

Dear School Pastors, Chaplains and Principals,

After discussion and a review of data and information regarding the escalation of the positivity and exposure rates for COVID19 in Illinois during the next few weeks, I have been directed as the Superintendent of Schools to share the following information with your school communities as approved by Most Rev. Daniel R. Jenky, CSC and Most Rev. Louis Tylka, Bishops of Peoria:

1. Effective Monday, November 16, 2020, the 42 elementary and secondary schools in the Catholic Diocese of Peoria will shut down and deliver instruction via remote learning only.
2. This entire system shut down will be through January 18, 2021 with a return to in-person or remote instruction on Tuesday, January 19, 2021.
3. While our school buildings are closed, principals should make arrangements to thoroughly disinfect and sanitize all areas within the schools.
4. Principals and teachers may be present in their offices and classrooms to facilitate remote-only instruction during the system shutdown.
5. While in the building, principals and teachers must observe all public health department mandates in order to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus including wearing masks at all times; washing hands frequently; checking temperatures throughout the day; and observing social distancing of more than 6 feet when interacting with other teachers in the building.
6. Preschool and prekindergarten classes will be delivered remotely; however, if parents/guardians choose to withdraw their child(ren) from these classes, tuition & fees may be refunded during this time of shutdown or applied as credit toward the individual family accounts until January 19, 2021 with the re-opening of our school buildings.
7. Principals will coordinate with their faculty and families and publish guidelines for the distribution of school computer laptops, grading, and assignments that must be picked up from and returned to the school. These individual school procedures and protocols should be published and shared with families as soon as possible.
8. As this is a system-wide shutdown, there will be no sporting or extracurricular events scheduled at the school. These activities may resume on January 19, 2021 following IESA and IHSA guidelines as approved by the Illinois Department of Public Health via the Office of the Governor.

The Bishops of Peoria and Office of Catholic Schools understand the many challenges that confront our school pastors, chaplains, principals, teachers, staffs, students and families with the issuance of this most recent guidance. However, the safety and health of our

school personnel and students is *first and foremost* what ultimately factors into this most difficult of decisions.

*“May the Lord bless you and keep you; may He make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; may He lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen.”*