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**Office of Catholic Schools**  
**M E M O R A N D U M**  
**COVID-19 Protocols and Guidelines for the 2021-22 School Year**  
**July 15, 2021**

The Office of Catholic Schools continues to review guidance from the CDC, state and local health departments and other sources to revise and update our guidelines for Catholic schools in the Diocese of Palm Beach. Our plan for the 2020-21 school year allowed us to have students in classrooms well before many schools in the country. The precautions we took provided a safe and healthy environment in our schools. The diocese will continue to monitor the pandemic and respond as needed in our protocols and guidelines. As we all know, the response to the pandemic has changed and evolved over the past year and a half, and *our guidelines will continue to be revised accordingly as needed throughout the 2021-22 school year*. Diocesan policies are independent of public guidelines given our unique circumstances with churches and schools and should not be considered amended unless/until notified by the Diocese of Palm Beach.

**Students in Our Buildings**

We believe that our students learn best when they are in our buildings and attending school. All families are encouraged to have their children at school for the 2021-22 school year. Families who require at-home learning for their children due to health-related issues should contact their school administrator for more information. Hybrid learning will be minimized or eliminated on most campuses. Exceptions may be made when significant numbers of students (or teachers/staff) are quarantined in a particular class or grade level.

**Stay Home if You Are Sick or Symptomatic**

Anyone with a temperature higher than 100.3 degrees may not be in school. Anyone who is sick or has symptoms of COVID-19, please stay home. If a student or someone in the household tests positive for COVID-19, please notify the school administration immediately. The diocese and school administration will work together with guidance from the department of health on any necessary precautions or notifications that should occur.

**Continue Best Practices**

Continue good personal hygiene by washing your hands frequently, avoiding touching your face, covering your cough or sneeze, and minimizing contact with others. Cleaning and disinfecting of the facilities will continue, with continued added attention to high touch surfaces and areas. Visitors and volunteers must be approved for specific purposes by the school administrator. Please follow CDC guidelines related to domestic and international travel.

**Facial Coverings and Masks are Optional**

Masks are optional, but recommended for all persons, including students under 12, who are regularly on our campuses. It is highly recommended that employees, visitors, volunteers and students 12 and older, who have not been vaccinated for COVID-19, wear a facial covering or mask while on campus. Please be considerate of others in making your choice as to whether or not you and your children will wear masks and please be respectful of others' decisions in this regard.

**Mass, Large Gatherings, Sporting Events and Field Trips**

School Masses will follow the protocols in place by the diocese. All athletic and sporting events must adhere to state and local guidelines. Assemblies, large indoor gatherings and field trips may be limited and must be approved by the school administrator.