

**Update #5 of 5 - sent by C. Fuller March 22, 2020 @ 17:51 p.m.**

**Dear Families,**

**Last week was most certainly one of the longest-lasting weeks in history! Well, except for the hurricane! Here we find ourselves reinventing school yet again. Fortunately, our teachers, faculty, and staff have become pros at helping meet the needs of our students in a time of crisis.**

**For the coming week, there are some key thoughts that I want you to remember. First, have patience as we roll out HNES@home. For many of us, this is a new journey in a virtual school setting, and we all know there will be unplanned surprises along the way. Secondly, give yourself and your child the grace to make mistakes along the way. Thirdly, communication will be of the utmost importance. Especially when we cannot interact with each other face-to-face, do not hesitate to reach out if you are having any issues at home.**

**Our plan is evolving every day for our HNES@home. Our fabulous teachers are working hard to provide the very best option in education for your child. All the while keeping in mind that many (if not all) of you are also working from home. HNES@home will continue the school's mission of providing a nurturing Christian environment where students with promise receive challenging academics, enriching opportunities, and a solid foundation for developing their potential as good, caring, and responsible citizens.**

**Very shortly, you will receive our material pickup plan for Wednesday, March 25, 2020. The first day of HNES@home will be Thursday, March 26, 2020. This week will be focused on how to learn virtually within each classroom. I know there will be many questions and changes as we all figure out this new virtual classroom world together. Please follow the emails from school as well as your classroom teachers as they will outline the informational steps that will be needed as we move forward.**

**Lastly, I want everyone to remember that you are not alone in these times of social distancing. Your precious children are continuously on our minds and weigh heavily upon our hearts. I was very teary upon reading your heartfelt responses to our survey, and your words of encouragement mean so much to all of us.**

**Seek God's will in all that you do, and he will direct your path. -Proverbs 3:6**

**God Bless You, Cynthia Fuller**

## **Update Email #1 of 5 - March 14, 2020 - JEH**

Hello Everyone,

Even though we all have experience with disaster and uncertainty, it is still hard, isn't it?

Our board wisely voted that we would make independent decisions for Holy Nativity during this disaster, instead of following our usual policy to close when BDS closes.

I am sure you are glad, but also now eager to hear something concrete from your school.

We have not made a decision yet about the week after Spring Break. As we are waiting for Wednesday and the new information available mid-break to make an informed decision, I want you to know some of what we are doing right now.

Gaila had already arranged during this week off, because of the virus, for our cleaning service to deep clean the school, including all the walls and especially the bathrooms.

After the National Emergency designation by the President on Friday afternoon, I spent last night viewing webinars and reading everything I could, to be as informed as possible. Cynthia Fuller was doing the same thing. Our texts back and forth until late Friday night were fast and furious!

The board and administrators are using the information from the CDC and the Florida Health Department as our health professional guides in decision making. As a public school system, Bay District has to follow the guidance of the Florida Department of Education, but the DOE does not regulate us or charter schools. I can not imagine the decision making that has to go into thinking about school for an entire state, but I am sure they have way too many moving parts!

Here are some facts that I gathered last night.

The CDC, as well as other health experts, expect the number of ID'd people with the virus to double every 6 days. Not to amp up your anxiety, but what we need to consider is that with 46 cases in Florida on Friday, that means by April 6th, 2 weeks after Spring Break, there will be 736 cases, and on April 18th there will be 2944 in Florida. The professionals' best guess seems to be, as mentioned yesterday at the press conference and also on those health sites, this will probably last 8 weeks. That takes us to the first week in May.

When Holy Nativity makes a closure plan, we also want to make a re-open plan at the same time, so you have some idea of what to expect--as best we can anyway. For HNES to close the week of March 23-27, with no cases in Bay County, and then reopen March 30th as we approach 700 cases, seems counterproductive. Following that progression of increasing cases, along with what we learn this coming week, needs to play into our school decisions.

On distance learning--that sounds so un-schoolish!--there are things we will do so students and parents have predictability and structure. Sadly, we all know it is coming sometime--on our plan there will be a daily schedule, not like the one at school but one that is logical and predictable, plus parents will not be expected to be the teacher!

