



**ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA
OFFICE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION**

222 North Seventeenth Street • Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-1299

November 29, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Now that the Thanksgiving Holiday is behind us, we are writing to all elementary, secondary, and special education families in the five-county Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

On behalf of all those working in the Office of Catholic Education, we express deep gratitude that you chose a Catholic education for your sons and daughters. We are especially thankful for your partnership with us and your local school to navigate the COVID-19 landscape successfully over the past two academic years.

Senior administrators in OCE, along with our partners, continue to review COVID-19 mitigation policies and procedures. They continue to be driven by guidance from local health officials and weekly data reports highlighting COVID-19 case and transmission levels as well as vaccination rates at the county level.

Given the continued presence of the virus and the high-level of transmissibility rates associated with its Delta variant, we remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring the health and safety of our students, faculty, administrators, and staff. As counties that have a high or substantial level of community transmission as reported by the CDC, we will continue to enforce the masks requirement and the social distancing in our schools. Should the level of COVID-19 in a particular county drop to the moderate or low levels, following a two-week period of sustained moderate or low levels, masks would become optional, but recommended for those individuals who are unvaccinated.

Please be assured that we are doing our very best to meet the varied needs of all students entrusted to our care within the context of a challenging environment that is constantly evolving. The continued use of a mask will enable us to continue with in-person instruction and minimize the number of students that are quarantined when exposed to the virus.

We continue to encourage vaccination for all members of our school communities in the strongest possible terms unless a medical condition prevents receiving the vaccine. That recommendation extends to reception of booster shots for adults when individuals become eligible as there have been instances of breakthrough cases amongst the vaccinated and the majority of new COVID-19 infections are traced to the Delta variant of the virus. Vaccination remains one of the best tools at our disposal to combat the virus.

We remain grateful to local health officials as well as to you, our school families, school administrators, faculty, and staff for working with us as partners in school safety during these uncertain times. Our goal is to continue providing educational services at every level in an uninterrupted fashion while maintaining a safe environment for all members of every school community.

Please be assured of our prayers for you and your loved ones as we prepare for the Holy Season of Advent.

Yours In Christ,

Andrew M. McLaughlin, Ed. D.

Irene H. Hannan, CEO, Faith in the Future