



THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

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July 31, 2020

Dear Catholic School Families of the Diocese of Columbus,

Last Spring, the principals and teachers at each of the 53 Catholic schools within the Diocese of Columbus rose to the challenge of distance learning with speed, grace, and a genuine concern for doing what was best for our students. Our students were well-served and well-cared for through those days of uncertainty and physical separation. During the summer months, the same committed teams have worked tirelessly on developing local plans for school the 2020-21 academic year.

With schools serving 15 counties across central and southern Ohio, it was determined early in our planning process that a single, centralized plan for the Fall is not possible. Each school is developing a plan based on local conditions, including enrollment, building size, and local health department regulations. There are some common elements among all plans that are described in the Diocesan Re-Opening Task Force document, available on our website (<http://education.columbuscatholic.org>). These include research-based guidelines specifying social distancing of six feet, face coverings, enhanced cleaning and sanitation procedures, restrictive visitor policies, and new illness protocols. It also includes a tiered response plan with the ability to be ready for and to adeptly shift between each level:

- Tier 1 – Normal operations, face-to-face instruction with safety protocols.
- Tier 2 – Hybrid learning, with partial in-person and partial remote instruction.
- Tier 3 – Full distance learning, with all instruction provided in a digital format.

It is possible that schools across our Diocese may open differently, on different tiers or even moving between tiers during the year. Schools have been sharing their detailed plans with families and will continue to do so as we monitor the developing Covid-19 situation carefully and work with our state and local government partners.

While we are all deeply concerned about the health and safety of our students and staff, we are also concerned about the effects of continued separation of our community. Re-



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opening in the Fall is not a decision that we take lightly, and a final determination on what the Fall will look like at each school has not been made just yet. The Diocese of Columbus and our schools will do so in the near future as we gather information and data in the early weeks of August. School re-opening plans have been incorporated staggered and later start dates, many into September, for this reason.

Thank you for your continued support for our schools and commitment to Catholic education. Despite these uncertain times, our mission and dedication remain the same – providing an outstanding education and to forming disciples of Christ. We are communities anchored in prayer that will persevere through the upcoming challenges.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

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