

STATE OF THE SCHOOLS

SUMMARY REPORT



“WHETHER IN-PERSON OR REMOTE, CATHOLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS ENGAGE WITH THEIR TEACHERS AND EACH OTHER, GROWING IN KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH. THEY LIVE OUT THE COMMANDMENTS TO LOVE GOD AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER BY LEARNING TO CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER AND EXPERIENCING PUTTING OTHERS’ NEEDS BEFORE THEIR OWN, JUST LIKE A FAMILY.”

-FRANK O’LINN
SUPERINTENDENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

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LEARN MORE

Hear more from Frank O’Linn, superintendent of schools, in his State of the Schools video address at dioceseofcleveland.org/StateoftheSchools

LEARNING NEVER STOPS

TESTIMONIALS FROM CATHOLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS, PARENT ON EDUCATION IN A PANDEMIC:

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The best part of Jayla’s school day is just that she can be in school and learn instead of being home. She enjoys school. The compelling factor is that the public and charter schools in my area were all going remote. Jayla and I talked about the remote learning and she said she is easily distracted at home and would want to go to school. I looked around and found St. Columbkille. I went on a tour and loved the school. It was actually affordable for us. We made the decision to have Jayla in school full time five days a week vs the remote learning. The things I am seeing in the classroom that make me comfortable are the multiple breaks for students to wash their hands and the sanitizer provided in all the rooms.”

- New parent, Mina Nardi, whose daughter Jayla Blair is a fourth-grader at St. Columbkille School in Parma

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Remote learning has been a weird experience for me. It is weird seeing your classmates in class while you are at your house. It is a new experience for me since I have never done home-schooling and it does not make me happy that it is during my senior year. A big positive is that I am more comfortable in my learning environment. Although there are more technological distractions, they are easier to get away from than distractions in class. What is surprising though, is that we are offered a lot of help, and for me I tend to finish my work quicker and better on the assignments given.”

- Elijah Perez, a remote learner and a senior at Holy Name High School, which offers synchronous learning so students learn simultaneously in the classroom and remotely

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I like going to school in person because you get to be face-to-face with your teachers and friends. I like to be in the classroom with other people while learning. I also enjoy being able to talk to my friends at recess and lunch. One thing that is different this year is that we have partitions around our desk and wear masks all day. Another change is that we rarely switch classes, instead the teachers switch rooms. Celebrating Mass is different, too. There is one class that videos Mass for streaming earlier in the week for all the other students to watch on Wednesday. What surprised me the most this year was that we even have to wear masks outside for recess and for gym class. Regardless of all this, I still do really enjoy physically being at school.”

- In-person student Bridget Hughes, a sixth-grader at Holy Trinity School in Avon



\$3,000,000

SPENT COLLECTIVELY ON DEVICES FOR TEACHER USE THIS YEAR IN ORDER FOR THEM TO TEACH IN PERSON, VIRTUALLY AND SIMULTANEOUSLY

CHROMEBOOKS, CAMERAS AND REMOTE CLASSROOMS: TRINITY DEMONSTRATES THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL COMMITMENT TO A NEW WAY OF EDUCATING

BY TONY BURKE
Director, marketing, communications and institutional advancement, Trinity High School

When students and staff walked out of their respective school buildings on March 13, 2020, it became evident very quickly that the way our young men and women would be educated was changing forever. No longer would it be students bidding their parents farewell and heading off to school for the day, seeing their friends and favorite teachers and returning home sometime that afternoon. Very quickly, hybrid, remote and simultaneous learning

became household words as schools began to adjust to a historic challenge teaching the students they love from a remote location into their homes.

Trinity High School in Garfield Heights has always taken great pride in staying ahead of the technology curve, and administrators realized very quickly that changes needed to be made to handle this new educational landscape. “It was obvious that we needed to identify solutions that would give our students, both at home and in school, the best chance for success,” said William Svoboda, Trinity assistant principal and CFO.

