

Principal Updates
Bridget B. Martin
January 4, 2022

Happy New Year! I hope each family had time to relax and enjoy one another during the Christmas break. The Christmas Season in the Catholic church offers some of my favorite feast days. Obviously, Christmas is special because God sent his son to us. Also, the feasts of the Holy Family and the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of Jesus are two of my favorite feast days. I truly hope your family was able to enjoy the Christmas season.

A new semester brings new adventures and a new start for each of us. This semester students will have the opportunity to participate in a number of special events. The last week of January our school will celebrate National Catholic Schools Week; during February we hope to have our Family Fun night; during March we will have our Mardi Gras parade, Ash Wednesday Mass, and spring break; during April we will celebrate Easter; and during May we will host our Fun Run, Olympic Day, and Kindergarten and 8th grade promotional ceremonies.

We are going to postpone Donuts with Dad until later in the semester. I will post a new date as soon as we have one. We would like to hold it in the spring so we can have it outside if we need to be in an outdoor environment.

Please read below for special announcements!

Happy New Year!
B. Martin

Updated guidelines from the diocese for covid protocols

I have attached a letter from the diocese as well as the updated guidelines for quarantine situations.

Students that have proof of vaccination on file in the office will not need to quarantine if they are exposed to covid. If you would like to go ahead and email me a picture of your child's vaccination card, we will file it in the office. This will help to know which students will need to quarantine in case of exposures.

Inclement Weather Announcements

Just a reminder, our best form of communication for inclement weather will be through FACTS phone call, texting and email. Please make certain all of your information is up-to-date in the FACTS family portal. The office cannot change your information. Each family must update their own information in their portal.

Warm Weather Dress this week

Thursday and Friday are forecasted to be very cold. It is important students bring coats to school. If there were an emergency situation and we needed to evacuate the building all students would need their coats.

Thursday and Friday students may be out of uniform to wear warm clothes. Please make certain students follow the out of uniform dress code. Students should not wear leggings unless their tops are knee length. Leggings with sweatshirts are not allowed. All students should wear tennis shoes.

Re-enrollment for the 2022-2023 school year

You should receive an email today regarding re-enrollment. Our current families have first priority to enroll for the 2022-2023 school year. You will be able to access enrollment forms by going to your FACTS family portal. Click on the apply/enroll tab then click on enrollment/reenrollment.

*If you have a new sibling attending next year, you will need to complete a new application on January 18. Please remember primary grades fill quickly. It is important even if you have emailed Mrs. Martin to complete the application.

Withdrawing for the 2022-2023 school year

If your family will not be returning for the 2022-2023 school year, please go into the enrollment/reenrollment tab in your family portal to click withdraw.

New Family Applications for the 2022-2023 school year

We will begin accepting new family applications on January 18. Current students not re-enrolled by January 18 will not have a guaranteed spot for the 2022-2023 school year. It is important to get re-enrolled prior to January 18.

Thank you PTO for our Red Fleece Jackets!

Our jackets are very nice this week with such cold weather!





OFFICE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION
CATHOLIC DIOCESE of JACKSON

December 31, 2021

Dear Catholic School Community Members:

The Office of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Jackson extends its most sincere wishes for a blessed and holy new year!

Once again, we face rising COVID case numbers and the highly contagious Omicron variant of the COVID-19 virus. We have consistently followed guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and our own Mississippi Department of Health, which we believe has kept our schools largely protected from disease outbreaks and school closures. To date, with a combined student and teacher population of 3,716, our schools have had a total of 208 cases (5.6% of the population) and four outbreaks, since the beginning of the school year. These remarkable statistics are due to the cooperation of our families, the committed work of administrators and pastors, and the guidance provided by the CDC and MSDH.

As stated many times before, we will continue to see a fluctuation in the case numbers until the pandemic is well behind us. We appreciate your continued support and understanding as we respond to this latest wave of COVID-19 cases. On Tuesday, January 4, 2022, we will temporarily return to Level 3 protocols for two weeks. Please note that we will continue to monitor cases in our schools and communities. Before the end of the two weeks, the local administrations will re-evaluate this decision and adjust their response accordingly. The leveled protocols published in October have been changed to reflect new quarantine guidelines issued by the CDC and supported by MSDH.

Currently, the CDC states that the best tools available to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and all its variants are:

- Vaccination, which is the best public health measure to protect people from COVID-19, slow the transmission, and it reduces the likelihood of new variants emerging,
- Masks, which offer protection against all variants,
- Testing, which can tell you if you are currently infected with COVID-19. If you are experiencing symptoms, please get tested.

If not yet vaccinated, please consider doing so.

We recognize that all may not agree with this action; however, we feel that this is the best way to ensure the health and safety of our students, staff, and community members. We appreciate your continued support and prayers, and we will provide updates as needed moving forward.

