

Greetings, Blessed Sacrament Families,

I hope this letter finds you healthy and well. The purpose of this communication is to inform you of the changes that have been made to counseling procedures and policies due to COVID-19, and to give you an idea of what you and your families can expect from me over the next few weeks.

As is the case with everyone at Blessed, you all included, I have been working diligently over the last week to make myself as prepared as possible to be able to continue providing quality services via a new platform. While I've enjoyed the challenge, I also request your patience as we work together to address any challenges that may come up over the next few weeks.

Individual, Family, and Small Group Counseling

In addition to my license as a Marriage and Family Therapist - Associate, I am also a certified Telemental Health Counseling provider. What is Telemental Health Counseling, you ask? This is a 15 hour continuing education course I've taken to ensure that I can provide the highest-quality electronic mental health services to improve access to counseling services during this crisis. At this time, I will only be providing telecounseling services for students and families who are currently residing in Texas, and only via videoconferencing and telephone. I will not be conducting any counseling sessions via email, though you may communicate with me through this electronic medium for any of the following reasons:

- To request a counseling appointment
- To change a counseling appointment
- To communicate a school-related academic, social, emotional, or spiritual concern or challenge your student is experiencing
- To request resources to address academic, social, emotional, or spiritual challenges your student is experiencing

Also at this time, and in accordance with Archdiocesan policy, a parent or legal guardian must be present during a session conducted with an individual student via videoconferencing or telephone. For small group sessions that may occur, parents may or may not be permitted to attend and such decisions may be made by me on a case-by-case basis. Families and students who will be receiving individual, family, or small group services will need to sign a new consent form which will be provided by me via email. The consent form can be scanned and sent via email directly to me--please let me know if you need some resources for scanning options.

The platform I will be using to conduct individual, family, or small group counseling sessions will be Google Meet, as all students and parents have been assigned gmail accounts.

Records will be maintained and secured at the school in written, hard-copy form in compliance with current privacy laws.

Guidance Classes

I have set up a Google classroom to continue Guidance classes and will be providing class codes to parents and students individually via gmail. Please note, however, that I will no longer be following the Second Step curriculum we have used up to this point in the year. Given that the needs of our families have evolved, and may continue to evolve, so greatly, I feel it is best to provide Guidance resources and lessons that are tailored to these needs. One way I'll be tailoring these lessons is by sending out a brief survey each week that allows parents to provide input as to what is currently happening for them and their children moving forward. This survey will be provided electronically using Google Forms. I will also be seeking input from teachers and administration. As I receive this input, I will put together lessons and resources in Google Classroom that address the needs of each grade level.

Content for these lessons may be provided in various forms including, but not limited to, YouTube videos, PDF psycho-educational handouts, Video Recordings, or live classes via Zoom. Notice will be provided within a reasonable amount of time if a live Zoom class is scheduled. These lessons are not like typical classroom lessons, they are usually less structured, incorporate a lot of movement, and tend to be activity/interactively-based.

Communication

I plan to continue to collaborate with teachers, administration, and parents on as regular a basis as possible. The relationships I have developed with students, families, and teachers are of the utmost importance to me, and as such, I would like to continue to collaborate with as many people who are involved in supporting our students as possible.

Please keep in mind that I continue to be scheduled to be available for Blessed Sacrament families on a part-time basis. As such, email is the most efficient and timely way to request assistance from me. My email is kkeith@blessedschool.com and my hours "on-campus" are as follows:

- Tuesday 7:30-4:00
- Thursday 12:30-4:00
- Friday 7:30-4:00

This does not mean that you can not reach out to me outside of these hours, it does, however, mean that you may not receive a response until I am back “on-campus”.

Intern Assistance

Blessed Sacrament currently has the additional support of our counseling intern, Ms. Lana Cosme. Ms. Cosme is a master’s level student at UTSA and is familiar to our students as she has been with us throughout the 2019/2020 school year. Ms. Cosme will be assisting in providing indirect counseling services such as: creating Guidance class content, researching community and crisis resources for families, and creating schedules for counseling sessions. She may also assist me in providing individual, family, or small group sessions for students; should this become the case for your student, you will be notified by me ahead of time.

I realize this is a lot of additional information for you to process and that I am not the only one communicating changes at this time. I hope you find all of this more informative than overwhelming and if you have any additional questions PLEASE do not hesitate to reach out.

I am so grateful to be a part of each of your lives in some small way, and I’m humbled by the opportunity to be able to serve you in a new, and (somewhat) uncharted way. I hope this situation we find ourselves in presents you with the ability to indulge in the opportunity to slow down, and truly be present with your families. And if that is not the situation you find yourself in, I want to leave you with the reminder that any challenge that you encounter, we will overcome together, as a Bulldog community.

Blessings,
Mrs. Keith

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