

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 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 on 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:

Stay-at-Home Requirements – *Please monitor your child/children each day for the following symptoms. Children should be symptom-free for 24 hours without the use of medication before returning to school.*

If one or more symptoms in Group A OR Has two or more symptoms in Group B.

Group A

- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing
- Loss or change in smell
- Loss or change in taste

Group B

- Fever (100.4 or higher)
- Chills
- Muscle/Body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Congestion
- Runny nose

- ***Student or Staff Member Tests Positive*** – If an individual tests positive for Covid-19, please contact: Mrs. Jane Brainard, Miss Diane E. McCaughan, and Miss Elizabeth A. Waltrich. If a student or staff member is COVID-19 positive, they should stay at home for a minimum of 5 days. Day 1 is the day after onset of symptoms and individual can

return on the 6th day. Individuals will then wear a mask when returning to school during days 6 through 10. At the parents' request, the school will provide make-up work for the student to complete during their time out of the classroom. Otherwise, all work will be made up upon return to the classroom. Virtual learning will not be available.

- **Contact Emails**

- Mrs. Jane Brainard, School Nurse jbrainard@materdeicatholic.com
- Miss Diane E. McCaughan, President dmccaughan@materdeicatholic.com
- Miss Elizabeth A. Waltrich, Principal ewaltrich@materdeicatholic.com

- **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. In addition, parents and teachers 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 in the specific cases detailed above.

Daily Health Monitoring – We ask that parents monitor their children's health. Please especially take note of symptom onset or any changes in symptoms.

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**
- **Quarantining Classrooms**