



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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Dear Parents and Staff of our Catholic Elementary Schools,

I hope the summer has brought an opportunity to relax and enjoy your family. As I mentioned in the last letter, the **Catholic Schools Onward, Best Practices and New Opportunities** Task force has been working hard to create a plan for the 2020-21 school year. I am very proud of all the work that has been accomplished and we are ready to share the drafts on some of the key parts of our plan. The plan is based on several key principles, cohorting – students remain with the same classmates throughout the day, social distancing, strategic use of masks, enhanced cleaning, a modified attendance policy, situational virtual learning and an enhanced partnership with parents.

The goal of the plan is to open in a brick and mortar situation, and continue in school. By following the principles above, we can limit exposure of COVID. If a case does surface, we are using cohorting, we can provide different situational virtual learning to those exposed for the prescribed period and continue brick and mortar school for the other cohorts. Once the quarantine period is completed, the cohort can discontinue and join the others back in the building. Additionally, the guidance that related to medical issues was reviewed by a pediatrician from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

The task force still has some areas to address, and we will update the website created when these areas are complete. You can view the draft guidance at the following website:

[Catholic Schools Onward](#)

Yours in Christ,

Andrew M McLaughlin, Ed.D.

Secretary for Elementary Education