

NEWS



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Rev. Monsignor John A. Zuraw, Chancellor

FOR RELEASE: Immediate **DATE SENT:** August 20, 2021

SUBJECT: Diocese of Youngstown Statement on Masks in Schools

MORE INFO: Rev. Monsignor John A. Zuraw, Chancellor, 330-744-8451

The Diocese of Youngstown desires for all of its Catholic School students to have in person learning without interruption for the coming school year. It is also the mission of our Catholic School to protect the needs and dignity of every person in the community and to always be mindful of the common good.

The Delta variant has been spreading rapidly across Ohio and has proven to be more contagious than the original and alpha variant. What is more, health officials have told us that this variant “relentlessly seeks out the unvaccinated.”

Currently the CDC regards almost all of the counties in the state as areas of high-risk, threatening the health of the unvaccinated among us, including children under the age of 12. The quarantine and isolation rules for exposure in schools must be followed. The wearing of masks by all may greatly reduce the risk for students to quarantine outside of school. Next to the vaccine, masks are the best protector.

Due to the increasing spread of the Delta variant and its rapid rise in recent weeks, the Diocese of Youngstown will require universal masking by both students and adults indoors in all school buildings during the school day, including morning and aftercare, along with other safety protocols in place.

The masking mandate for K-12 students, staff, and visitors is a temporary measure that will take effect on August 20, 2021.

The decision will be reviewed in mid-September following data from the schools and local health departments, the Ohio Department of Health, and the CDC.

The revised COVID-19 plan for the Diocese of Youngstown Schools can be found at www.doy.org under the media.

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