



November 22, 2021

Dear St. Patrick Families:

We are grateful for a wonderful start to the school year for our community. Because of everyone's commitment to health and safety, our COVID numbers have remained low. The school has also continued to be intentional about offering a normal school setting. Our students have been able to experience sports, clubs, mass and an authentic and holistic classroom experience every day.

I am writing you to share recommendations sent to schools from the Diocese COVID Task Team ("Team"). The leaders who serve on the Team gathered to review the Diocese of Charlotte's Catholic Schools COVID protocols and COVID trends and impact across the Diocese. Included, are the Team's recommendations and how these recommendations will affect procedures at St. Patrick Catholic School.

Team Recommendation for the Diocese:

Masking Optional: *Schools in the Diocese are encouraged to move to masking optional by the return from Christmas break. Should your school reside in a county that already has masking optional in public settings, the school should implement masking optional effective immediately (if safe for the students not to wear a mask in other indoor settings, our schools should not be an exemption). For schools in Mecklenburg County, they will move to masking optional as soon as the county mandate - - which specifically calls out religious schools - - is lifted.*

St. Patrick Catholic School Change:

St. Patrick will automatically move to masking optional when Mecklenburg County lifts the county mandate that specifically calls out religious schools. St. Patrick will continue to support individual masking choices of all individuals once the mandate is lifted.



Team Recommendation for the Diocese:

Contact Tracing: *All schools will move to contact tracing measures that include only immediate contacts. This includes family members, carpool, and athletic activities that verify close contact. Students within the classroom will no longer be considered a close contact. Students will continue to be sent home should they be displaying symptoms after evaluation by the school nurse or professional on staff.*

St. Patrick Catholic School Change:

St. Patrick Catholic School will only contact trace a student's family members, carpool members, and any bus riders. We will no longer contract trace in the classroom. The school will continue to request and verify information from families of positive students about additional close contacts of any St. Patrick student outside of the normal school operations (sleepovers, etc.) during the infectious period.

St. Patrick Data:

- 56 St. Patrick students have been quarantined due to classroom exposure since August 2021, because through contact tracing it was determined that the positive member was on campus during a potentially infectious period.
 - Out of 56 students quarantined and tested, 4 people tested positive before his or her return to campus, all of which occurred in late August-early September.
 - The other 52 students tested negative for COVID, remaining healthy throughout the entire 14-day monitoring period.
 - The minimum quarantine of seven days automatically excludes students for at least five school days.
- Close contact with positive family members and/or through outside activities remains the leading indicator of spread.



- 24 students were quarantined due to exposure from family and/or outside activities.
- Of those students, 16 tested positive before his or her return to campus.

At this time, I am confident with the above described policy and procedure changes in relation to our recorded and analyzed school data. The Diocesan COVID Task Team review from all 19 schools found, “. . . there is little to no spread from classroom/quarantine students; and many families are doing a good job of identifying symptoms and ensuring their children stay home when sick.” I ask our families to continue monitoring symptoms in order to prevent sending any student with any illness to school.

St. Patrick Catholic School will continue to monitor and analyze data related to St. Patrick Catholic School and Task Team recommendations. Vaccines are now available to elementary-school-aged children for parents who choose. Please consider sending a copy of vaccinations to the school nurse to avoid having your student miss classroom instruction should they be identified for quarantine.

Please continue to pray for our school community.

God Bless,

Amy Tobergte