

Dear St. Cecilia School Families,

You may have heard that Kate Brown just updated recommendations to the public schools that they remain closed for the remainder of the school year. In consultation with the Department of Catholic Schools, and in line with the information from the CDC, OHA, and the Oregon Governor's office, St. Cecilia School will remain closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. This is truly challenging for me to say and heartbreaking to know that we will not be together in person again this year, however I want to ensure that we are all able to remain healthy and safe.

I sent out a survey last Friday and I have gotten 79 responses. Based on that survey, 70% of families feel like the overall amount of work assigned is 'Just Right'. 80% of families wrote that teacher emails were the most helpful and 76% of families wrote that the zoom meetings were the most helpful form of communication.

One of the things that we are also realizing is that the teachers need more opportunities for professional development. Therefore, in the calendar, you will notice some professional development days. On these days, the teachers will still be accessible to answer questions, but they will primarily be working on learning new techniques for distance learning as well as catching up on grading, meeting in department levels, and meeting with teachers from their same grade level around the Archdiocese. On these professional development days we hope that you as a family can use the time to catch up on any missed assignments, complete parts of longer term projects, view any zoom meetings that you couldn't make, or just use the time to take a deep breath and be together. The three days we are taking for professional development will be: April 23, May 7th, and May 14th. Please see the attached schedule with the revised school calendar. Thank you so much for being so supportive.

Pope Francis offers advice about how to face the daily challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic: "We need to rediscover the concreteness of small things, the small acts of kindness shown to those who are close to us, family, friends. We need to realize that our treasure lies in small things. There are tiny gestures that sometimes get lost in the routine of everyday life, gestures of tenderness, affection, compassion, that are nevertheless decisive, important", he says. I believe that his words go right along with our theme for this school year: Do small things with great love. We can still make an impact together. We are a community of faith, we are a community with strong communication and friendships, and one that empowers our students to be life-long learners. We can continue to do small things with great love and be there for one another during this difficult time.

Thank you so much for your continued support and partnership.

Blessings,  
Lillie Stevens