



THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

May 27, 2021

Dear Families of the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Columbus,

Guidance from the CDC and from the State of Ohio has changed rapidly over the past few weeks. After consultation with Bishop Brennan, our parish Covid task force, the medical advisors to our Diocese, and our Covid task force for schools, the Diocese of Columbus has modified Covid guidance for school activities conducted during June (following the last day of school) and July of 2021.

This new guidance pertains to school-sanctioned summer activities only, such as camps, summer classes, athletic practices, and other enrichment activities. Reflecting the increase in the vaccinated population, the low risk of infection in children, and the rapidly falling case numbers in Ohio, these protocols are a shift toward a surveillance methodology, similar to what we use for other infectious diseases such as the flu.

Summer activities are distinctly different than educational activities during the school year. All summer programs are optional and participation is voluntary. Unlike during the school year, a nurse or medical professional is not required to be present or available.

The protocols outlined below require parents to keep sick children at home. Any student showing signs or symptoms related to Covid must not attend summer program activities. If a student or staff member tests positive for Covid, he/she must follow all recommendations of public health officials. A student or staff member may return to summer activities at the school 10 days from symptom onset or testing positive and 24 hours without fever and with improved symptoms.

The protocols are:

**Outdoor Activities**

Includes events, classes, programs, and activities that fully occur in outdoor spaces.

For these activities, no Covid protocols are required.

- Masks do not need to be worn.
- Social distancing is not required
- Enhanced cleaning of surfaces is not required

Frequent hand washing is essential. Schools will allow for thorough hand washing with soap and water throughout the duration of the event, program, or activity.

Self-monitoring must be conducted at home before attending the school program. If a student is ill or is showing any signs or symptoms associated with Covid, that student must stay home. Consultation with a doctor or medical professional or Covid testing is recommended.



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### **Indoor Activities**

For all indoor activities, the following protocols are in place:

- Social distancing is not required
- Enhanced cleaning of surfaces is not required
- Barriers / plastic shields / dividers are not required
- Masks:
  - o For ages 12 and up and fully vaccinated\* – masks are not required
  - o For ages 12 and up and not fully vaccinated\* – masks are encouraged but not required
  - o For ages 11 and under – masks are encouraged but not required

Frequent hand washing is essential. Schools will allow for thorough hand washing with soap and water throughout the duration of the event, program, or activity.

Self-monitoring must be conducted at home before attending the school program. If a student is ill or is showing any signs or symptoms associated with Covid, that student must stay home. Consultation with a doctor or medical professional or Covid testing is recommended.

\*- Fully vaccinated means vaccination series is complete  $\geq$  two weeks.

This guidance is in effect through July 31. Policies and procedures for the 2021-22 school year will be determined later this summer and communicated promptly to families. Should the Covid situation deteriorate in the state or within a school, stricter measures will be taken, up to and including cancellation of summer programming. Additionally, I'd like to remind you that Bishop Brennan continues to encourage those eligible to receive the Covid vaccination.

Thank you for doing your part and for your continued support of our Catholic school communities.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Adam J. Dufault  
Episcopal Moderator for Education  
Superintendent of Catholic Schools