William, along with other administrators and Dave Krizan, information technology director, immediately began researching and determining what technology upgrades would most effectively teach their entire student body. The school fully committed to becoming a Google Classroom school and invested in Google Chromebooks for every student to use for in-class or remote learning. Cameras were installed in every classroom so students can see, hear and be engaged with their classmates and instructors. The Wi-Fi system also was upgraded for optimum capabilities in accommodating all of the new technology. “The new technology has made a world of difference,” William said. “The students and teachers have adjusted extremely well, allowing us to maintain our rigorous college preparatory education, while finding new extraordinary ways to educate our young men and women.”

Like Scott Hayes, medical science teacher, who has taken the use of cameras in the classroom a step further. He installed a camera in his microscope so the students at home see exactly what the students in class are seeing in their microscopes in real time. “With the current challenges of trying to replicate the same class environment for remote learners, it is encouraging to find a way to give them close to the same lab experience as those in the building,” Scott said. “The live images can be broadcast through Google Meet and the remote learners can actually perform the same manual cell counts as the students in class at the exact same time. It is one more tool that allows us to continue to provide an unparalleled medical education even in these uncertain times.”

With the continued uncertainty of this pandemic, nobody really knows what the future holds for our educational system. However, with Catholic schools like Trinity investing in our children, families can feel very confident that their kids remain on a path to an extremely successful future. ▶



83%

OF OUR SCHOOLS INVESTED IN ADDITIONAL VIRTUAL LEARNING PLATFORMS OR DIGITAL TOOLS SINCE THE PANDEMIC BEGAN



6,000 DEVICES

WERE PURCHASED COLLECTIVELY BY OUR SCHOOLS FOR STUDENT USE THIS SCHOOL YEAR



LAKWOOD CATHOLIC ACADEMY RECEIVES PRESCHOOL PANDEMIC LICENSE FROM STATE OF OHIO

BY JENNIFER BERARDINELLI,
Vice president of early childhood learning at LCA

Lakewood Catholic Academy has one of the largest Catholic early childhood programs in the state of Ohio. Rich in tradition and dedicated to faith and family, the program cares for and educates children from 6 weeks of age through 5 years.

LCA is home for students with parents who are essential workers who need to perform duties on the front lines. As the height of the pandemic consumed Ohio, the first round of state-issued orders not only included closure to all schools, but also day care and preschool programs.

And what started as a limited break extended into many weeks and then months. Many of the preschool families struggled to find quality child care while they were at work.

In April, LCA applied for a temporary pandemic child care license. The temporary license allowed the school to provide care to children of essential employees while the state of emergency was in place. During this time, the early childhood team worked tirelessly to implement the new state guidelines and best practices. Once it was granted the temporary pandemic license and all protocols were in place, the program reopened at reduced ratios and continued to provide a loving service to a community of children and families. The temporary license of operation was in place from April through June and today under current conditions operates at 85% capacity.

“With both my wife’s and my professions being deemed essential during the pandemic, our child care was the most concerning to us,” said Josh Fontanez, an LCA parent. “LCA saved the day with a pandemic license for child care and was able to continue caring for our son while implementing a safe protocol as we navigated through this pandemic together.”

“This is what working in collaboration with families, the Church and our local and global communities looks like,” said Monica Dietz, assistant superintendent for Catholic schools. Each week, as timelines and COVID-19 cases rise and fall, Dietz checks in with preschool programs like LCA and celebrates with them the dedication the teachers bring during an uncertain time.



HOLY TRINITY NAMED 2020 BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

This fall, Holy Trinity School in Avon was recognized for its overall academic performance as an Exemplary High Performing School by the U.S. Department of Education. The K-8 school received the National Blue Ribbon award and was one of only 50 non-public schools in the country to be recognized, and the only school within the diocese to receive the honor.

“This recognition is a testament to the incredible effort of our teachers and staff, and the support of our Holy Trinity families and community,” said Kim Kuchta, Holy Trinity School co-principal. “To be part of the Holy Trinity family is to be inclusive, compassionate and empathetic to members of the community and beyond. Our teachers foster student success using this approach while delivering engaging, individualized instruction in a faith-based environment.”



