



Saint Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church

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September 10, 2020

Dear St. Demetrios Greek Afternoon School Families,

We hope that the summer has been fun and restful. We are pleased to announce that registration for the 2020-2021 school year is ongoing. As you are aware, on August 7, 2020, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced his decision that all schools in New York would be allowed to reopen. We would like to advise you that the School Administration has been diligently planning for the reopening of our Greek Afternoon School, starting with a Blessing (Agiasmos) in the Church on **Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 4pm.** The Blessing will be followed by an Orientation as to how the new school year will look like, including a review of our policies and procedures. In light of the fact that the DOE has delayed the NYC public school reopening to September 21, our classes will begin to meet on **Monday, October 19, 2020** and every Monday and Wednesday from 4pm-6pm thereafter. This will allow for us to monitor the public school situation. We are preparing for a return to a traditional on-site/in-person instruction model, ensuring small class size and proper social distancing.

Naturally, the health and safety of our students, parents, faculty and staff are our priority. To that end, we have updated our policies and procedures according to CDC and DOE guidelines to include the following (please see Policies & Procedures form for complete list):

- ❖ Modified drop off/pickup procedures to eliminate congestion to take place in the Church where students will wait with their respective class in assigned pews that have been marked according to social distancing guidelines, as well as staggered dismissal times;
- ❖ Drop off to begin at 3:45pm to allow adequate time for temperature check upon arrival, assembly in the Church and travel to classrooms in order for classes to begin on time;
- ❖ Mandatory mask wearing by all students, parents, faculty and staff. Masks will be available if needed;
- ❖ Proper spacing between students and desks in the classrooms. If there are too many students enrolled in a grade than can be accommodated in a classroom, another section will be created;
- ❖ Hand sanitizer dispensers/bottles will be available in every classroom. Students are encouraged to have their own bottle of hand sanitizer as well; and
- ❖ Classrooms, bathrooms, and shared spaces to be cleaned and sanitized before and after each Greek Afternoon School session.

This spring, like so many schools across the country, our Greek Afternoon School was forced to close and transition to remote learning with no time to prepare. As a result, our teachers had no choice but to utilize e-mail in order to send students their assignments and for students to e-mail their completed assignments to their teachers for feedback and grading. In the event that the school is forced by local or state authorities to close again at any point, our teachers will be better prepared to continue instruction online and we will then move to a remote learning model. The Parish Council has been providing the Greek Afternoon School teachers with proper training by certified technology professionals in using the various platforms available for remote learning, such as Zoom Video Conferencing, Google Meets and Google Classroom. As many of you know, Google Classroom can be used to post assignments, grade student work, provide individualized feedback and allow for classes to virtually connect with each other. The teachers will also have access to remote support should they encounter any software issues.

In order for the School Administration to properly prepare for reopening, we need to know approximately how many students will be registered. This will allow for us to plan on how many students will be in each classroom, whether additional classrooms need to be created, whether more teachers need to be hired and additional resources procured. To register, please fill out the **Student Registration, Parent Association Membership, Covid-19 Policies and Procedures** and **Covid-19 Waiver** forms enclosed herein, (sent via e-mail and available in the Church Office as well). As you know, our Greek Afternoon School program is offered ***tuition free*** to the members of St. Demetrios Church of Jamaica. Please ensure that you have paid your **annual membership fee of \$400** (check made payable to St. Demetrios Church) when completing your application, as well as the **annual Parent Association membership fee of \$50**, (separate check made payable to St. Demetrios PA) which is also required at the time of registration. If this presents a hardship to your family, please contact Father Kostantinos Kalogridis to discuss the matter privately.

Kindly be advised that in order for your child to be considered fully registered, ALL forms must be signed and submitted and all fees paid by October 7, 2020. For more information regarding Registration, please contact the Church Office at (718) 291-2420 or Georgeta Spelios, Parish Council Greek Afternoon School Board Committee at georgeta.spelios@gmail.com.

We are deeply committed to ensuring that our Greek Afternoon School continues to provide a caring, nurturing and academic environment while keeping in mind the mental and social-emotional well-being of our students to allow them to thrive. Thank you as always for your support. May God continue to bless our families and keep us in His care.

Very truly yours,

The School Board Administration
St. Demetrios of Jamaica Greek Afternoon School