



*Diocese of Knoxville Catholic Schools Preparing Scholars, Leaders, & Saints*

August 31, 2021

Dear Catholic School Families,

Thank you for your continued trust and partnership with our schools. Our ability to communicate, to make adjustments as needed, and to partner together as we continue to navigate through COVID-19 continues to be essential to our shared success and goal of keeping our children in school in healthy environments.

The purpose of this letter is to share with you an update concerning COVID-19 activity and its impact, and to communicate proactive adjustments to our mitigation strategies. Our total student population within the diocese is 3,379 students. As of today, there are 58 active positive cases (55 students and 3 faculty) with 144 students out due to quarantine in 9 out of our 10 schools. Since the beginning of the school year, we have tracked the COVID-19 cases and quarantine counts in each school and monitored the surrounding community. Based upon the increased contagion factor of the Delta variant, temporary changes are necessary to protect the ability of our students to learn on campus. Included with this letter is a letter from Bishop Stika instituting a temporary mask mandate for our Catholic schools effective **Tuesday, September 7, 2021** through **Friday, October 1, 2021**. We hope that these measures are temporary, and we will continue to reevaluate our protocols and make necessary adjustments.

We continue to pray for all those ill or suffering from the effects of COVID-19 and pray for an end to this pandemic. Thank you for your ongoing prayerful support and partnership in the education of your children. May God bless each of you!

In Christ,

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