90%

OF OUR SCHOOLS BEGAN THE SCHOOL YEAR WITH THE TRADITIONAL MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY SCHEDULE WITH NO SHORTENED HOURS



98%

OF OUR SCHOOLS OPENED WITH BOTH IN-PERSON AND REMOTE OPTIONS

1,000

NEW STUDENTS WELCOMED TO OUR SCHOOLS DUE TO REOPENING OPTIONS OFFERED (SCHOOLS SHOWING THE HIGHEST NUMBERS ARE BELOW)

HOLY NAME ELEMENTARY 30

GESU 41

ST. BARNABAS 63

ST. ALBERT THE GREAT 75

SCHOOLS TAP INTO EXPERTISE OFFERED BY LOCAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS FOR REOPENING AND CONTINUED COVID PREVENTION PLANS

Hospital systems, pediatricians and medical experts teamed up with principals, school nurses and key leaders of Catholic schools to develop plans, conduct site visits and train teachers for fall reopenings and continued prevention plans during the pandemic.

“Our schools are integral parts of their communities across Northeast Ohio,” said Frank O’Linn, superintendent of education for the Diocese of Cleveland. “Each school’s successful protocol plays an important part in slowing the spread of the virus and meeting public health needs. Establishing partnerships with local experts strengthened our best practices to provide a customized plan for operations that earned the trust of parents, students and staff.”

At schools throughout the diocese, pandemic advisory teams were formed to guide schools on how to operate safely. Throughout the summer months and through the fall, medical professionals from Akron Children’s Hospital, Cleveland Clinic, Summa Health System, University Hospitals and all county boards of health assisted by consulting at individual schools to assess risks and establish protocols to protect staff and students from COVID-19. In many cases, procedures that were once in place prior to the pandemic were updated after walk-throughs and simulations were conducted.

Medical consultants are part of advisory teams that provide information from the health care system they are affiliated with. Information on environmental hygiene, updates to infectious disease protocols and shedding light on any confusion are just a few ways advisors support the schools.

“Each setting is unique, requiring schools to make many decisions about how best to implement measures for protection and detection, said O’Linn. “These collaborators advised on everything from classroom spacing, foot traffic, and visitor policies, to air flow, lunch procedures, and communication. They helped us plan and execute effectively.”



100%

OF OUR SCHOOLS RESPONDED TO PARENT FEEDBACK IN CREATING THEIR REOPENING PLANS

HIGH SCHOOLS TEAM UP WITH CLEVELAND CLINIC

The leaders of the five diocesan-owned high schools, Cleveland Central Catholic, Elyria Catholic, Holy Name, Lake Catholic and Villa Angela-St. Joseph, partnered with professionals from the Cleveland Clinic.

Each school convened a task force of key stakeholders that gathered local input and developed COVID-19 reopening plans in collaboration with the Cleveland Clinic AtWork, which ensured the protocols followed the best available science to mitigate possible risks of infection.

“It has been a very challenging time of uncertainty because the facts about the virus were and are still unfolding,” said Amy Butler, associate superintendent for secondary schools. “Every aspect of a school routine ingrained in the minds of the students and faculty members changed, except that everyone cares about one another. That is why following the new protocols is worth it, to keep each other safe and healthy so that they can be back at school.”

K-8 SCHOOLS UTILIZE PSI SERVICES

Along with major healthcare systems, six K-8 schools incorporated PSI, a third-party provider of health and behavior resources for education based in Twinsburg.

Schools formulated reopening plans utilizing services from PSI as a first step and then reviewed plans with local hospitals and boards of health.

The partnership with PSI provided schools a “COVID-19 playbook” that included educational posters for inside the classroom, healthy restart tips for families and an online digital resource center. PSI offered various levels of staff training, communication strategies and mental health resources.

“K-8 service providers have been able to help our teachers navigate strategies for remote learners and build in social emotional learning into the daily classroom routine,” said Monica Dietz, assistant superintendent for elementary schools. “Students need a reliable way to deal with whatever feelings they experience. For example, at the start of each day there is a physical temperature check for the in-person learners. But once inside the classroom, all students might then do a ‘feelings temperature’ labeling their emotions using a feelings word chart or journaling. Practicing identifying their feelings and body responses will help students learn how to cope in our pandemic learning environments,” Dietz said. †

