



PITTSBURGH CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Catholic School Families,

I want to begin by thanking you for responding to our COVID-19 Educational Planning Parent Survey. Your responses were a welcomed and important planning component as we move forward in the process of planning for schools to reopen in the fall. The survey results revealed a wide and diverse range of opinions regarding the challenges we are confronted with as students and teachers return to our schools.

Like school planning teams throughout the country, our COVID-19 Educational Planning Team began its work immediately following the close of instruction for the 2019-20 school year. The initial working team is comprised of principals, regional administrators, and diocesan schools office representatives. This team has reviewed volumes of research from multiple experts while surveying teachers and parents. The result will be written guidelines which will be presented to parent/teacher focus groups, expert consultants, and diocesan officials for review and feedback.

The planning team is meeting throughout each week to focus on plans for the following possibilities:

1. Diocesan schools reopening with no restrictions
2. Diocesan school reopening with strict social distancing guidelines
3. Diocesan schools reopening in a hybrid mode with alternating days
4. Instruction for families seeking virtual instruction even if schools are reopened
5. Diocesan schools providing fully online instruction
6. Preparing for changing situations that could arise during the school year

There is no denying the uncertain nature of this situation. It is our intent to be as prepared as possible for whatever scenario we may encounter. Our top priority is the safe return of our students to their classrooms. In that spirit, we will be following the guidance and requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Office of the Governor, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

We received close to 4100 Parents Surveys with nearly 150 pages of comments. We are very grateful for the time and thoughtfulness that went into each survey response. The level of your commitment is evident as we read through your concerns and recommendations. The comments reveal a wide range of thoughts on how we should begin the school year, and a considerable number of comments regarding enrollment status of students dependent upon our conclusions.

Like all schools throughout the country, we are working diligently to start school as close to normal as we possibly can. As a faith community committed to our mission, we will follow the fluid nature of this virus and make recommendations that are based in faith, science, and expert consultation. You can expect to get continued updates in the weeks ahead as these plans continue to be developed. I know you may have many questions, and we are working to have a plan as quickly as due diligence allows.

We humbly ask for your prayers.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle A. Peduto". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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