



Office for Catholic Schools
Diocese of Scranton

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July 28, 2022

Catholic School Families,

We are looking forward to the start a new school year and have been planning during the summer months to make sure we are ready to welcome all of our returning and new Catholic school families. Part of that preparation is reviewing and updating our protocols as they relate to COVID-19. As we are all aware after over two years of working through this pandemic, there are many ways that we can work together to help minimize the impact of COVID-19 in our schools. With your support and cooperation, combined with the efforts of our dedicated principals, faculty and staff, we anticipate enjoying school days with minimal interruption.

Nationally and locally, we continue to monitor the transmission of this virus. While case counts continue to fluctuate, the number of hospitalizations has decreased and remains low so far this summer. Vaccinations and at home testing are both readily accessible, and when used, help reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the community. We continue to encourage healthy habits like routine hand washing, staying home when not feeling well, and getting the COVID-19 vaccination if you are eligible.

We are thrilled to return to the in-person learning environments that promote collaboration, communication, creative thinking, and creativity, and we will do so with caution. We will be mindful of planning activities throughout the school year to maximize the healthy environment for our students and teachers.

With the start of the school year approaching, please review the updated COVID-19 protocols for our schools:

- If an individual is sick with COVID-19, the individual remains home for 5 days from the COVID positive test date /or/ onset of COVID-19 symptoms. The individual is able to return to school on day 6 without a negative COVID-19 test provided his/her symptoms have improved and he/she is fever-free without fever reducing medication. If this individual returns during days 6-10, he/she will be required to mask and eat separately.
- If an individual is identified as a close contact to a positive COVID-19 case, this individual can come to school and will be required to mask for 10 days since the last contact with the COVID-19 positive case. This individual will be required to test for COVID-19 on day 5.
- There are two options for COVID-19 testing:

Testing Option 1: At-Home COVID-19 test – this test will need to be completed twice, 24 hours apart. A picture of the two negative COVID-19 tests will be submitted to the school to verify test results. Picture must include the individual's name and date on the tests.

Testing Option 2: PCR test completed at pharmacy or medical office

As always, we will monitor the school environment daily and if there is ever a need to make adjustments to masking, distancing, distance learning, or other health and safety protocols, we will do so with the goal of maximizing in-person instruction in the healthiest learning environment.

Thank you for your support and commitment to Catholic education in our Diocese. Our prayer is that you enjoy the remaining days of summer, continue to stay healthy and safe, and enjoy all of the excitement that a new school year brings!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristen Donohue". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kristen" and last name "Donohue" clearly distinguishable.

Kristen Donohue

Superintendent of Catholic Schools