

Re: Co-Responsibility and Keeping In-School Learning Possible

Dear St. Monica Academy Families,

I am grateful for how quickly the community has adjusted to our new protocols for in-person learning. While these changes haven't been simple or easy, the extra efforts of students, faculty and staff have been noticed and appreciated. While there is much to applaud, we are redoubling our communication efforts around safety behaviors, especially social distancing during arrival/dismissal times and mask wearing. Additional positive behaviors are listed below.

Committing to Positive Behavior Outside of School

It has come to my attention that some students and families are not following safe social gathering guidelines outside of school, which will significantly limit our ability to offer in-person instruction. I know that it is difficult to monitor off-campus behavior of older adolescents and we all have a strong desire to congregate with friends having spent so much time apart; however, I am making a plea to all within our St. Monica Academy family to make responsible decisions outside of school. We need a concerted community response in order to keep everyone healthy.

We want students to experience in-person learning, but we can only do that by committing to safe personal behaviors outside of school. Here's what you can do to help:

- Follow the '5 Behaviors to Keep Us Safe' while away from school and avoid activities such as large gatherings and sharing meals with others outside of your household, which can jeopardize everything we all want for the school year.
- Do not send children to school if they are ill, exhibit any symptoms or if they have been exposed to the virus.
- Cooperate when Archdiocesan staff members ask for contact tracing information; an unwillingness to do so could lead to greater spread to other cohorts or the entire school.
- If you or anyone in your household has tested positive for COVID-19 or are awaiting results, please stay home and notify your principal's office immediately. You should also notify anyone with whom you have been in close contact ([see CDC's definition of exposure here](#)) outside of school and self-quarantine for 14 days.

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

5 BEHAVIORS TO KEEP US SAFE

As a member of our community, I will ...

1. Wear a mask
2. Keep my distance
3. Wash and sanitize my hands
4. Stay home if I am sick
5. Get tested if I exhibit symptoms

... because protecting others in our community is my responsibility, too.

Prepared and Ready for Positive Cases

With a current infection positivity rate of more than 5 percent across Chicagoland **we anticipate and are prepared for COVID-19 cases or exposures that occur in our school community.** A pillar of our plan is to respond swiftly with our state and local health departments-derived infection protocols to immediately isolate and reduce the spread of infection. There will be times when a cohort is quarantined; there will likely come a time when our entire school needs to transition to remote learning for a couple of weeks. While no one wants those scenarios, we are prepared for them. When they happen, they are not failures of the plan. Our commitment is to keep safety as our foremost priority and to be ready and flexible to continue educating our students without disruption.

The Archdiocese's COVID-19 Task Force, working with state and local health departments, are monitoring several key factors, such as infection rates, community spread, and positivity rates in our communities. Should there be a significant change in a combination of these factors that

necessitates a shift to full-time remote learning, our plan is flexible and provides for that for the well-being of our students, our families, and our staff.

And if and when a cohort or the entire school transitions to remote learning for any period, we will execute the protocols necessary to resume in-person instruction as soon as possible.

Update/Confirm Contact Information in Power School

Critical to our efforts is clear and swift communication. Please ensure your family's contact information is current in Power School so that we and the Archdiocese can communicate with you without delay.

This is an uncertain time for all of us, and we have a responsibility to do everything we can to keep our community safe – inside and outside of school. Our ability to maintain our collective well-being and provide in-person instruction is possible if we all accept our shared responsibility. I ask that you communicate your expectations to your family and reach out to me if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Raymond Coleman, Principal