

Catholic Schools Onward
Best Practices and New Opportunities
as We Move Forward

Guidance and Procedures



2022-2023 school year

Introduction and Philosophy

Introduction

As we start the 2022-2023 school year, the COVID-19 landscape is greatly different than what we experienced over the previous two academic terms. Although COVID-19 is still present in our community, the availability of new treatments, vaccines, and testing have all of us better equipped to confront the virus and maintain healthy environments.

With the availability of these new tools, we are poised to embrace a new strategy in dealing with COVID-19 in our schools. We are pleased to share that we are now able to operate our schools without many of the previously enacted restrictions designed to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Below are some of the guidelines for this school year and our return to a pre-pandemic education model.

Parental Partnership – Catholic elementary schools are inherently a partnership between the parent and the school. This collaboration remains the most important aspect of our plan to deal with COVID-19. It is paramount for us to keep children in school. This goal cannot be possible unless the school and the parents agree to the importance of monitoring their child’s health daily. Most importantly, this means that children who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or the flu need to stay home. With parental cooperation in this matter, we will be able to limit the impact of the virus on our classrooms. Below are some specific recommendations;

- *Student or Staff Member Tests Positive* - If a student or staff member is COVID-19 positive, they should stay at home for a minimum of 5 days and then wear a mask when returning to school during days 6 through 10. The school will provide make-up work for the student to complete during their time out of the classroom. Virtual learning will not be available.
- *Student or staff comes into close contact with a positive case*- We recommend that in this case the student or staff can return to school with a mask and test on the second and fourth days after exposure. If after that time, the student or staff is negative, then the mask is not recommended. If the person does test positive, follow the above procedure for a positive case

Additional School Practices

Ventilation

Increase ventilation to the greatest extent possible to optimize air quality and reduce the risk of germs and contaminants spreading through the air. Open classroom windows and doors.

Reinforce Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Best Practices

Washing hands can prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Schools and Early Childhood Centers (ECC) programs should teach and reinforce proper handwashing to lower the risk of

spreading viruses, including the virus that causes COVID-19. If washing hands is not possible, schools should provide hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. In addition, schools should teach and reinforce covering coughs and sneezes to help keep individuals from getting and spreading infectious diseases, including COVID-19.

Enhanced Cleaning – Schools should clean surfaces at least once a day, or to the greatest extent possible to reduce the risk of germs spreading by touching surfaces.

Strategic Use of Masks – Masks will be optional except for their use with the specific cases detailed above.

Monitoring Health Form – We ask that parents to monitor the health of their children. The attached form could be helpful to share with school families to reinforce this concept. This is at the school's discretion. (copy attached)

Schools should also continue to monitor the recommendations from their county health department as those guidelines can vary from county to county. Unless the COVID-19 landscape virus changes radically, the following practices used in the past are *not* required:

- **Social Distancing**
- **Virtual Learning**
- **Modified Attendance**
- **Quarantining Classrooms or Schools**

Parent / Guardian

Health Check

Partnership – Catholic elementary schools are inherently a *partnership* between the parents and the school. At (Insert Name of School) we value this greatly. We request parents agree to the importance of monitoring your child’s health daily. Most importantly, this means that parents need to keep their children home if they are experiencing symptoms such as fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea. With parental cooperation in this matter, we will be able to keep our school open and safe.

As a parent/guardian, I accept this responsibility to check the health of my child/children in the morning of every school day of the school year. I will check for symptoms – such as fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea and will not send my child/children if experiencing the above signs. I pledge support for this mission of this school and by enrolling my child I commit myself to uphold this agreement every day before I send my child / children to (Insert Name of School).

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Please review, sign, and return by Friday, first week of school. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact _____ School. Thank you!

Please review, sign, and return by Friday, the first week of school. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact [ok to just put the word school or do you want the name of the school again?] _____ School. Thank you!