May the New Year bring Christ's love, peace, good health, and an end to this pandemic for all.
Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Karla Luke
Executive Director of School Operations

CC: Joseph R. Kopacz, Bishop of Jackson

Catholic Diocese of Jackson- Office of Education

Updated COVID-19 Protocols

Overview

The Office of Education and each of our schools continually monitor the status of the COVID-19 pandemic across our state. The following protocols have been created to easily adapt our school protocols as cases fluctuate in our communities. The levels indicated below will enable individual schools to pivot in response to the changing nature of the pandemic.

Over the last twenty-two months, we have witnessed that the virus's case numbers and community spread fluctuate. Therefore, as we monitor case numbers in our communities and schools, students and staff members may be asked to switch to different protocol levels. When a switch to a higher level occurs, it will be implemented for a minimum of two weeks and then reassessed.

Decisions to move between protocols will be made by each school's administration (principal and pastor/canonical administrator) in consultation with the Office of Catholic Education.

These protocols have been updated to reflect the latest guidance issued by the CDC regarding quarantines found [here](#).

Level 1 Protocols

- All faculty/ staff and students will be encouraged to wear masks indoors. Unvaccinated individuals are especially encouraged to wear masks. Masks may be required in certain classrooms or in other instances as determined by the teacher or administration.
- Reasonable efforts will be made to maintain a minimum of three feet between individuals. Common areas such as the cafeteria, specialized classrooms, and auditoriums may be used throughout the day as long as they are sanitized in between classes.
- Contact tracing will be conducted when a positive case is reported. Students or school personnel known to have been in close contact (less than three feet for more than fifteen minutes) with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 will:
 - If unvaccinated or partially vaccinated
 - Not attend school or activities for *five days after the last contact with the infected individual. Students who do not develop symptoms and receive a negative COVID-19 test result after day five may return to school. Please note positive antibody test results will not be accepted.
 - *The five day period is conditional upon having no symptoms AND wearing a mask for five days after returning to work or school.
 - If you develop symptoms, get tested, stay home and follow the guidelines for students/personnel that have been infected.
 - Individuals who have been fully vaccinated

- Individuals who have been infected with COVID-19 in the past 90 days or individuals who have been **fully vaccinated will not be required to quarantine, assuming no symptoms develop. It is suggested that you wear a mask for 10 days and get tested for COVID 5 days after exposure to confirm you are not infected.
- Fully vaccinated means you have received a COVID-19 booster dose or third dose, OR you have received both doses of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last six months, or a dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine within the last two months.
- School visitors are permitted at the principal's discretion.

Level 2 Protocols

- All faculty/ staff and students will implement modified mask protocols:
 - Elementary Schools/ Self-Contained Classes: Masks will be optional for staff and students when they are in their classroom with only their class. Masks should be worn when transitioning to other spaces or in other settings where classes and grade levels are mixed. Masks may be required in certain classrooms or in other instances as determined by the teacher or administration.
 - Middle & High School Classes: Masks will be optional in classrooms where physical distancing can occur but will be required in the hallways, during transitions, or when physical distancing is not possible.
- Reasonable efforts will be made to maintain a minimum of three feet between individuals. Common areas such as the cafeteria, specialized classrooms, and auditoriums may be used throughout the day so long as they are sanitized in between classes.
- Contact tracing will be conducted when a positive case is reported. Students or school personnel known to have been in close contact (less than three feet for more than fifteen minutes) with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 will:
 - If unvaccinated or partially vaccinated
 - Not attend school or activities for *five days after the last contact with the infected individual. Students who do not develop symptoms and receive a negative COVID-19 test result after day five may return to school. Please note positive antibody test results will not be accepted.
 - *The five day period is conditional upon having no symptoms AND wearing a mask for five days after returning to work or school.
 - If you develop symptoms, get tested, stay home and follow the guidelines for students/personnel that have been infected.
 - Individuals who have been fully vaccinated
 - Individuals who have been infected with COVID-19 in the past 90 days or individuals who have been **fully vaccinated will not be required to quarantine, assuming no symptoms develop. It is suggested that you wear a mask for 10 days and get tested for COVID 5 days after exposure to confirm you are not infected.
 - Fully vaccinated means you have received a COVID-19 booster dose or third dose, OR you have received both doses of Pfizer or Moderna

vaccine within the last six months, or a dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine within the last two months.

- School visitors are permitted at the principal's discretion. However, all visitors must wear masks when inside the school building.

