

BISHOP BARAGA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

AUGUST NEWSLETTER 2021

**BISHOP
BARAGA** 
Est. 1856

School Rebuild Update

As our school enters the last phases of the rebuild process, we are happy to say that we are on track to being back in our building for the school year. Many of the last items are scheduled to be completed by the end of the month, and teachers are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to re-enter their classrooms and begin setting up for the year. In the weeks leading up to teachers re-entering the building, several last inspections will be done, as well as the set up of the school office and other areas around the school. Playground equipment will be installed, touch up painting will be occurring, and furniture will be trickling in.

One of the hurdles that we have come up on is the furniture for students. All student desks, tables, and chairs have been delayed until the middle of September, therefore, we are planning to re-open with temporary student furniture until the new things arrive. We hope that this temporary arrangement will only be for a short time, but feel as though it is most important to get students back in the classroom. Read more about the start of school on page 2.

As we get closer to the start of school, we will continue to update you all on the progress of the school. As extra hands are needed for tasks, we will be offering volunteer opportunities. Thank you ahead of time for stepping up to assist.

Extra Tuition Funding Opportunity

Our school is a recipient of Native American Grant Funds that are applied to reduce your tuition costs. Therefore, if your child is a Native American card holder through a recognized tribe, please provide a photo of their official membership card to the school office by emailing office@bbseduc.com to be included in this Native American Education Program. If you have any questions regarding this available funding opportunity, please contact the school office as soon as you can.

School Calendar Update

This coming week the School and Parish will meet to discuss the 2021-22 calendar. Shortly after, a school calendar and a parish calendar will be published, including breaks, days off, and half-days so that childcare and other needs can be established. Soon an updated Parent/Student Handbook will also be sent out that will include this same calendar for the coming school year.

After School Care Update

Many families have inquired about the After-School Care program. For a multitude of issues beyond our control, the goal is to have After-School Care return for families as early as January 2022. There is a chance that this could progress sooner than anticipated, and if so, we will adapt our plans and bring the program back sooner. Nonetheless, we are currently working on alternative options to help families with after school care for their children.

Conducting School Business

Beginning Monday, August 16th, the school office will be in the process of being set up, with the hope of being fully operational by Friday, August 20th. Until then, for school business that requires in-person attention, we are asking that you schedule an appointment with either Ann or Chase via email. Currently our phone systems are offline as we transition to a new phone system, therefore the best way to get in contact is through email. Once your email is received, someone will contact you as soon as possible. We appreciate your patience in this matter and hope to be back up and running very soon.

BBCS

LEARNING TODAY

LEADING TOMORROW

COVID-19 Protocols for 2021-22

From Dr. Erick Chittle, Phd, Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Gaylord:

As you all know, the pandemic is back in full swing, therefore the following protocols listed below are very much subject to change as we continue to monitor our local cases, follow guidance from the diocese and prepare a safe return for our students. As of right now, the following protocols will be place until more information and/or guidance is provided.

- Although many of our mitigation strategies against the coronavirus will still be in practice, at this time masking will be a parent's choice.
- We will foster an environment of Christian charity and respect for others' decisions regarding vaccination status and use of masks.
- We will continue to utilize the CDC guidance for cleaning, disinfection, and hand hygiene.
- We will continue to use many of the distancing strategies for indoor activities that were used last year.
- Parents/guardians should monitor their children for symptoms of infectious illness every day before arrival at school. You will not need to complete a daily health survey.
- Students who are sick or displaying symptoms of infectious illness should not attend school and seek medical care when necessary.
- We will continue to report positive cases to the Health Department and report positive cases to school families.
- Positive cases will be required to isolate at home for the requisite period based on Health Department guidelines.
- We will follow the Mass protocols as established by the Diocese.
- While the school is not requiring masks at school events, the use of facial coverings is required by federal order on school buses and other forms of public transportation in the United States.

Again, we recognize that much could change between now and beginning of school. Rest assured, we will be evaluating our situation on a weekly basis and will be sure to inform you if any of these protocols change. We appreciate your trust and support in keeping our student body safe this year.

School Start Date and Times

The School Leadership team along with Fr. Duane, met with the School Advisory Board to discuss school start dates. Due to the rebuilding process and to ensure that the school and staff are most prepared for students to enter the 2021/2022 school year, it has been decided that Bishop Baraga students will begin the 2021-22 school year on Monday, September 13th.

