

September 2020

## Saint Peter's Begins School Year with Distance Learning

By Erin Pant



The 2020-2021 school year is well underway at Saint Peter's. All students began the year participating in distance learning, with plans for in-person learning to return in phases.

Faculty and staff worked tirelessly throughout the summer to prepare for the new school year. Their efforts included staying up to date on all national, state, and local health guidelines, securing personal protective equipment, and making necessary adjustments to the building and classrooms to ensure safety. In addition, new technology and platforms had to be acquired, learned, and tested, and the internet speed on school grounds was updated.

During the week of August 31, orientation sessions were held for all grades. Students could attend a small group in-person session or virtual session. The orientation sessions were a chance for students to meet their teachers and gain an overview of what to expect for the year ahead. It was also the first-time students had been back in the building since March.

"It was wonderful to finally see students back on our campus. Their joyful energy has been greatly missed," said Principal Kristen Cocozzella.

Staff continue to test new technology and prepare the building in anticipation for the return of students. Parent volunteers gathered on two Saturdays to construct desk dividers that will be used in classrooms to aid in physical distancing.

Students who opt to return for in-person learning will do so in three phases, the first phase welcome backs pre-K through third grade on September 28, fourth and fifth grade are targeted to return in mid-October, and sixth through eighth grade tentatively returning by the end of October. Students who choose to continue distance



learning will participate in live stream of in-person classroom lessons so they can participate in discussion real-time.

“I’m extremely appreciative of our parents, our students, our teachers and staff during these challenging times,” said Cocozzella. “The Lord has brought us all together as a school and he is the center of all things at Saint. Peters. With him all things are possible and that has been so evident during this time.”

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