

Dear Catholic School Community,

Below you will find important information related to the resumption of in-person instruction as we prepare for the fall. Please note that the procedures and policies referenced below are based on the best information currently available and are subject to change. We will work to share all relevant and update information as it becomes available.

## Ability to Resume In-Person Instruction

- Schools may provide in-person instruction as long as your region is operating under phase 4 or better of the [MI Safe Start Plan](#). If your region is in phases 1-3, all schools (public, charter, private, religious) will move to virtual instruction.
- It is possible that students and staff may experience disruptions to in-person instruction in phase 4 or better as a result of the COVID protocol described below. Students, families, and schools must be prepared to transition to and from in-person and virtual learning throughout the school year. Professional development and training opportunities are being provided for instructional staff. Schools will be providing support related to virtual instruction to students and parents as we move closer to the beginning of the school year.

## Diocese Plan for Phase 4

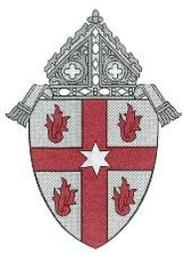
- The [diocesan phase 4 preparedness plan](#) for operating under the MI Safe Start Plan and [Return to School Roadmap](#) is available and has been shared with school leaders across the diocese. I am grateful for the contributions of the Back to School Task Force members in the creation of this document.
- Each Catholic school is required to complete a preparedness plan for phase 4 and 5. School plans will be based on the diocesan plan. Due to variations in enrollment and building footprint among our schools, local modifications may be necessary.
- The diocesan phase 5 plan is currently being developed.

## Faith Centered and Emotional Health Support

- Through collaboration with the Office of Faith Formation, we are working develop and incorporate age appropriate, Faith centered activities and resources that will help our families navigate the coming school year. Our Faith is at the center of our mission and provides significant resources as we continue through his challenging time in education.
- Through a partnership with Catholic Family Services, we are prepared to support the mental and emotional needs of our students, families, staff, and faculty.

## School Masses

- The Diocese of Saginaw previously released [Liturgical Guidelines And Protocols For Resumption Of Public Masses](#). The Office of Catholic Schools is collaborating with the Office of Liturgy to support our schools and the celebration of the Mass in a safe manner. The desire to cohort students and capacity limitations in the worship space may reduce our ability to conduct all-school Masses.



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We are exploring the possibility of live streaming a weekly Mass intentionally for our Catholic school community. Individual schools are also exploring various local options to ensure we that are able to provide this essential component of our Faith to our students and staff.

## COVID Protocols

We have been in contact with each county health department in which our Catholic schools operate. We will continue to collaborate with local health departments as we move forward. They have been and will continue to be an important resource for our schools. The following COVID protocols have been developed based on CDC guidance, the Return to School Roadmap, and consultation with local health departments. The protocols are subject to modification based on guidance from appropriate health agencies.

- Will students and staff be subject to daily health screening?
  - Daily health screenings (at home or at school) are strongly recommended. This process will vary by school. Please contact your building administrator for specifics. (These plans may still be in development at the local level.)
- What if a student displays symptoms of COVID-19?
  - Please keep your child home from school until symptom-free for at least 24 hours (72 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medicine) and consult your personal physician.
  - If this occurs during the school day, the student will be placed in supervised isolation, with a mask (if appropriate based on student's ability to medically tolerate a mask). Parents or guardians will be contacted to pick the child up from school.
- What if a student tests positive for COVID-19?
  - Contact school's administration / COVID response coordinator to ensure that other students and staff in the class(es) and related activities can be notified. This contact is also essential to allow the school to take appropriate cleaning precautions.
  - The student should isolate for 10 days and cannot return to school until after the 14-day quarantine period.
- When can a student return to school following a positive COVID-19 test?
  - The CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation following a COVID-19 test (or possible close contact) is at least 72 hours without a high fever and the 14-day quarantine period from the period of the first symptoms.
- What does my child do if another household member tests positive for COVID-19?
  - If another household member tests positive, the exposed student will enter a 14-day quarantine period away from school, even if the student shows no symptoms.
- What if a staff member displays symptoms and/or tests positive for COVID-19?
  - Staff members are subject to the same protocols as a student
- What happens if another student or staff member in my child's class/activity tests positive for COVID-19?
  - School will contact appropriate students and staff to inform them of a positive case.
  - In all COVID-19 positive cases, schools will consult with the county health department for the next steps related to contact tracing, need for others to be tested and/or quarantined, as well as the impact on the operation of the school.
  - A classroom, portion of a building, entire building and/or activity could be shut down due to a positive test(s). Response may vary based on social distancing and level of cohorting that is in place.



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## Maximizing Our Ability to Resume In-Person Instruction / School Activities in the Fall

- Our schools are taking every reasonable step to be prepared for in-person instruction in the fall. Part of this effort has resulted in modification and/or cancellation of various school related events over the summer to minimize the potential spread of COVID-19. Unfortunately, our graduates and student-athletes have been disproportionately affected by these actions. I share in the disappointment that many of our students, families, and staff feel as a result of the difficult choices that school leaders have had to make regarding summer activities. Our first responsibility is keeping our students and staff safe and healthy. We will continue to take aggressive steps that will increase the likelihood that we will be able to welcome all our students and staff back to school in the fall.
- We need your help to ensure that we are all prepared to return to school. As you enjoy the remaining weeks of summer, please consider how your social and travel plans may impact our ability to welcome your child back to school. Daily health screenings associated with the return to school / daily attendance may ask you (as well as our staff and faculty) to self-report travel over the previous two week period. It is possible that travel to areas experiencing a significant outbreak of COVID-19 and/or the failure to socially distance can result in the delay of your child being able to attend school and school sponsored activities. This action would only be taken after consultation with local health departments and/or guidance from appropriate governmental agencies. The [CDC has guidance related to domestic and international travel](#) that may be helpful.

Over the coming weeks we will continue to prepare for the resumption of in-person instruction. You should expect to hear more specific information from your school in the near future. Due to the actions being taken to create the healthiest environment possible for your child, school in the fall will be different. What school looks and feels like is likely to fluctuate through the course of the school year. Our commitment to supporting the spiritual, academic, social, and physical development of our students remains undiminished. We look forward to continuing to partner with you in the 2020-21 academic year.

Respectfully,

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