



ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

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June 26, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Allow me to introduce myself to you, as I begin my tenure as interim superintendent for Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Washington. I have a long history, including several years of senior leadership responsibilities, of working in the Catholic Schools Office and I am pleased to serve in this role in the start of the school year. I want to first thank you for your commitment to providing a faith-filled and academically excellent education for your child. As the school year recently concluded, Catholic schools throughout the Archdiocese of Washington continued rigorous planning to reopen campuses for the next school year. Following federal and state guidelines, we will be ready to safely welcome our students on the first day of school in August.

The Archdiocese of Washington *Reopening of Schools Task Force* is charged with devising the reopening plan for archdiocesan schools. The Catholic Schools Office has successfully guided the safe and planned reopening of three of our year-round early learning centers and several parishes and schools who are offering outdoor summer camps, under the current guidance available to our leaders. How wonderful it is to have the joy of children back in our buildings! The guidelines that will govern reopening schools in August in the District of Columbia and Maryland have not been provided from the local jurisdictions at this time. Reopening our schools in a manner that is safe for our students and faculty is our priority. Health and safety protocols are being established based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), local health departments, and local jurisdictions. Our goal is to create habits and routines that promote safety and good health throughout our schools.

During the summer months, we encourage all of our families to keep Christ at the center of your daily routine. Daily prayer, as a family, is important especially during meal times and particularly, at bed times where you can help your children examine their day. By helping your children look back at their day, identifying good choices made, as well as, not-so-good choices, children become more reflective and can learn how they can make more loving choices toward others, the next day. Summer is also a great time to try a family service project, in which the whole family can work together to complete a common goal. Some ideas include preparing meals or treats to drop off to neighbors still in quarantine, cleaning the house and collecting clothing, toys, non-perishable food and items to donate to local charities or picking up trash in the neighborhood, beach or campground while on vacation.

As a reminder, our partnership with schools and families has led to the creation of *Summer Learning Resources* that are designed to promote continual learning throughout the summer -- learning that is faith-based in all aspects of the curriculum and developed for our schools and parishes. These resources are not mandatory, but strongly recommended as an opportunity for continual growth. Resources are available per grade level for pre-K through grade 5. Middle school grades will have content-specific resources. Subjects covered for summer learning include religion, math, language arts, social studies, and science. Please visit our *Summer Learning* page at <https://adwcatholicschools.org/elementary-k-8/> for a wide variety of enrichment resources, differentiated activities, and summer reading lists.

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The Archdiocese of Washington and your school will keep you informed as the task force and our schools continue the work in planning to reopen. Please look forward to another status report in mid-July and the reopening plan, soon thereafter.

Again, thank you for your commitment to Catholic education and support of our schools.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Branaman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kelly Branaman
Interim Superintendent for Catholic Schools