



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

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MR. MICHAEL J. DEEGAN, SUPERINTENDENT

December 2020
Year of St. Joseph

Dear Catholic School Families:

Thanks to your advocacy, the leadership of Staten Island's elected officials, and the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools holding the government accountable, we have some positive developments to report with regard to testing regulations issued by the New York State Department of Health. While these regulations are subject to change, we wanted to provide this update.

1. Schools located in Orange Zones must test 20% of in-school populations on a monthly basis. The numbers tested will be proportionately spread across the month with 10% the maximum/minimum to be tested bi-weekly.
2. Schools located in Red Zones must test 30% of in-school populations on a monthly basis. The numbers tested will be proportionately spread across the month with 15% the maximum/minimum to be tested bi-weekly.
3. Now that the New York State Department of Health no longer requires a line list for the reporting of test results, parents may choose to have their children tested privately by their pediatrician. **This test MUST be a PCR Molecular Test and NOT A RAPID TEST. Any test other than a PCR test will NOT be accepted.** Printed results must contain the following information: your child's name, the date the test was given, the type of test and the result. Test results must be provided to the school within seven days from the date of specimen collection and specimen collection must not only be dated after a school community was found to be located within an Orange or Red Zone, but also after the parent has been notified that the student was randomly selected as part of 20% or 30% cohort. Tests administered prior to the random selection do not apply.
4. If selected, parents of all students in grades Pre-K through 8 must either submit a testing consent form, or notify the school that they will be tested privately.
5. At this time, Pre-K and Kindergarten students are still included in the directives from New York State Department of Health regarding testing for the in-school population for schools in Orange Zones and Red Zones. The NYS DOH frequently adjust guidance as they learn more about the spread of the virus. We are in touch with New York State and New York City on a consistent basis and will share all updates with parents.
6. Given the high number of asymptomatic positive tests, it is incumbent upon families to be responsible during the Christmas season and through the new year. If your family interacts with anyone outside your immediate household, it is **recommended** that all family members be tested approximately five days after that interaction. Students should also quarantine for 14 days before returning to school. We all have a moral obligation to protect those most vulnerable among us and to keep each other safe.
7. All families must re-sign and recommit to the daily screening checklist when they return to school on January 4th. **It is imperative that anyone experiencing any symptoms, including common illnesses such as a cold**

or stomach ache, stay home. While these minor illnesses are associated with the winter months, we have a collective responsibility to ensure we keep our extended school family safe.

8. An important update on the 14-day quarantine timeline: **Although the CDC announced an option for close contacts to reduce the length of time to quarantine, we must continue to comply with our local public health authorities. The New York State and New York City Health Departments, still require a 14-day quarantine period even with a negative test result. Archdiocesan schools have no authority over this timeline and legally must follow the directive.**

We remain totally committed to providing five-day in-person instruction. This can only happen with your help. The health and safety of our school communities is our number one priority. Information sharing is a key tool to meet that challenge. Our goal is to provide you with the latest guidance from federal, state, and local authorities in an expeditious manner.

Have a blessed Christmas season! We look forward to welcoming you back to school in January.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael J. Deegan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

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