



COVID- 19 Plan Reminders

December 31, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

After what we hope was a blessed and happy Christmas for your family, our schools are looking forward to welcoming students and staff back to school next week.

As we turn the corner into 2022, we find that the spread of COVID-19 did not go in the direction all had hoped when we began Christmas vacation. With the steep rise in COVID cases, including an increase in children's infections, we are updating our policies out of an abundance of caution and concern.

Since the beginning of the school year, we have stated that our goal is to keep our students in school for in person learning. We know the toll that remote learning took on our students, educators, and parents the last year and a half. Thus, we will continue the mask mandate as one of our safety protocols for the time being. We are heeding the advice of health professionals during this current spike.

<https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Back-to-School/OHA-OCHA-Letter.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>

Our protocols have served us well to date. We need healthy faculty, staff and students in order for quality instruction and care to continue in person.

Layering different protections work together for the good of all.

- Schools rely on parents to keep them informed when a child tests positive for Covid or is considered to be a close contact.
- Parents and guardians are expected to keep children home when they are sick and make prompt arrangements for pick-up of a child who is ill at school. This is especially important as isolation and quarantining protocols are revised by the CDC and the Ohio Department of Health.
- Masks will be mandatory for all who are in the building during the school day and for extra-curricular and after-hours activities. (Note: preschools may have different protocols due to the age of the children.) Please see the following link on how to be most protected when wearing a mask: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/effective-masks.html>
- Social distancing of at least three feet or more will be the standard.
- Frequent handwashing and healthy practices will be emphasized.
- Building sanitation practices continue.
- Testing results will be utilized as possible.

Masks need to be worn:

- When moving around in the halls or classrooms or going from place to place.
- When seated closer than three feet apart for any reason.

- When a school makes a determination that a situation would be safer if a mask should be worn. i.e music class; close group collaboration, playing board games during indoor recess, etc.
- On the school bus.
- At all sporting, extra-curricular, and other school events.

Masks do NOT need to be worn:

- When outdoors, at recess, or in gym class.
- When seated in a stationery position working independently at least three to six feet apart.

Vaccinations

Vaccinations are available for all ages 5 and up. Vaccinations are not mandatory. But we urge you to speak with your pediatrician. Vaccinations are encouraged by the Catholic Church and have proven to be a valuable tool in fighting the virus. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/children-teens.html>

The CDC defines fully vaccinated individuals as those who:

- have received a booster of vaccine, OR
- have completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months, OR
- have completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months.

Isolation and Quarantine Procedures

The CDC has just revised its guidelines for isolation and quarantining. The Ohio Department of Health is following suit. <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1227-isolation-quarantine-guidance.html>

If You Test Positive for COVID-19: Isolate
<p>If someone tests positive for COVID, regardless of vaccination status, the individual must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Isolate for a full 5 days regardless if symptoms are present or not and regardless if symptoms resolve before the 5 days are complete. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For symptomatic people, Day 1 is the first full day <u>after</u> symptoms develop. ▪ For asymptomatic people, Day 1 is the first full day <u>after</u> the positive test is administered. ▪ Example: Symptoms develop or a positive test is administered on a Sunday. Day 1 is Monday. The individual isolates Monday through Friday. The first <u>potential</u> day out of isolation is Saturday. ○ If the person is asymptomatic or symptoms resolve before the fifth day, the individual must still complete the full five days of isolation and must wear a mask around others for five more days. ○ The individual must be fever-free for 24 hours before leaving isolation. The 5-day rule still applies, but if a fever is present after 5 days, the individual must remain isolated until fever-free for 24 hours. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is no need to test before leaving isolation. While individuals could remain COVID positive for some time, they are no longer contagious.

If You Were Exposed (a close contact) to Someone Positive With COVID-19: Quarantine
(Close Contact Definition: living in the same house together or being within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more.)
<p>If a vaccinated individual is a close contact with a positive individual: (Proof of vaccination must be shown.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is no need to quarantine at home as long as the vaccinated individual is not symptomatic. The vaccinated individual must wear a mask around others for 10 days after exposure. ○ Testing is recommended 5 days after exposure OR if symptoms develop. <p>If an unvaccinated individual is a close contact with a COVID-19 positive person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The individual must quarantine at home for 5 days and continue to wear a mask around others for 5 more days. ○ Testing is recommended 5 days after exposure OR if symptoms develop.

Our schools will continue to rely on the advice of their local health departments. That partnership has been invaluable throughout this pandemic and we owe them a great debt of gratitude.

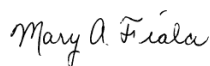
Remote/ Virtual Learning

Moving to remote learning will be our very last resort. However, if that switch needs to be made, all of our schools have contingency plans. Every effort will be made to make a period of remote learning as brief as possible for the good of our families.

We appreciate your cooperation and kindness as we take steps to address safety in the current COVID-19 climate. As we have done all year, the situation will be continuously monitored and protocols adjusted as possible. Adjustments will be communicated to families as they occur.

Thank you for partnering with us in the education and growth of your children. Let us continue to pray for one another. With the tremendous spike in numbers over the last two weeks, many of our families have undoubtedly been touched in some way by COVID-19.

Sincerely in Christ,



Mary Fiala

Superintendent of Schools



Additional Note: We could not have made it this far into the pandemic without the heroic leadership of our administrators and teachers. Nominations for the annual Golden Apple Awards are now being accepted. Please consider making a nomination.

Through the generosity and kindness of the Donahue Family Foundation, the Golden Apple Award program is seeking nominations to honor outstanding individuals who devote their lives to teaching in Catholic schools. This award is bestowed annually on four elementary teachers, two high school teachers, and one principal currently working at one of our schools.

Candidates must be a practicing Catholic, full-time teacher or principal and have completed a minimum of three full years teaching or being a principal in the elementary or secondary school at which he/she is currently serving.

Nominations are currently being accepted at the individual schools. The letter of nomination should explain why the nominator feels the individual deserves the Golden Apple Award and include specific examples of the individual's unique qualities and teaching ability. Nominations are accepted from a parent, and elementary student with his/her parent, a high school student, or a fellow teacher. Please see your local school for the nomination form. Completed nominations can be submitted to the school principal no later than February 1st.