



# Zion Lutheran In Bethalto, Other St. Louis Area Lutheran Schools Prepare Back-To-School Plans

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**ST. LOUIS** - As parents throughout the St. Louis area navigate changing information for schools and childcare in the age of Covid-19, St. Louis area [Lutheran schools](#) are moving forward with plans for fall. Several schools, including [Abiding Savior Lutheran](#) in south St. Louis County, have announced plans for **in-person** classes via [YouTube](#) or Facebook. Others, like [Zion Lutheran in Bethalto](#), are busy installing protective equipment like [desk shields](#) to keep teachers and students safe. Since LESA's 34 member schools serve a wide range of communities - from urban to suburban, to rural - some schools are still finalizing their plans. [Here's a look](#) at what schools in St. Louis, St. Charles, Jefferson County and the Metro East are doing to prepare.

## [Zion Lutheran - Illinois](#) (Bethalto)

“Zion Lutheran School Bethalto is planning to open for Fall 2020 and has every intention to do so. The first day of school in our building for Kindergarten through Grade 8 students is scheduled for August 12. We are following the State of Illinois guidelines for reopening and making the necessary adaptations for our school.”

**Laura Warfel, Director of Admissions**

## [Abiding Savior Lutheran](#)- St. Louis County (South)

“When our interaction with our students is limited to computer screens and shortened periods of time, it interferes with our ability to invest in them at a personal level and even at the spiritual and academic levels. To that end, it is our fervent desire that we are able to open **our campus** to in-person schooling this fall on **August 12**. Guidelines and requirements from the CDC, St. Louis County Executive and Health Department will influence or determine the manner in which we deliver school, and the processes and procedures we will use.”

**Megan Arnold, Director of Admissions (314-892-4408,**

[marnold@abidingsaviorlutheran.org](mailto:marnold@abidingsaviorlutheran.org))

## [Child of God Lutheran](#) - St. Charles County (St. Peters)

“The **St. Charles** administrators meet weekly to discuss and talk through health and safety protocols. **We are all planning on opening as scheduled in August.** Child of

God opened June 1 for summer camp and we've been using it as a pilot for fall. So far so good."

**Dr. Melissa Sandfort, Principal** (636-970-7080, [msandfort@coglcs.com](mailto:msandfort@coglcs.com))

**Christ Community Lutheran School - St. Louis County**(West)

"CCLS will begin the 2020-21 school year on its four campuses **August 19**. We have developed a Back to School 2020-2021 Plan for reopening that provides a tiered approach with actionable steps that will be taken before students and employees return to school buildings, along with school actions that will be taken given the possibility of varying levels of community spread of COVID-19 throughout the school year. As a People-Focused school, the health and safety of our students and staff are of utmost importance. We look forward to being together in person after many months of separation."

**CCLS Charger Newsletter** (Jenna Dehn, Communications Dir - 314-822-7774, [jdehn@ccls-stlouis.org](mailto:jdehn@ccls-stlouis.org))

**Grace Chapel Lutheran - St. Louis County** (North)

"At this time we are planning to start "regular" school **August 24**. We will be taking precautions such as taking temperatures as students/staff enter the building, streaming chapel instead of gathering, as well as not rotating classes for middle school and elective courses. We will also follow any CDC or state regulations that come up as time goes on. We are prepared to have virtual learning again if that becomes a requirement."

**Irene Desmond, Director of Admissions** (314-604-6076 Cell)

**Messiah Lutheran - St. Charles County** (Weldon Spring)

"We plan on returning to full-time in-person school on **August 19**. We put out two surveys (Early Childhood and K-8 families) that proved to be very useful in getting our fingers on the pulse of what parents are thinking and feel comfortable with.

Overwhelmingly, parents just want to see their kids back in our building with as normal a school experience as possible. As far as plans and protocol, we are creating a plan to integrate and maintain educational best practices that promote student learning as well as social, emotional, and spiritual development in the safest manner we are able.

**Cat Van Hook, Director of Admissions**

**St. John's Lutheran, Arnold**- Jefferson County (Arnold)

"We announced to our school parents in early June that we are planning on in-person school, five days per week ... and this announcement was well-received! Along with the announcement, we reminded parents that there will be some "changes" and preventive measures ... yet to be determined."

**David Florine, Principal**

**St. Paul's Lutheran - St. Louis County** (Des Peres)

"Opening St. Paul's Lutheran School to in-person instruction on **August 19** is our main priority this summer. We pledge to review all mandated and suggested policies and guidelines from the CDC, pediatricians, and St. Louis County leaders while maintaining our Lutheran heritage, our St. Paul's identity, and family culture. We will use our best judgment, seek best practices, use good-faith measures, and create reasonable and

common-sense approaches to this health pandemic in our nation and world."

**Janet Profilet, Principal** (Joanna Hoeltge, Admissions - 314-822-0447, ext 202)

**Word of Life - St. Louis City (South)**

Word of Life's plans for re-opening for the 2020-2021 school year is in the final stages and should be ready to release to our families in the upcoming week. Our goal, as we have worked through this, is to be open for parents that would like to return to the traditional **5-day in-school model** with great care given to social distancing recommendations. But we also will have an option for parents who would like to continue with remote learning. We have indicated to families that this the plan we are working on. Technology to accomplish this has already been ordered. We are now working out details as we think all of the options need to be fully prepared and shared so that families can make the best decision. These plans continue to be fluid, as they are for any school and district, based on the severity of the spread of Covid-19. An increase high enough to recommend schools in the entire area go to distance learning (as they did last spring) would have an effect on these plans. And should the spread and concern decrease, we can then start altering the plans for fewer restrictions when they are possible.

**Melissa Bergholt, Principal**

**Zion Lutheran - Illinois (Belleville)**

"We are planning in-person school with our first day of the year to be **August 17**. All public and non-public schools in Illinois serving Pre-K through 12th grade must follow the guidelines set forth by the Illinois State Board of Education in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Public Health. Face masks, wellness checks, social distancing as much as possible, and an increase in school-wide cleaning and disinfecting will be part of our new daily routines. We have a task force in place that has been working diligently on reopening plans this summer, and more specific information will be given to our enrolled families in the coming weeks. We started our summer program on campus in June, so we have a lot of processes in place to keep kids safe and healthy. We look forward to having our students back in classrooms and on our campus very soon."

**Erica Stelling, Director of Admissions** (314-494-3818) [lwarfel@zionbethalto.org](mailto:lwarfel@zionbethalto.org)

**618-377-5507 (School)**

**618-301-6706 (Mobile)**

[Click here](#) to contact schools directly about enrollment or opening plans, or to find a Lutheran school near you. And [check back](#) for updates to this story as additional schools finalize their plans. More than **8,300 students** attend LESA member Lutheran schools in the St. Louis Metro Area, making it the **second-largest private school system** in the Bi-State Region. A Recognized Service Organization of the [Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod](#), LESA represents [34 elementary and high schools](#). For information on our members schools and enrollment, visit [www.lesastl.org](http://www.lesastl.org).