



ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS

The Church in Central and Southern Indiana

May 30, 2020

Dear Parents, Faculty, Staff, and Students in the Catholic School Community of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis,

Does it feel like “summer break” to you? Though the 2019-2020 school year ended very differently than any of us imagined it would, it has been incredibly uplifting to witness the ways in which students, parents, teachers, school leaders, and pastors have stepped up to the challenges presented by COVID-19. It has been edifying to see the innovative ways teachers have connected with young people and brought the classroom experience alive through remote means. The multitude of ways students have demonstrated their faith is also a beautiful testament to the home-school connection. As we look ahead, the following “roadmap” is intended to provide parents, students, faculty, staff and parishioners a general perspective as to where we are today and the plan to reopen our Catholic school buildings for quality education and formation of the young people we serve.

The current plan begins with a focus on two key re-entry dates: July 1, 2020 (school buildings are scheduled to reopen per the Governor’s executive order) and August 5, 2020 (the first day on which several archdiocesan Catholic schools have scheduled instruction).* The goal is to start school within the buildings on time in August with all recommended health and safety actions in place. Because the health and well-being of our students, faculty and staff are at the core of every decision, the Office of Catholic Schools (OCS) has formed a task force with two sub-committees– one focused on elementary re-entry, and the other on secondary re-entry. The task force will attempt to address needs in five basic areas while preparing to share best practices and to clarify all state, local and diocesan directives as it relates to mitigating the spread of COVID-19. The five areas of need have been identified as:

- Logistics and planning (including all health/safety guidelines)
- Promoting Catholic identity in all places and spaces
- Creating and maintaining community
- Curriculum and instruction
- Technology support at home and at school

Given that our Catholic schools invest in the holistic development of young people – spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically – the ideal is to return to a shared space where there exists a genuine community of faith. Along with school administrators and the reopening task force, the OCS will continue to collaborate with key organizations to seek the

most up-to-date findings as well as best practices regarding COVID-19 and schools.[∨] Details of the plan(s) are forthcoming.

Preparations and directives will not be a one-size-fits-all approach for Catholic schools. Spanning across 13,000 square miles of our state and including rural, urban, and suburban Catholic schools throughout southern and central Indiana, we are called to understand and respond to the unique needs of each community. Additionally, we must consider the ranging factors that impact PK – 12 teaching and learning differently. With that said, the Office of Catholic Schools expects that schools will comply with a set of requirements (including the recently released CDC guidelines for schools) targeted at cleaning protocols, health checks, contact tracing, assessing risk, and implement social distancing strategies for gatherings, classrooms, and movement through the building.

Catholic schools will respond to this challenge and employ every measure we can to ensure the safety of our students, faculty and staff members. As we move through the summer months, updates on archdiocesan efforts to reopen school buildings for the start of the new school year will be provided. What a blessing it is to be a part of a Catholic community that makes God known, loved, and served!

May God bless you and keep you safe,



Superintendent of Catholic Schools
Archdiocese of Indianapolis

*Please note that this plan is subject to change, based on a resurgence of the pandemic and/or health restrictions determined by the local health department, CDC, city and state officials, and/or archdiocesan leadership.

[∨] The organizations with whom the Archdiocese's Office of Catholic Schools directly collaborate include: Archbishop Thompson and his leadership team, directors of archdiocesan secretariats, archdiocesan legal counsel, Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Commission (ACSC), Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), Indiana Nonpublic Education Association (INPEA), local educational leaders, National Catholic Education Association (NCEA), Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), Indiana Catholic School Consortium (ICSC), Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA), and health department officials.