



August 17, 2020

**Re: Provision of Educational Instruction via Live Streaming and/or
Recorded In-Person Instruction During the 2020-2021 School
Year**

Dear Parents and Guardians:

In an effort to provide continuous learning opportunities during the COVID-19 Pandemic St. Ferdinand School is offering virtual instructional sessions to students via third-party remote learning applications or platforms for those students who are not comfortable returning to in-person instruction at this time. St. Ferdinand School will utilize third party remote meeting applications or platforms, such as Zoom, Google Classroom, and Seesaw for live classroom teaching and/or in-person recorded instruction, parent-teacher conferences, and other individual and small group teacher- student meetings (“Sessions”) as part of our remote learning plan.

PRIVACY ISSUES

The use of livestream and/or recorded in-person lessons during in-person instruction carries potential privacy for students:

1. Audio/Visual. Students working remotely will be logging into the remote meeting platforms and engaging with their teacher and classmates. The students working remotely, and their parents and others present where the students are working, will have the ability to see and hear their teacher and *other students* if the instructional services are livestreamed and/or recorded in a classroom setting or provided in a virtual classroom/group setting on the remote meeting platform.

Please note that teachers also may **record** their in-person instructional lessons and post these recordings on the school’s remote learning platform to enable students to review the lessons at a later time, and your student’s image or voice contained in those recordings may be recorded while participating in class and later viewed by students or their parents.

2. Data Privacy. In addition, for students participating remotely in a virtual classroom, group, or individual sessions, the remote meeting platform may maintain, utilize, or disclose student information for its own purposes in line with its terms of service. We strongly encourage parents and guardians to review the terms of service for each of these applications or platforms so that you may make a fully informed decision on each instance of consent requested by the application or platform.

If required by the application or platform, the School may provide student directory information (for example, student or parent name and student school email address) or other education record information to the third party application or platform for the sole purpose of providing the Sessions pursuant to the “school official” disclosure provision of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In accordance with regular FERPA processes, parents and guardians may opt-out of the release of student directory information to third parties. Further, although schools have the general authority to release education records to third party vendors under the FERPA “school official” exception for the limited purposes of the service to be provided, ensuring vendor adherence to all standards during the use of virtual technology involving parent/guardian direct consent to the vendor’s terms and conditions is more complex during this period of virtual instruction related to the COVID-19 pandemic. According, during this period of virtual instruction, parents/guardians will be allowed to withhold consent for release of education records to the third party vendors for these virtual education applications and services, with the understanding that this may result in their students being unable to participate in the virtual education program. If you opt-out of allowing your student’s information to be provided to these applications or platforms or refuse to accept their terms, the virtual instruction will not be made available to your child. In such case, alternative instructional methods may be explored that do not utilize such applications or platforms. If you wish to opt-out of this use of technology, please notify me directly at efolino@saintferdinand.org.

PRIVACY PRECAUTIONS

To facilitate student and staff safety and privacy, St. Ferdinand School has adopted the following requirements for all Sessions:

- Teachers have the ability to admit or deny participants in the Sessions. Students or their parents will either receive a direct link sent via email to their student account or to a parent email on file when the student does not have a school email account. Where the provision of a direct link is not possible, students will be required to enter their name (first and last) and a password specific to that class. Teachers have been instructed to deny admission to names that are not listed on their class rosters.
- Students and parents or guardians will be given the class specific password through Google Classroom or Seesaw.
- Teachers will enable features and monitor activity to prevent students and unauthorized users who access the Sessions from sharing their computer screens during the Sessions.
- Recording features will be disabled during the Sessions.
- Parents or guardians will be given specific instructions for parent-teacher conferences through Google Classroom or Seesaw.

St. Ferdinand School expects all students and their parents or guardians to comply with following requirements during all Sessions:

- Prior to joining a Session, ensure that your student is in a private location and that his or her device is not visible to the public.
- Please be attentive to the background environment. Students should not participate in Sessions in an area where personal or private information and images could be shared.
- Please minimize all background noise and activity during the Session. We want these Sessions to maximize student learning.
- Remind students to use the “raise your hand” feature and wait to be recognized by the teacher **before** speaking during individual or small group Sessions.
- Please remind your students that any misconduct during the Session will be subject to discipline according to the St. Ferdinand School Student Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy.
- Recording, copying, reproducing, displaying, or distributing any of the Sessions in any manner by students or parents or guardians is **prohibited**.

If you have any concerns regarding your student’s participation in remote learning during the school closure period, especially regarding your student’s privacy or confidentiality rights, please contact **Margaret Brumann at mbrumann@saintferdinand.org**.

Thank you for your partnership and patience as we work to provide your student with continuous learning opportunities during this challenging time.

Sincerely,



Erin Boyle Folino
Principal