Level 3 Protocols

- All faculty/ staff and students will be required to wear masks indoors regardless of vaccination status. However, individuals participating in outside activities will not be required to wear masks.
- Reasonable efforts will be made to maintain a minimum of three feet between individuals. Common areas such as the cafeteria, specialized classrooms, and auditoriums may be used throughout the day so long as they are sanitized in between classes.
- Contact tracing will be conducted when a positive case is reported. Students or school personnel known to have been in close contact (less than three feet for more than fifteen minutes) with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 will:
 - If unvaccinated or partially vaccinated
 - Not attend school or activities for *five days after the last contact with the infected individual. Students who do not develop symptoms and receive a negative COVID-19 test result after day five may return to school. Please note positive antibody test results will not be accepted.
 - *The five day period is conditional upon having no symptoms AND wearing a mask for five days after returning to work or school.
 - If you develop symptoms, get tested, stay home and follow the guidelines for students/personnel that have been infected.
 - Individuals who have been fully vaccinated
 - Individuals who have been infected with COVID-19 in the past 90 days or individuals who have been **fully vaccinated will not be required to quarantine, assuming no symptoms develop. It is suggested that you wear a mask for 10 days and get tested for COVID 5 days after exposure to confirm you are not infected.
 - Fully vaccinated means you have received a COVID-19 booster dose or third dose, OR you have received both doses of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last six months, or a dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine within the last two months.
- School visitors are permitted at the principal's discretion. However, all visitors must wear masks when inside the school building.

Level 4 Protocols

- All faculty/ staff and students will be required to wear masks indoors regardless of vaccination status. However, individuals participating in outside activities will not be required to wear masks.
- Classes will remain in cohorts at the elementary school level to minimize exposure and cross-contamination. When possible, shared spaces should not be used.

- Contact tracing will be conducted when a positive case is reported. Students or school personnel known to have been in close contact (less than three feet for more than fifteen minutes) with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 will:
 - If unvaccinated or partially vaccinated
 - Not attend school or activities for *five days after the last contact with the infected individual. Students who do not develop symptoms and receive a negative COVID-19 test result after day five may return to school. Please note positive antibody test results will not be accepted.
 - *The five day period is conditional upon having no symptoms AND wearing a mask for five days after returning to work or school.
 - If you develop symptoms, get tested, stay home and follow the guidelines for students/personnel that have been infected.
 - Vaccinated individuals will not be exempt from quarantine at this level.
- School visitors should be limited to essential personnel. In addition, all visitors must wear masks when inside the school building and limit their visit.
- Individuals who have traveled to areas deemed high-risk should quarantine per CDC guidelines.

Level 5 Protocols

- Distance learning will be implemented, and students will virtually attend classes until it is deemed safe to return to the campus setting. Please refer to your school's distance learning policies.

FOR THOSE WHO TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

Vaccination Status	If You Test Positive for COVID-19 (Isolate)	If You Were Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 (Quarantine)
Received a Booster OR Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months OR Completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months	Stay home for 5 days. If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you may return to work or school conditionally upon wearing a mask for an additional 5 days. If you have a fever, continue to stay home until fever-free without fever-reducing medication for at least 72 hours.	Wear a mask around others for 10 days. Test on day 5. If you develop symptoms get tested and isolate at home.
Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over 6 months ago and are not boosted OR Completed the primary series of J&J over 2 months ago and are not boosted OR Are unvaccinated	Stay home for 5 days. If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you may return to work or school conditionally upon wearing a mask for an additional 5 days. If you have a fever, continue to stay home until fever-free without fever-reducing medication for at least 72 hours	Quarantine at home for 5 days. You may return to work or school conditionally upon wearing a mask for an additional 5 days Test on day 5. If you develop symptoms get tested and isolate at home.

No matter the level of protocols in place, the following guidelines should always be followed:

Students or School Personnel who test positive for COVID-19 and are demonstrating symptoms will isolate at home and not return to school until:

- They have been fever-free without fever-reducing medication for at least 72 hours AND
- At least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Students or School Personnel who test positive for COVID-19 and are NOT demonstrating symptoms quarantine at home and not return to school until:

- At least five days have passed since the date of the positive COVID-19 test, assuming no subsequent symptoms have developed since the positive test result.

Other Instances of Quarantine:

- If a live-in family member of a student tests positive for COVID-19 and the infected individual cannot isolate from other family members, please get in touch with your principal to develop a plan of action regarding quarantine timelines.
- If a member of a student or staff member's immediate family is tested for COVID-19 and are awaiting test results, the student or staff member should not return to the school setting until:
 - a negative result is reported OR
 - a positive result is reported, and all guidelines for positive cases have been followed.

Glossary of Terms

Close Contact - Someone who was less than three feet away from infected person without a mask for a total of 15 minutes (in increments or total).

- **Exception:** In the K–12 indoor classroom setting or a structured outdoor setting where mask use can be observed (i.e., holding class outdoors with educator supervision), the close contact definition excludes students who were between 3 to 6 feet of an infected student if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time.

Exposure - Having come into contact with a person or contaminated material that can cause a particular health problem

Isolation - separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.

Quarantine - separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick..