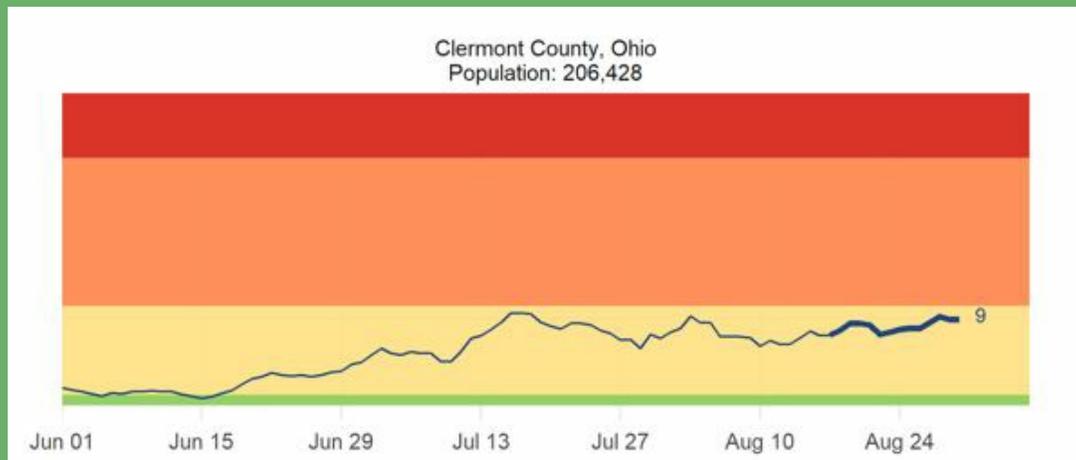


SAINT BERNADETTE SCHOOL

COVID cases per 100,000 people, 7-day average with trend.



Small school. Big heart.

[School Website](#)

[Parish Website](#)

Dear Parents and Guardians,

*The most pressing issue for me, now that school is underway, is **keeping** us open. The question in my mind is, "When will I have to change our learning plan?" We have a few ways of looking at it.*



We are in regular contact with the Clermont County Department of Public Health (DPH). The commissioner, Julianne Nesbit, has the power to send us home for remote learning if the progression of COVID-19 starts to get out of control, but she much prefers to simply advise us and give us tools to make our own decisions. Armed with good data, or metrics, we should be able to make our own calls. DPH remains available to advise if/when we get cases in our school.

COUNTY DATA: Two indicators

*We are checking county data weekly for updates and trends. The graphic above is the most recent data of new cases per 100,000 people, but it will be updated later today. As you can see, we are flirting, as a county, with the "orange" zone as far as new cases are concerned. For schools, the **recommendation when in the orange zone is for hybrid or remote learning**. If this metric stays in the yellow zone, we can remain in classrooms as long as we are distancing, using masks, sanitizing, washing hands, etc. New cases per 100,000 is the first indicator for keeping classrooms open.*

The second indicator is the **rate** of positive tests. Unlike a raw number of positive tests, which would increase with increased testing, the rate shows positive tests among all tests given. This is a good metric and will only fluctuate as the infection of the virus fluctuates. A community that wants to have in-person learning environments needs this rate to be below 5% (CDC) or more conservatively (Harvard), 3%. Clermont County is currently at 4%. (By way of contrast, Germany is at 0.8%.)

If our county's "new cases" average is below 10, **and** our positive test rate is below 5%, we should be able to remain open, five days per week, by faithfully using COVID prevention protocols, but there's one more set of metrics to consider...

SCHOOL DATA

How many positive cases are in the SCHOOL? (None) Thankfully, we don't have a number yet, but positive cases are bound to happen. When they do, we will be working with DPH. The number of cases, the amount of spread, the number of students having to quarantine and across what grade levels, and the number of faculty in contact with positive cases will all be part of the decision process if our population has an outbreak. This would be true even if the whole county made it to the "green" level. An outbreak in our school would be carefully analyzed, and we would be seeking the advice of DPH professionals.