At the end of this week we will be asking you if you have wifi and computer / chromebook availability, if you need our help getting at-home school set up, and if there is any other area where you need our help. We have already collected some excellent daily school plans for our precious littles too!

As always, we know that every parent will make decisions that are best for your own children. This, just like in our last disaster, is not a time we would ever tell you what to do. You are part of the Holy Nativity family, doing the same as what we do or not. If you decide to keep your children home at any time, please just let us know so we don't worry someone is sick.

Always first in our decision making is the safety and health of our children, our parents and our employees. We found following Michael, our children needed school to feel safe. Parents needed school so you could manage your own work and businesses. We all needed each other. This social isolation being recommended now also needs a how-to on keeping person to person contact. Currently, we are setting up GoogleMeet for our faculty and staff. We will figure out some way for our school family to gather electronically as part of our plan during these days and weeks.

Knowing what we know now, when it is decided to close the buildings, we will do all we can to make school feel like school every day. I am having trouble thinking of how to help our parents when we can't offer school on our campus. This has to be so hard on planning for work, and not calling on grandparents to help you. Know, please, we are thinking of you too in our planning.

I love hearing from you--concerns, suggestions, funny stories. You can expect an email on Wednesday if not before. You have surely learned that about me--I have been known to over share--I love to keep you in the know!

One silly thing is really bothering me. As I type, we have a crew at school putting together a wonderful new playground fort for the older students, purchased through a grant for St Joe, that they have wanted since August. Something about it being installed and now they can't play on it just isn't right!

Do you think we will all remember this as the year of the toilet paper mania?

Fondly,

Judy Hughes

## **Update Email #2 of 5 - March 16, 2020 - JEH**

Hi Folks,

If anyone makes this movie, I am definitely not buying a ticket!

On Sunday night, the CDC directed everyone in the country to postpone or cancel any face to face gatherings of 50 people or more for the next 8 weeks. Gulp.

For our coming events, let's think postpone right now instead of cancel. We are busily planning the next two weeks, and eight weeks is a math concept we have not yet tackled.

May 15th is 8 weeks, assuming the CDC means don't count this week just beginning. In March we are OK, except for chapel. April and May are busy with fun-filled events. Just for today, decide whatever you are especially interested in will be postponed, then don't think about that for a while... unless you are in charge of it, of course. if so, we need to talk!

It is possible to record programs. Did you know we have a private YouTube account? That might come in handy, as will all of the tech we are lining up for distance learning.

I have already been in touch with Miss Hope about possibly postponing the Dance Recital and the Musical. Both have interesting potential for recording segments and sharing. Creativity comes naturally to Hope, so we'll watch for her fun thoughts.

You know I always say my only talent is hiring amazing people--and I say that because it is true! This group of 52 super-stars who make up the workforce of Holy Nativity will convert this new postponing challenge into an acceptable new plan. You can count on that.

I have shared the following with the board but I love it and now it is especially important. You may be familiar with 8th grade teacher Mrs. Morgan's posts about American history. Recently, she had a post about the Spanish flu of 1918. The article explained that so many servicemen were sick with that flu they had to put up tents to hospitalize them.

Nurses and doctors started taking their beds outside so the patients could get some fresh air and, amazingly, they found that the men who got plenty of fresh air and sunshine had a much better recovery rate. Not long after that important finding, the first medicines were discovered

and the important finding about fresh air actually containing healing effects was lost to history. Your grandmother was right all along!

We are lucky to have wonderful outdoor spaces everywhere on our campus and we will plan to use those for not only a great way to space out students but also adding fresh air and sunshine as often as possible. This is sounding like a great place to be!

Please don't think my occasional silly remarks indicate a flipness about this terrible disaster. Today I blasted some 60's music while I did housework, so I have had a good day hiding in music for a while, taking a break from reality. If you need to escape with some of the best music ever, let me know and I'll share!

Lots and lots of loving thoughts about you all,

Judy Hughes

### **Email Update #3 of 5 March 16, 2020 4:11 p.m. - JEH**

Hi Everyone,

The President is speaking as I write this. He just announced 4 new guidelines with one being NO schooling.

These newest guidelines have now made that Wednesday decision for us.

Our students will not return to school the week following Spring Break.

