



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

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MR. MICHAEL J. DEEGAN, SUPERINTENDENT

October 30, 2020

Dear Catholic School Communities,

Catholic schools continue to operate safely and efficiently throughout the Archdiocese of New York thanks to the resolve and selfless dedication of our principals, teachers and families sharing this singular goal. Our school communities have faced obstacles in these past two months. Whether it has been a positive COVID test in a school community or an issue with technology or logistics, we have adapted and overcome these challenges together.

As the transmission rate of COVID-19 inches up around the metropolitan area, we must remain vigilant and faithful to the protocols in place for all our schools, beginning each morning with this recently revised daily [self-screening checklist](#), **including taking your child's temperature at home** before sending them to school on their cohort days. Please sign the new daily checklist and return to your school as soon as possible.

If you can answer YES to any of the checklist questions, your child may NOT enter the school building. You MUST contact a health professional for guidance and notify the school principal.

* In accordance with the [revised New York State Department of Health COVID-19 Toolkit](#), your child will need to receive a note of medical clearance and a negative PCR COVID test to return to school should they develop any symptoms or be sent home from school. **The Office of the Superintendent of Schools does not accept rapid tests for school return.**

Please note the New York State [travel advisory list](#) is constantly changing. We urge you to refer to the list when making travel plans and other decisions involving those states.

It is also critical to make the right decisions *away* from school. Almost without exception, every positive COVID case affecting one of our school communities was a result of activities, including contact sports, parties, travel, or all three after school or over the course of a weekend.

As life goes on and holidays like Halloween and Thanksgiving approach, we urge you to take account of numbers of people in attendance and space available for safe distancing. Perhaps adopt a group conscience for an exit strategy in situations where your family does not feel comfortable with the surroundings. We have all come too far to allow peer pressure or embarrassment to put ourselves or our schools at risk. For this weekend, please see [a very helpful graphic with useful tips for a safe Halloween](#).

Thank you for your partnership in managing the massive task of keeping our children and staffs safe and our schools open during this once in a lifetime global health crisis. As long as we have each other and acknowledge that God is with us every step of the way, we will see this pandemic through and one glorious day we will remove these masks, enjoy the smiles we miss so much and hopefully embrace one another in warm hugs of gratitude and relief. Until that day arrives, please wash your hands, wear a mask, and keep a safe distance from others.

Sincerely,

Mr. Michael J. Deegan
Superintendent of Schools
Archdiocese of New York