



**Diocese of Fresno Education Corporation
Waiver to Reopen
Kern County
St. Ann’s Catholic School-Ridgecrest**

Background Information

Name of Applicant: Diocese of Fresno Education Corporation
St. Ann School-Ridgecrest

School Type:

- Traditional Public School
- Charter School
- Private, Independent, or Faith-Based School

Number of schools: 1 Enrollment: 111

Superintendent Name: Mona E. Faulkner

Principal Name: Tracy Sherrick

Address:

Diocese of Fresno Education Corporation-Mona E. Faulkner, Superintendent
1550 N. Fresno St.
Fresno, CA 93703

St. Ann School -Tracy Sherrick, Principal
446 W. Church Ave.
Ridgecrest, CA 93555

Grades Proposed to be Reopened:

- K 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th

Date of Proposed Reopening: 9/14/2020

Name of Persons Completing Application: Mona E. Faulkner, Superintendent in consultation with Tracy Sherrick, Principal

Phone Number: Diocese Fresno Education Corporation, 559-488-7420
St. Ann’s School: 760-375-4713

Email: Mona E. Faulkner, Superintendent: mfaulkner@dioceseoffresno.org
Tracy Sherrick, Principal: principal@parishofsaintann.org

Principal Signature: Tracy Sherrick

Date: September 8, 2020

Superintendent Signature: 
Mona Faulkner (Sep 8, 2020 15:33 PDT)

Date: Sep 8, 2020

I. Consultation

Please confirm consultation with the following groups:

Labor Organization(s)

Name of Organization(s) and Date(s) Consulted:

- If no labor organization represents staff at the school, please describe the process for consultation with school staff:

As of July 24th, 100% of the teachers at St. Ann's stated that they were ready to return to teaching face to face onsite. Also, in mid-July each staff member was given an Intent to Return Form (see Attachment). If the employee stated that he or she did not intend to return in person, the person contacted the Diocesan Health Officer in the HR department. The health officer determined what accommodations needed to be made, if any, for the staff member to remain employed by the school.

Parent and Community Organizations

Name of Organization(s) and Date(s) Consulted:

St. Ann Church CCD
Al-Anon

Friday, August 14, 2020
Monday, August 17, 2020

The parents were surveyed and called in late July to see how many parents felt comfortable sending their children back to St. Ann's in person. 90% stated that they wished their children to return following the diocesan guidelines for reopening. Teachers will live stream lessons for those students who will continue distance learning. Teachers are using Zoom, SeeSaw, and Google Classroom.

II. Elementary School Reopening Plans-See Appendix A Reopening Guidelines

Cleaning and Disinfection: How shared surfaces will be regularly cleaned and disinfected and how use of shared items will be minimized.

Sanitizing of each classroom will be completed multiple times per day with a deep cleaning every evening; including the use of foggers as well as approved sanitizer. Each student will have his or her own iPad or cover for the keyboard in the computer lab. No supplies will be provided by the school; students will bring their own and keep their supplies with them. Students will keep the same desk in the same classroom throughout the day. The school office is wiped down after each person is served.

Cohorting: How students will be kept in small, stable, groups with fixed membership that stay together for all activities (e.g., instruction, lunch, recess) and minimize/avoid contact with other groups or individuals who are not part of the cohort.

Each classroom of students will remain in one classroom, or at one area of the playground as well as a specific place at lunch. Students will eat together in their cohort outside and distanced if the outside temperature is below 90 degrees otherwise, they will eat in their classrooms at their desk. Recess will include 6 feet of distancing outdoors or in a larger space indoors like the gymnasium if it is too hot outside where distancing can be observed. Based on the physical space of the classrooms and keeping 6 feet between students at desks, grades Kindergarten through 3rd grade and 6th grade can accommodate 15 students maximum. The 4th and 5th grade

classrooms can accommodate 17 students maximum with 6 feet in between students at desks. Desk shields have been purchased for all student desks in the school. Attached pictures show desks spaced 6 feet apart in Grades 1 and 5.

☒ Entrance, Egress, and Movement Within the School: How movement of students, staff, and parents will be managed to avoid close contact and/or mixing of cohorts.

Specific plans (see attached) have been provided to parents and guardians for drop off and pick procedures. Students will go directly to their parent's vehicle. Parents remain in the vehicle and do not transport any child/ren but their own. There are no plans for volunteers to be on campus. All meetings, including faculty and staff meetings will be through Zoom calls. Arrows have been placed on walkways helping the children remain as distant as possible going from classroom to outside or to parent pick up. Specialty teachers will move from classroom to classroom. Students will not change classes at any time during the day.

☒ Face Coverings and Other Essential Protective Gear: How CDPH's face covering requirements will be satisfied and enforced.

Face covers are always required of all students, grades K-6 while on campus except for lunch and recess. Faculty, staff and students are provided with disposable masks if they don't arrive wearing one. Employees taking staff members temperatures as they arrive at school will wear a mask, shield and gloves. Teachers will also be provided with a shield with their mask for taking student temperatures. St. Ann School has a (1) month supply of PPE on hand for students and staff. Through Sierra Sands Unified School District, we will use our allocated CARES Act funding to purchase additional PPE as needed during the school year.

☒ Health Screenings for Students and Staff: How students and staff will be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 and how ill students or staff will be separated from others and sent home immediately.

