



## DIOCESE OF TRENTON

*Department of Catholic Education*

---

July 13, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The beauty of the summer season is ours to be enjoyed. The bright sunshine, the cleansing rain, and the longer daylight hours afford time for personal renewal and time to enjoy the boundless energy of carefree children.

While the school year effectively came to a close in June, our principals, teachers, and staff have not experienced a defined “summer break” as planning unfolds with new regulations for the 2020-2021 school year.

An essential priority in the re-opening and return to brick and mortar school facilities is the health and safety of students, faculty and staff. Our schools have formed task forces and are utilizing a number of resources to create a detailed plan to re-open school buildings. Resources that contribute to the planning include guidance from Governor Murphy’s office, the CDC, the NJ Commissioner of Education, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the document from Loyola University, “Leading with Hope.”

As you can imagine, there is much detail, reflection, consideration, and unanticipated expense as health and safety aspects provide the focus for continued learning and growth for all students. Flexibility continues to be the mantra in creating this plan as changes are often revealed from key agencies on a day-by-day basis. With new information and guidance available, changes to the plan are anticipated. School officials are assessing the school’s readiness regarding technology and upgrades to school infrastructure as well as the need for additional devices and materials. Faculty members are engaged in continuous learning and professional development during the summer months. The goal is to deliver instruction to meet the needs of students whether in the traditional classroom setting or in a virtual reality should the effects of COVID-19 become more widespread and virulent.

Spirits remain high. Our administrators, faculty and staff are committed to provide an exceptional Catholic education for all students. They are committed and dedicated individuals and know the benefits of hard work to provide the best educational environment for your child(ren).



---

The return to school plan is expected to be available to you in the beginning weeks of August. Again, flexibility continues to be underscored as updates to the plan may be necessitated by ongoing guidance.

As you may be aware, I will retire on July 31, 2020. The incoming superintendent, Dr. Vincent DePaul Schmidt, looks forward to guiding our Catholic school communities into the future. Dr. Schmidt has served as the associate superintendent in the Archdiocese of Detroit, the Superintendent in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, West Virginia and most recently as an adjunct professor at Loyola Marymount University located in Los Angeles. I know you will provide a warm welcome and cooperative spirit to Dr. Schmidt as he comes to know the blessings that await discovery in the Diocese of Trenton.

It has been a pleasure to serve as Superintendent of Catholic Schools for eleven years and an honor to serve our Catholic schools on behalf of Bishop David O'Connell, C.M. I have been blessed to work with talented administrators and educators who provide leadership in our diocese. It was a delight to visit our Catholic schools on numerous occasions and observe the creativity and the talents of the students. They have been challenged to think deeply, to assess various perspectives, and to be guided by the tenets of our faith as they live lives based on integrity. I am proud that they will be our leaders in future years.

Thank you for choosing a Catholic school to educate your children. Our commitment continues to provide an exceptional Catholic educational experience to enrich the lives of our students. They have been prepared to be the leaders of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

*JoAnn Tier*

JoAnn Tier  
Superintendent of Catholic Schools

