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March 4, 2022

Dear Catholic School Families,

We would like to provide an update regarding the latest K-12 school and child care COVID-19 guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) specifically as it relates to masking and contact tracing in our Catholic schools.

On February 25, 2022, the CDC released new [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) and associated recommendations for COVID-19 prevention measures in education and childcare settings.

For students, masking, as communicated on February 11, 2022 will be based on parental choice. Staff will also have the option to wear a mask or not. In addition, the wearing of face masks will now be optional on buses or vans operated/contracted by our Catholic schools. This applies to all individuals, regardless of vaccination status. Please see the [CDC guidance](#) for additional details and information.

Universal contact tracing will also no longer be implemented in our Catholic schools. Instead, we will follow the procedures below when a COVID-19 case has been identified in a student or staff member:

- The school will exclude the student/staff member from campus and follow the CDC [isolation guidance](#).
- The staff member with COVID-19 or parents of the student/child with COVID-19 are requested to notify their own close contacts.
- Schools will provide notification of the COVID-19 case to the school community at the cohort level (e.g. classroom or grade level as appropriate) and encourage self-identification and quarantine for those who may have been in close contact and are not up to date on COVID vaccinations.

Catholic schools will continue to follow existing procedures for reporting communicable diseases (COMAR 10.06.01) and will notify the local health department when a staff member or student/child has tested positive for COVID-19.

In the event that an outbreak is identified in a classroom, our schools will work to identify close contacts of all persons with COVID-19 in the school through contact tracing and exclude them for quarantine according to [CDC guidance](#). Additional measures to mitigate the outbreak may also need to be implemented and will be done in consultation with the local health department.

Please continue to remain vigilant and monitor the health of all members of your household. Our ability to offer in-person instruction for all our students is dependent on your partnership. If a child is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, RSV, or Influenza, they should remain home to avoid exposing the school community to illness.

Thank you for your partnership and support.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Sellinger".

Mr. James Sellinger
Chancellor of Education

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donna W. Hargens".

Dr. Donna Hargens
Superintendent

Rise
ABOVE