HYBRID LEARNING

Breaking our homerooms into Wednesday and Thursday start dates was an early attempt to develop smaller cohort groups in case we move to hybrid learning (some days at home, some days in the building). There are two problems with hybrid learning as a strategy for slowing the spread after an outbreak:

1. Contact tracing goes back two days...chances are, if we need to move to hybrid, a number of students in both groups have already been in contact with an infected student.
2. Students who meet with a sports team, ride a bus, play with others in the neighborhood, or visit extended family members are already expanding their reach beyond their hybrid cohort group, making this separation far less effective.

A third issue is that our parent population cannot easily support a hybrid model. According to our survey, 40% of the students may not have parents available during the morning hours to assist/supervise remote learning if we have to use that strategy.

THE BOTTOM LINE

If both county metrics rise into the orange segment, and DPH advises hybrid or remote learning, there would still be one advantage to hybrid learning: We would be able to increase the distance between students in the classrooms, thereby further preventing close contacts between students. However, because so many of our families struggle with daytime supervision of their children, we would need to consider a different way of splitting our population. Namely, families without daytime supervision could send their children five days per week, and families who can support daytime supervision at home would be asked to voluntarily rotate in and out of remote learning, or go remote 100% for a few weeks until the situation improves.

LABOR DAY = COVID OUTBREAK?

Health professionals all over the country are concerned about a new increase in cases as families celebrate Labor Day - either with family events or by travelling. It happened after Memorial Day, and after Fourth of July. **Please do your part to beat the predictions, and keep the virus from our county and school!** See the article below on special prevention, especially this weekend.



ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT AN OUTBREAK!

If you are attending a gathering, inviting friends over, or traveling this weekend, the rest of us are counting on you to take precautions.

- No common "touch" items. Put out the chips in single bags, pre-package the potato salad so there are no shared utensils, use cans for soda not 2-litres, wrap utensils in individual napkins for grab and go, use single-use condiments, or pre-portion in small cups, or have families bring their own. If you have some kind of buffet, designate a server who is gloved and masked. Think about anything you expect to see or provide and make it a "touchless" experience for anyone outside your household.
- No shared bites or taste-testing the new craft beer, if you're into that kind of thing. Slice the cake and let them fork it from your plate. Pour a sample of your beverage into a small cup before you drink from the can, then offer the cup to your friend.
- Wear a mask and distance. Yes. Even at a party. Especially at a party. Even with extended family. You can take your mask off if you are outdoors AND 6' away from others.
- Space out the lawn chairs, or group them according to family groups when eating.
- Reserve going indoors to use the restroom, only, and make sure there are paper towels, not cloth towels, for hand washing. Suds up the faucet when you suds up your hands. Dry the faucet with your paper towel, use the paper towel to open the door, and then dispose of it.
- Avoid crowds.
- Stay mentally sharp so you can keep up the prevention protocols.
- Bring hand sanitizer and use it before and after touching sports equipment.
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- Play games that are great for social distancing.
- Click [HERE](#) for ideas.
- Don't come back to school right away if people you were with could not mimic or support your careful precautions. You can voluntarily quarantine ... just let Mrs. Ingram and your teacher know.

TAKING PRECAUTIONS AGAINST THE SPREAD OF COVID-19...

- Will help us stay in school
- Will keep your loved ones safe
- Will reduce community-spread
- Will help businesses prosper
- Is an act of mercy for our world

Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9

A WORD ABOUT CONTACT TRACING

There are scams where people will call claiming to be a contact tracer, but they are really after your personal financial data. A **legitimate** contact tracer will not ask for your social security number and they will NOT try to sell you a home-based test, collect credit card

information, or even give you the name of the person infected.

You will be asked to supply verification of your identity such as date of birth or address and you will be asked to identify others in your circle who might be affected. Please **cooperate with a legitimate** contact tracer and beware of anyone asking you for bank or credit card information.

Quick Links

School Calendar 2020-2021

[COVID-19 Handbook](#)

FACTS Login

Parish Website

PTO

Virtus Login

Schoolbelles (code S1952)

Gradelink

Newsletters/Handouts

Parent/Student Handbook

Virtues in Practice (at home materials -

Year I, Year of Faith)

Kroger Rewards

Box Tops Bonus App

