

Q/A Parent Sessions - Thursday Evening

Sept. 24, 2020

We see a few things open now, so what is the plan?

We have our Oregon Blueprint is available on the website, and Mr. Matcovich will address any new changes, as we watch the metrics, in a weekly update starting on Friday.

There will not be any changes to the Middle School program until second quarter. However, we continue to work with the state and archdiocese, use the student, parent and teacher surveys to help keep a pulse on how things are developing and to look for ways we can safely integrate person-to-person interactions during the second quarter.

How are kids managing the 85 minute classes?

Each teacher is managing their 85 minutes as they feel is best for the particular lesson. However, all teachers are expected to teach a synchronous lesson for the first 20 minutes (minimum), and wrap up their lessons with the last 10 minutes also synchronous. The 55 minutes in between these two check in times vary but all teachers keep their Zoom connection open the entire class period if the lesson allows for students to get away from the screen during the 55 minutes between the start and ending times.

Is community time happening every week?

The community group time will not happen every week. There will be team building, retreats, and other group activities that will be integrated into this time during the months of October and November.

Kids are supposed to have the AMC exam. Can you say what this exam is and when it is going to happen?

We cannot supervise the AMC 8 and 10 when students are at home for digital learning (to the level expected by the testing service), and we cannot yet bring students back to campus (at this time) to take the test at VC. For these reasons, we are unable to offer the AMC 8 and 10 this fall.

Is the Parent's Guide active and available?

Yes, it is available at: <https://www.valleycatholic.org/vcms-parents-guide/>

Where can I find the PowerSchool parent login related information?

PowerSchool logins were handed out to all students during registration. If you need to have your PowerSchool login information resent to you or are having issues logging into PowerSchool, please reach out directly to VCMS VP, [Dale French](#).

Where can I find the handbook?

The handbook and curriculum guide is available on the website under the parent's guide: Yes, it is available at: <https://www.valleycatholic.org/vcms-parents-guide/>

When will be parent teacher conferences?

Given the inability to have in-person conferences for all parents and teachers in October, teachers will reach out to parents over the coming weeks to initiate individual conferences, as needed.

In general, parents should only expect to hear from a teacher if their child is struggling in ways that is impacting academic performance or that shows signs of social/ emotional struggles including not connecting (or interacting) with peers and staff during community time.

Parents, as always, can contact a teacher, Counselor Sarah Moyer smoyer@valleycatholic.org or Academic Support, Lanie Toth mtoth@valleycatholic.org directly with concerns or questions.

Formal Conference Specific Days: Valley Catholic Middle and High Schools have set the days prior to Thanksgiving Break as another time for conferences. Our hope is that we will be in-person. If not, then we will conduct virtual conferences. More details to come in a few weeks.

Is it possible for kids to have some short time to meet back in person community group or PE?

Not yet. Between balancing of the maximum number of students allowed on campus per week, the number of students we have in each grade level, the social distancing requirements, and the bandwidth of each teacher while we are conducting full digital classes, we are actively looking for opportunities to do this come second quarter.

Is there a maximum size for math classes and will the class be divided if there are too many students in the class?

The maximum size for every class is determined by the physical classroom that the teacher and students will use when we return to in-person instruction. We have set rooms aside using the social distancing requirement of 35 square feet per person (student, teacher, and passing areas). For most classes that places the class size at a max. Of 22 unless that class is assigned a repurposed space such as the band room, choir room, or the cafeterias (in which case there may be more than 22 in those locations).

How much time do kids have to get into the Zoom before marked tardy?

Just like in-person instruction, class begins at the start time. If a student is not in class ready to go by the start time, the student will be marked either tardy or absent accordingly. This is true for the ten minutes that is required at the end class as well.

Should there be connection issues, or other reasons beyond the students' control for why they were late, the student and parent must reach out to the teacher via email as soon as possible so the issue can be addressed and accurately reflected in the attendance record.

Do they need to share the reason during class or any time of day?

The student and parent can send a private email or chat to the teacher. It should not be addressed in front of the class.

Can we not have PE right after lunch?

We share the gyms with the elementary school (ES) and high school (HS). Between the three schools we have close to 800 students (since high school students do not take PE every year) that need to have PE classes scheduled in the three locations. The fact that both MS and HS have PE five days a week also adds to the congestion. But we highly value the ability to have students engage in some type of physical activity daily, when we are in-person.

This means there will be some classes that have PE after lunch, some that have PE as their first class of the day, and some that have PE as their last class of the day since only three PE classes, at any grade level K-12, may use the gym space at any given class time.

Are there any options for programs to improve student's keyboarding skills?

Not at the current time. Keyboarding used to be part of the curriculum but we found that an overwhelming number students were either entering with basics or that the parents and students wanted the technology class to have added curriculum, not a keyboarding unit. So keyboarding was removed as a curriculum unit five years ago as we moved to an enhanced STEM program and the unit that was spent on keyboarding was replaced with digital citizenship and basic coding.

We are having internet connection/stability issues- any suggestions?

We (VC) cannot endorse or formally recommend any specific product at this time other parents shared the following information (I took liberties to rewrite/adjust the wording of these comments to apply to a larger audience):

- Families can upgrade their Wi-Fi router to something more 'substantial' (~\$400 price point) if they are frustrated by their internet connection dropping/freezing etc. The Wi-Fi devices provided by your cable/etc. provider simply overheat and stop working if placed under sustained load. Some examples of routers include:
 - ASUS Zen Wi-Fi"
 - Google Nest Wi-Fi
 - Netgear Orbi
 - Tp-link
- One family mentioned "We negotiated with Xfinity Comcast for a higher speed internet (with a booster) with NO additional cost."

Is it ok to not attend the after school homework time unless homework help is needed?

The homework time is to help students as needed. They are more than welcome to drop in as they need help or make a set schedule to attend. If a student traditionally has a hard time organizing or completing work, that student will receive the greatest benefit if he/she attends regularly but please have the students use the homework help times as they need it, even if that is a one-time visit.