



## BISHOP BARAGA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

August 27, 2021

Dear Bishop Baraga Families,

As we begin this new school year, I want to say thank you to all those whose efforts make our school possible. Thank you to God for his blessings. Thank you to our teachers and staff who work so hard to meet each student's needs. Thank you to parents and guardians who sacrifice to send their children to school. I am grateful for each one of you.

Although I would like to be able to get through this year without mentioning COVID 19, it is a reality we must be prepared for while attending school. I want to make sure we have a clear understanding of our COVID 19 policies and guidelines so I would like to review a few things.

First, when should you keep your children home from school? If your children have any symptoms of COVID 19, they should be kept home from school, even if those symptoms are mild. The symptoms include the following:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

It is important that you monitor your children and screen them before you send them to school. You should also keep your children home if you have been in close contact with someone outside of school who has tested positive for COVID 19. If you are unsure about whether or not to send your children to school, please email or call me. We want to err on the side of caution. Our goal is to limit any exposure to our students and staff.

Once someone becomes aware of a positive COVID 19 test, it is important that you notify the school as soon as possible. You may email or call me or Mrs. Steinbrecher. The Dickinson-Iron County Health Department begins contact tracing to determine if there are any close contacts that must be quarantined. Although the health department usually does the contact tracing, we are often able to react much faster than they are to limit any exposure or spread. We will contact you if your child is considered a close contact. At that point we will let you know the timeline for returning to school. The Health Department will also follow up with you.

If someone is a close contact, they must quarantine for 10 days before returning to school and then monitor for symptoms for an additional four days. Those who are fully vaccinated are not required to quarantine, although they should monitor for symptoms.

Once the school becomes aware of a staff member or student that has tested positive for COVID 19, we will notify you. We start first with contact tracing and then notifying those who are considered close contacts. Once we have done that, we notify the specific grade and the rest of the school. We do not wait for the Health Department to do this. We do this immediately when we become aware of a positive case. On that note, we have already had our first positive case of COVID 19. A student in our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom tested positive yesterday. This student was in school on Wednesday, but not for the rest of the week, therefore, the exposure happened on Wednesday. The parents notified the school, and because of that we were able to act quickly and minimize exposure. I have been in contact with the Dickinson-Iron Health Department, and we have followed all the protocols for contact tracing. Those who were identified as close contacts have been notified and are quarantined for 10 days from the time of exposure, which was Wednesday, August 25<sup>th</sup>.

Our goal this year is to ensure that our students are in school for face-to-face instruction as much as possible. We know that meeting student's educational, spiritual, and social needs happens best when they are in school. That is why it is so important that we all continue to self-monitor and follow the guidelines we have in place. I appreciate your patience and understanding.

Please contact me if you have any questions. I will also post this letter on SchoolSpeak. Please be assured of my prayers for you and your families.

God bless,  
Angela Oller