Fortunately, we have already been working on our plans for at-home schooling. Although our plans are not finalized, we will have clear information for you by the end of this week.

Your assignment for the next few days:

make sure you have a computer or chromebook available at home, ink for your printers, and an area being designated at home for daily school.

If you need our help on any of these parts, please get in touch.

Our kids need a routine right now. A reliable schedule. Part of the predictability needs to include where "to go to" school at home.

I bet you need predictable, as well! I sure do! We are working to try to help with that. A start time for school, a lunch time, a scheduled conference time with teachers—things you can know ahead of time.

In the next two days, we will change our working focus to 100% on preparation of this. Until now we have been doing both: school at home and building attendance as a hybrid.

I was loving our at-school plans but maybe we'll use those later.

The other 3 points from this news conference:

2-no groups larger than 10

3-travel only when absolutely needed

4-no open restaurants, bars...he named some other places, but we get the idea.

From the Florida Health Dept today, Florida has 155 cases but none in Bay County.

I do know for sure that Bay County does have testing materials available here now.

Maggie Shuler and I needed to do some school business today in Dothan and had a nice 4 hour escape from being tuned-in. I have not had a chance to read any emails since early this morning. I will check shortly and respond if you have emailed me today.

Listening hard to between the lines statements, there are indications the number of cases may continue to increase through the next 8-10 weeks. That could answer the question of when we return to school. And please know, we get back into our buildings the moment we are allowed!!

I am not a fan of saying 2weeks, then saying 2 weeks, and on and on without a big picture. The likely big picture indicates the virus could have increasing numbers for a few months, so we have lots and lots of work to do.

Reminds me of not long ago, making up how to do school while sitting on the church floor and having no curriculum materials. Here we are, reinventing school again! Together we did a great job at the church, then again creating another new school in the portables. Think anyone else in Florida already knows how good they can be at setting up an alternate schooling model? We've got experience, we've got love, we've got each other.

The most important good news is that when we don't know what to do, God says, "Here, let me help."

And we say, "Praise be to God."

Fondly,  
Judy Hughes

Email Update #4 of 5 March 17, 2020 @ 8:17 p.m. - JEH  
Hi there--me again!

The Florida DOE announced today, and therefore BDS has sent a message today, that they plan to keep public schools closed until April 15.

Probably I should have been more direct in my last few emails, then this public school announcement would not have taken some by surprise.

Holy Nativity is planning to deliver school to you in your home for months, not weeks. As I have said, I am not a fan of incremental news about something so important. I believe this "few weeks at a time" announcing is hard on families.

We all hope for a reunion on our campus sooner than later. The projected number of infected people in Florida is expected to peak, at best, the end of April or mid-May, but the last few days the President has been referring to July or August. We should have no expectation that school as we know it will resume while virus numbers are increasing, don't you think?

Our faculty's Spring Break has been cancelled (sob!) and we are creating our Holy Nativity Home Delivery plans this week and the beginning of the next. On Wednesday, March 25th, we will schedule pick-up for each student's Launch Packet but at different times all throughout the day, and then Holy Nativity Home Delivery will go live on Thursday, March 26th.

Expect a short Survey Monkey questionnaire at the end of this week about availability of wifi, the number of devices available at home since some of you may be using your computers for your own work at home, and to ask for cell numbers of students and parents. For 3K and 4K we are asking if an iPad or another kind of tablet is available everyday for your little one.

Our plans include chapel on Wednesday--of course Fr. Steve will provide chapel!--and the pledge and a prayer each morning. We are using Google Classroom for 2nd - 8th, and Seesaw for 3K-1st grade, plus a video delivery method to see one another is needed to supplement Seesaw. We are looking into some choices.

We are in the middle of checking availability of all of our textbooks' on-line version. And we are planning in case the county-wide use overwhelms the system and you have no access to wifi!

A wonderful project we all are going to love is a prayer fence on the fence by the tennis courts on Hamilton Ave. More on that in the next few days.

We are thinking of your children--and you too-- every minute of our planning. There have been some funny FB posts about students being at home for school and they provide a good laugh when needed. But we never forget how very, very hard all of this is on each family and are doing everything the Holy Nativity way to bring some happy reliability to your situation.

Love and continuing prayers,

Judy Hughes