

21-22 Safe Learning Plan



While our situation is different today than last school year, we continue to be committed to maintaining the health and safety of our school community. We are taking an approach that includes a broad number of steps. Here are some of the mitigation strategies we have in place for the 2021-22 school year.

- **Staying Home When Sick (#1 Strategy that we can implement)**

- We continue to require all individuals to stay home when they are sick. We are asking all parents to do a health check before sending your child to school each day. Students can return to school once they are feeling better and their symptoms have substantially improved (including being fever free for 24 hours with no fever-reducing medication). We will not require students to be tested for COVID-19 before returning to school.

- **Reinforcing Good Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette**

- Hand sanitation dispensers are installed at the entrance of each classroom. Students will be instructed on the importance of good hygiene and will be expected to follow routines established for this purpose.

- Our 75F Air circulation system will continue to run in epidemic mode, circulating fresh air throughout the building.

- Deep cleaning and disinfecting of classrooms every day.

- **Physical Distancing**

- We will encourage physical distancing during the school day when it does not disrupt the development and learning of our students.

- All visitors and vendors to schools will follow all school-defined safety and personal hygiene procedures. Until the Pandemic has run its course, visits of volunteers, visitors, and vendors during the school day will be kept to the essential activities.

- **Events**

- School Masses and other liturgical services will follow the Archdiocesan protocols published by the Archdiocesan Office of Worship.

- We will continue to prudently evaluate our Safe Learning Plan throughout the year for in-person group events, gatherings, and meetings during the school day with respect to the risk of spreading COVID-19.

- **Lab-Confirmed Cases of COVID-19**

- State law requires us to report to Minnesota Department of Health any cases of COVID-19 that occur among students or staff in our building. If your child has COVID-19, we will require that they not return to school or school-sponsored activities until they are no longer contagious.

This means:

- They feel better. Their cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms are substantially improved.
- It has been at least 10 days since they first felt sick or tested positive for COVID-19.
- They have had no fever for at least 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers fevers.

- Like other infectious diseases, we will notify impacted families of a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19 in the classroom if the person who tested positive was in the school environment within 48 hours of symptoms or of receiving a positive test result.

- In cases in which the 48-hour limit has been exceeded, we will use prudence to disseminate information to those who "need to know" while respecting data privacy laws.

- The Minnesota Department of Health has their own trained staff to conduct contact tracing. We will be ready to assist MDH whenever they request our assistance in this area.

- **Quarantine**

- The Minnesota Department of Health no longer requires individuals who have been potentially exposed to COVID-19 to quarantine.

- In general, our school will not exclude any healthy individual from the learning environment, unless we are specifically counseled to do so in the circumstances by public health officials.

- **Face Coverings in the School Building**

- Last year, the Governor through an Executive Order required all individuals in public and nonpublic school buildings to wear face coverings. In our commitment to obey rightful legal authority, last year we implemented the face covering mandate at our school. This legal mandate ended over the summer. Districts and schools across Minnesota are making decisions based upon the actual COVID-19 circumstances that are present in their respective communities.

- The Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis does not have a policy requiring face coverings in Catholic schools for students or employees. For the start of the 2021-22 school year, we are putting the decision for a child to wear a face covering in the hands of each parent. Parents and guardians are well positioned to determine if their child should wear a face covering while outside of the home. We ask all parents and guardians to consider what is best for their child in making this decision while also being vigilant in the monitoring of symptoms and the health of their child. We know that there are a variety of positions and opinions on the use of masks, for children in particular, and so our school faculty and staff will be working diligently to eliminate any bullying or stigmatization for wearing or not wearing a face covering. We ask that you help us in this goal.

- We expect that a number of students and families will decide to wear masks this autumn and a number will choose not to wear them. It is prudent that we as a school community accept and respect the diverse actions of others during this pandemic. Please do your part to refrain from discussions around particular groups, families or individuals who choose to respond to the face covering mitigation in a manner that is different from your own choice.

- **Face Coverings on the Bus**

- All people are required by an Order from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to wear face coverings while in public transportation hubs and on all public transportation conveyances (airplanes, public buses, etc.), including school buses (both public and private).

- **Vaccination**

- We are grateful to the medical community who worked tirelessly to develop a safe and effective vaccine for COVID-19. We know many people have chosen for good reasons to get this vaccine for themselves and their family members. We also know that some others following their own good reasons have chosen not to be vaccinated. Honoring the health care decisions of all in our community and the importance of individual privacy for health related decisions, our Catholic Schools will not be mandating any community member to receive the COVID-19 vaccine nor provide documentation of vaccination.

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