



## COVID- 19 Plan Update January 31, 2022

As promised, the Diocese of Youngstown has been monitoring the number of COVID-19 cases in our area and we are thankful that the numbers of cases are decreasing rapidly. Thus, we have updated our COVID-19 Policy which will take effect on **Monday, February 7<sup>th</sup>**.

**Our goal remains: to keep students and staff in school to provide the best learning environment for your child.**

Our updates are based on the following:

- Ohio Department of Health updated Contact Tracing Protocol Changes issued January 26, 2022: <https://odh.ohio.gov/static/docs/memo-contact-tracing-final-012622.pdf>
- Mask to Stay/Test to Play updated January 26, 2022: <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/schools/k-12-schools-quarantine-alternative.pdf>
- Flow Chart for Quarantine and Isolation updated January 25, 2022: <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/docs/covid-19-guidance-quarantine.pdf>

### **Mask Policy**

Beginning February 7<sup>th</sup>, masks are still highly encouraged, but their use will **be voluntary except** in the circumstances listed below.

Masks are required in the following circumstances:

- Masks still required on the school busses.
- Persons with direct contact to a person positive with COVID-19 who shows no symptoms are to wear a mask for ten days. (While the school may know if someone in school has been exposed at school, if a child is a close contact to someone outside of school, parents are asked to inform the school and support their child wearing a mask for the required ten days. (See the guidance documents above.)
- A local health department recommendation to the school may be followed by the school, as the local health department has the most accurate local information.
- A school has the authority to continue or to temporarily institute a mandatory mask policy based on their local circumstances.

### **Layering different protections work together for the good of all.**

- Schools rely on parents to keep them informed when a child tests positive for Covid or is considered to be a close contact.
- Parents and guardians are expected to keep children home when they are sick and make prompt arrangements for pick-up of a child who is ill at school. This is especially important as isolation and quarantining protocols are revised by the CDC and the Ohio Department of Health.
- Social distancing of at least three feet or more will be the standard.

- Frequent handwashing and healthy practices will be emphasized.
- Building sanitation practices continue.
- Testing results will be utilized as possible.

### **Vaccinations**

Vaccinations are available for all ages 5 and up. Vaccinations are not mandatory. But we urge you to speak with your pediatrician. Vaccinations are encouraged by the Catholic Church and have proven to be a valuable tool in fighting the virus. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/children-teens.html>

### **Remote/ Virtual Learning**

Moving to remote learning will be our very last resort. However, if that switch needs to be made, all of our schools have contingency plans. Every effort will be made to make a period of remote learning as brief as possible for the good of our families. Remote learning will be required if the allotted “calamity hours” are used up by the school.

Sincerely in Christ,

*Mary A. Fiala*

Mary Fiala  
Superintendent of Schools



Lighting the Way Forward.