, the PTO, and the school staff to plan on safe, creative, and fun ways to celebrate. We will soon communicate a detailed plan

Planning for next year

While remote learning continues, our attention is already starting to turn to next year. We have already started to think about what school reopening might look like. We will follow federal government guidance for reopening, keeping in mind that getting kids back in the classroom is the top priority for getting back to normal.

We are in the process of assembling a committee to plan for next year. The members will be chosen from our families and will include doctors, nurses, teachers, and community leaders in addition to Father Chris, myself, PTO, and board members. The committee will assure that we are ready for next year and will discuss and put forth a plan for the reopening.

If you like to be part of this committee or have a suggestion, please contact me. I would love to hear from you and work with you.

Few other notes

- *I wanted to let you know about a public information campaign the Office of the Child Advocate is launching in partnership with UMass Medical. The information campaign is designed to make Massachusetts families aware of state resources that are available to them and encourage struggling families to reach out for help. <https://www.mass.gov/lists/we-all-need-help-sometimes>*
- Happy teacher appreciation week! Although we are physically apart, we can still show love and appreciation to our amazing year around givers! Send your teacher a note, a picture, or a video. I am sure it will brighten their day!
- Friday Mass will be celebrated today and you can always find a link to watch later on our website.
- We post school announcement on our facebook page along with fun activities and messages form the teachers and the students. It is a great tool to connect us, so check it out, like us and follow us.
- The diocese asked ask to share this link with our families regarding circle of grace training as part of the implementation of student safe environment training that could not be communicated earlier due to the school closing. <http://diospringfield.org/circle-of-grace-presentation/>

Thank you

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