

August 12, 2021

Dear Students, Parents and Families,

I am hopeful that your summer has been enjoyable and that leisure activities with family and friends have been bountiful.

As we continue to plan for the 2021-22 school year, maintaining an open school with the least restrictive scenario is our focus while continuing to monitor COVID related issues and guidelines. We will provide updates as we receive additional information that proves relevant to our schools. That being said, we are confident that, based on our ability to provide families with school five days a week with in-person instruction last year will be the rule as we open the school year.

Below are the most recent updates on COVID related public health measures that represent the guiding documents in our planning for the reopening of our schools for the 2021-22 school year:

- Regarding NYS schools from the [Commissioner of Education](#), Mrs. Betty Rosa.
- Regarding COVID related public health measures, the New York State Education Department is recommending that school districts follow the CDC's guidance until further information and the [New York State Department of Health](#) (NYDOH).
- Regarding CDC's Updates: [CDC's Guidance for K-12 Schools](#).
- Regarding [NYSED guidelines](#):

Please see the basic guidelines for our own schools in the Diocese of Syracuse noting that, due to certain county wide DOH requirements or mandates, as well as certain social norms that may be present in your parish/school community, there may be slight variations or exceptions to these guidelines. We are recommending that you follow these guidelines unless permitted or directed by the social norms in your respective community.

1. Schools will be open to full participation and enrollment with a five day in-person educational setting. There will be no virtual option for students either as individuals or cohorts unless directed by the principal or mandated by county or state DOH due to transmission or infection rates requiring a remote option. [A virtual option will only be considered by the school due to a medical note due to student's or family member's existing medical condition(s)]
2. Regardless of vaccination status all students, staff, faculty, and visitors will be required to wear masks while in the school building and while riding school buses, during school hours.
3. Students will be required to maintain a distance of at least 3' from other students or individuals while inside the school building.

4. While outdoors, and while conducting outdoor activities, students and faculty, as well as other adults representing the school community, will not be required to wear masks while maintaining a distance of at least 3' from others.
5. Schools will not be required to conduct temperature checks or monitoring until or unless there is a known or suspected outbreak of a COVID related infection.
6. Students in athletics and performing arts students will follow Section III and IV student guidelines and NYSSMA guidelines that will be in concert with the local community and DOH guidelines.
7. Students should be placed in cohorts while in the school setting and when at all possible.
8. While eating snacks or lunch in the school setting (cafeteria or classroom), students should maintain a distance of at least 3' with a barrier (1 per every 2 students), or at least 6' without a barrier.
9. Visitors to the school will be allowed while following all masking and COVID guidelines established by the school. The number of visitors permitted in the school at any given time will not be more than 50% of the total students present. Outdoor events can be guided by a minimum distance of 3' per person.
10. Cleaning and disinfection of school premises should be maintained by treating common areas and touching surfaces per CDC guidelines.

Our goal for the 2021-22 school year is to stay open five days, full-time, in-person instruction, with all of our students and schools, for the entire school year. We believe we can do this safely. When necessary, COVID related public health measures will be implemented with this goal in mind.

We will share additional information regarding COVID related public health measures, as soon any updates become available.

Blessings to everyone for remaining safe and healthy while enjoying the summer.

Respectfully,

William W. Crist
Superintendent of Schools