We understand that this may cause some logistical challenges for some families, and we apologize for the inconvenience. During the time leading up to school, staff will be diligently working to furnish classrooms, unpack supplies, and prep classrooms and student spaces. We greatly appreciate your support and understanding and feel as though the hard work that our Baraga students have displayed during the pandemic warrants some extra vacation time for students.

The 2021/2022 school year daily schedule will look a bit different than last year. We will continue to open our school doors at 7:45 am for students, with the first bell sounding at 7:55 am. Classes will begin when all students are in class but no later than 8:05 am as normal. This year our dismissal time will be at 2:55 pm, with students utilizing public school transportation leaving upon bus arrival between 2:50-2:55 pm. Students with parent-pick up will be dismissed at 2:55 pm when the final bell rings.

Monday-Friday

7:45 (Doors Open)

7:55 1st Bell

8:05 Classes Begin

2:55 School Dismissed

School Lunch Program

Unfortunately, as the school year begins, we will not be able to offer a hot lunch program. However, we will continue to work towards bringing the program back so that parents of Bishop Baraga students have a hot lunch option. For the time being, we are asking that all students bring a cold lunch each day to eat. Pizza will continue to be offered on Fridays.

MISSION STATEMENT

~TO PROVIDE THE HIGHEST QUALITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION, WITH A COMMITMENT TO ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND TO SUPPORT FAMILIES WITH THE SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR CHILDREN~



School Staffing Update

Regarding Staffing: we continue working on solidifying a staffing plan for the school year. Administration will soon begin conducting interviews for available positions.

Our search is ongoing for teacher candidates to apply to the posted lower elementary positions. If you know of anyone that may be interested, please direct them to apply using the [Diocese of Gaylord website](#). Feel free to pass along this link, or put them in contact with me, Chase Closs, Principal, as soon as possible, via email. It is our goal to have all classroom staffing plans finalized by August 23rd.

[Click here to see → Teacher Job Posting](#)

We also continue our search to fill other positions as the school year begins. A Business Manager for both the school and the parish cluster is needed, as well as an additional aide. If you are interested or know of someone who might fill our needs, apply through the above link to the Diocese or contact me or Fr. Duane at the Parish Offices at (231) 627-2105.

Keep in mind that full time employees receive a greatly reduced tuition rate for children attending Bishop Baraga School.

Athletics and Extracurricular Programs

Many families are wondering if we will be offering school sports or extracurricular programs this year at Bishop Baraga. The answer is YES. Several sports seasons for students along with a variety of new and traditional extracurricular programs are being planned.

However, because of building issues yet to be remedied, and staffing concerns, a schedule has not yet been determined. As these concerns are soon solved, we will be able to begin planning the wide array of athletics and extracurricular programs for students.

We embrace the importance of these programs, and our goal is to be able to bring back as many of the programs as we possibly can, however, at this point, we must prioritize the major academic and spiritual needs of the school and students, which is getting students back in the classroom at the beginning of the year and continue in fulfilling our Mission Statement found in this newsletter for your review.

As we accomplish these goals, we will assess the athletics and extracurricular programs and speedily communicate our plans as they develop. Thank you all for being supportive and understanding of these future decisions.

Back to School Orientation

Because of the many “new” procedures, and so student families may be able to better understand any changes for the coming year, an orientation for parents and registered students is being planned. It will be important for both new families as well as families who have previously attended Bishop Baraga be present. Unfortunately, a date has yet to be determined. It is hoped to have it in the school, but we must wait for certain inspections that we expect to be completed very soon, to be done before non-employees can enter the building.

Spaghetti Dinner

If you are looking for a quick and easy dinner on Wednesday, August 25th, check out the Spaghetti Dinner at the Knights of Columbus Hall. This dinner is dedicated to Bishop Baraga Catholic School, with 100% of the proceeds going to the school. We are asking for a minimum donation of \$10. Indoor seating will be available along with to-go dinners upon request. The meal will be from 4:30 pm until 6:30 pm. Please make all checks payable to Bishop Baraga Catholic School. If you are interested in volunteering for this event, reach out to Ann Couture in the school office via email or through the parish offices. We greatly appreciate your support!

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