Each staff member must fill out a questionnaire, (see attached) stating that he or she has not been in contact with anyone testing positive for the virus. Any symptom must be declared on that form and the employee is sent home and must be cleared by a physician before returning. If a child displays any symptoms related to the virus or is in any way unwell, the child is isolated in a separate room and the parents are called to pick up the child immediately. The child cannot return until cleared by a physician. Any employees showing any symptoms during the day must leave the campus immediately.

Students will have their temperatures taken with a no-touch thermometer before they are allowed to enter the campus. If a student's temperature registers at 100.4, we will keep them seated outside the school in the shade and retest their temperature in a few minutes. If the temperature on the second reading is lower, the student will be admitted to the campus. If the temperature remains at 100.4 or goes higher, the child will need to leave the campus. Should students become ill during the day, they will come to the school office to have their temperatures taken. If a student's temperature registers at 100.4, we will keep them seated inside the school office and retest their temperature in a few minutes. If the temperature on the second reading is lower, the student will be returned to the classroom, unless the child is experiencing other symptoms (i.e. upset stomach, cough, etc.) If the temperature remains at 100.4 or goes higher. The office will call the child's parent/guardian to come pick the child up. Should more than one child become ill and need to have his/her temperature taken, we will utilize the space in our Extended Day Program (EDP) room and our school library to socially distance students while taking temperatures, and rechecking if necessary, as well as calling

parents or emergency contacts to pick up students if necessary. After children have left the office, EDP, and/or the school library, we will disinfect the area(s).

☒ **Healthy Hygiene Practices:** The availability of handwashing stations and hand sanitizer, and how their use will be promoted and incorporated into routines.

St. Ann has converted a traditional drinking fountain into a handwashing station. St. Ann's has fresh filtered water at the school. Each student fills his or her water bottle to drink during the day. The water stations are disinfected after every use. Hand sanitizer is positioned at every entrance, in the school office and in each classroom. Students will be taught the proper way to wash hands and the area will be sanitized after every use.

☒ **Identification and Tracing of Contacts:** Actions that staff will take when there is a confirmed case. Confirm that the school(s) have designated staff persons to support contact tracing, such as creation and submission of lists of exposed students and staff to the local health department and notification of exposed persons. Each school must designate a person for the local health department to contact about COVID-19.

The principal will Immediately notify local health officials. These officials will help administrators determine a course of action for the school. Mrs. Sherrick or Cathy Haugen will immediately notify the Office of Catholic Education (OCE) and work with the OCE to determine what communication should be sent out the school community. St. Ann will work with Jasmine Ochoa, School Liaison of Kern County Public Health Services Department, to determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.

☒ **Physical Distancing:** How space and routines will be arranged to allow for physical distancing of students and staff.

Tape and floor signs will indicate the 6 feet of distance that must be maintained in the office and while waiting in lines. All desks have been arranged in each classroom observing the 6 feet of social distancing. Staff members observe distancing in all shared spaces such as teacher work rooms and in hallways. If teachers need to speak to one another, they should be outside and 6 feet apart rather than going into each other's classrooms. No small group tables are used in the classroom. No shared desks are ever used.

☒ **Staff Training and Family Education:** How staff will be trained, and families will be educated on the application and enforcement of the plan.

All staff members are trained prior to the opening of school. The Office of Education provided all schools with a training PowerPoint presentation (see attached) that was required of all employees. Parents also signed an agreement stating that they accept and agree to comply with all safety measures taken by the school, (see attached).

☒ **Testing of Students and Staff:** How school officials will ensure that students and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 will be rapidly tested and what instructions they will be given while waiting for test results. Describe how staff will be tested periodically to detect asymptomatic infections.

Any student or staff member who have any symptoms of the virus or reports that they have been exposed will be sent home immediately or if notified by phone, will not be allowed to come on campus until the results of a COVID test are complete. An employee shares his or her

results with the Diocesan Health Officer and then the principal is notified if the employee is safe to return. Parents must have a letter from a qualified physician stating that the child is safe to return to school. That letter must be shared with the school principal before the child is allowed back to school. Staff are tested periodically by their primary care provider or by referring teachers to a community testing site, as testing capacity permits and as practicable. Examples of recommended frequency include all staff being tested over 2 months, where 25% of staff are tested every 2 weeks, or 50% every month to rotate which staff members are tested over time. Under the CARES Act, Covid-19 testing is covered by the Diocesan Health Plan with no cost to the individual being tested. The Diocese of Fresno Health Plan will cover the health costs associated with COVID testing of employees. Please see the attached memorandum of understanding between Ridgecrest Regional Hospital and St. Ann School.

Triggers for Switching to Distance Learning: The criteria the superintendent will use to determine when to physically close the school and prohibit in-person instruction.

The Office of Catholic Education will close St. Ann if 25% or more of the Catholic schools in Kern County have closed due to COVID-19 within 14 days, and in consultation with the local public health department. St. Ann may typically reopen after 14 days, in consultation with the local public health department provided a thorough cleaning and disinfection regimen has been completed. Public health has been consulted and done their investigation of the outbreak. At St. Ann School, we currently have 113 students and 19 faculty members for a total of 132 individuals. 5% of our site would be 7 individuals. For our student and employee population, everyone lives in Ridgecrest within the 93555 zip code, except for one student who lives in Trona where the zip code is 93562.

Communication Plans: How the superintendent will communicate with students, staff, and parents about cases and exposures at the school, consistent with privacy requirements such as FERPA and HIPAA.

The Superintendent will send a letter to all parents explaining the cases and exposure without releasing any names (see attached).

St. Ann Completed Waiver ready for Signature

Final Audit Report

2020-09-08

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