



## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

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1011 FIRST AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022 PHONE (212) 371-1000 FAX: (212) 758-3018

MR. MICHAEL J. DEEGAN, SUPERINTENDENT

November 18, 2020

Dear Catholic Schools Families,

As you know, your school is one of a number of Catholic schools that currently finds itself in a New York State-designated yellow zone. As such, your school is required by the State to conduct bi-weekly testing of a random 20% sample of the in-person faculty, staff and students ages 5 and up to continue in-person instruction. The Health and Safety Task Force of the Office of the Superintendent of Schools has been planning for this process. We should all embrace this as the next indicated positive step to keep our buildings open and operating safely.

New York City is currently refusing to provide our schools with COVID-19 testing as they are required to do under the law. While we have called upon Mayor de Blasio to instruct schools chancellor Richard Carranza to follow the law, we are prepared to take the City to court to fight for the essential health and welfare services our schools are entitled to under the law. As that struggle for our rights unfolds, we have made arrangements to establish a testing infrastructure that will meet the requirements set forth by New York State as we are committed to keeping our students in school for in-person instruction.

Our Catholic school system has contracted with a highly-regarded, licensed organization, [SOMOS Community Care](#), to conduct the COVID-19 testing required to keep our schools open. Testing will take place in your school building, in a secure area to be designated solely for testing. Student cohorts will not mingle during the testing, and your child's privacy will be maintained throughout the process, following all HIPAA standards and protocols.

**There will be no out of pocket expense for you. Under the federal government's CARES Act, your medical insurance will cover this testing with zero co-payment. [Consent forms](#) will be provided to you. In order to quickly carry out the testing, easily and free, be sure to include your insurance information on that form. If you don't have insurance, your child is still eligible for testing at no cost to you.**

**Once again, if your child age 5 and up is to attend school in person, you must consent to testing your child. Children ages 5 and up who do not have consent will be required to transition to remote learning immediately for the rest of this quarter.** Your principal will contact you with details regarding your school's testing process, including the necessary forms, to make this a seamless process for your family.

This public health crisis has been a constant reminder that we are all part of something greater than ourselves. As members of the extended Catholic schools' family, it is our nature to unite in order to lift one another up and overcome challenges. At this moment, I have all the faith in the world that we will take a collective breath, understand what is needed to keep our schools open, and once again, move forward together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael J. Deegan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

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