

March 11, 2020

Dear Archdiocese of Dubuque School Families and Staff,

Concerns are increasing surrounding the spread of the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19. I want to assure you that the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools and local school leaders have been monitoring the situation diligently. We work in concert with local county health departments, the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the Iowa Department of Education (DE). The safety and welfare of the entire Archdiocesan school community is a very high priority.

What you can do now:

- Keep children home when they are sick. Students and adults who are ill and/or have a fever, especially with acute respiratory symptoms, should stay home.
- Teach your children to always cover their cough and sneezes with a tissue or elbow.
- Children and adults should wash their hands with soap and water (or use hand sanitizer) after they touch their face, use the restroom and before they eat.
- Children and adults should avoid touching their mouth and nose since that is how germs get into the body.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects. Enhance cleaning of high touch surfaces like door knobs, electronic devices and sink handles.
- Plan for when community spread occurs. Ensure you have a plan to designate a caregiver, such as a family member or neighbor, for a sick child(ren) if you can't stay home. Know your child's school plan to communicate with you when needed.

Local school ongoing actions:

- Enhance cleaning methods.
- Encourage more frequent hand washing.
- Expect that children and staff remain home when ill.
- Plan for possible disruption to the school calendar and activities.
- Prepare for alternative methods of teaching and learning in consultation with the DE guidelines as our Archdiocesan schools are accredited through the DE.

The Archdiocese of Dubuque has 50 school sites in 19 counties. Each school/geographic area will make decisions about possible closures, cancelling activities, and quarantine protocols in conjunction with specific guidance from their county health department and the Office of Catholic Schools. We want to assure families and staff that we are following the situation closely in every geographic area and will continue to provide local schools guidance when new information becomes available. For reference, the most up-to-date information about the COVID-19 can be found via the [Iowa Department of Public Health Coronavirus](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control Coronavirus](#).

Prayers for the health and wellness of our communities,



Kimberly Hermsen, Superintendent