The Department of Catholic Schools of the Diocese of San Angelo provides this “COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols” document for all Catholic schools within the Diocese of San Angelo for the 2021-2022 school year. Each school must ensure that the local level school plans and procedures are compliant with the diocesan requirements. The diocese will continue to monitor the public health situation to respond to any changes in the pandemic, government guidance, or mitigating factors.

As new health information is received, pastors and principals will be notified of updates, changes, deletions, suspensions, or discontinuance in part or in whole to these requirements at any time with or without notice.

We ask for your ongoing patience and partnership as we continue navigating the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Health Assessment/Screening:**
- All involved in the school must monitor their health for any COVID-19 symptoms. If any of the following new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19 should occur, the individual should stay home and seek medical help: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste, loss of smell, diarrhea, feeling feverish, having a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit, or known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Parents will review the health conditions of their children before the school day.

**Immunizations/Vaccinations:**
- All Catholic school students must be current on any immunizations required by civil authorities and the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department.
- COVID-19 vaccinations are encouraged but not required.
- All employees are encouraged to be vaccinated against COVID-19 both for their own health and for the health of those around them.

**Facemasks:**
- Under current conditions and capacities, facemasks are not required but are optional. If any person chooses to wear a facemask for his or her own personal reasons, their choice is to be respected and there is to be no mocking nor bullying for anyone who chooses to wear a facemask. The diocese will continue to monitor the public health situation, and respond to changes in the pandemic, government guidance, or other mitigating factors.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the coronavirus is spread mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets. The facemask acts as a barrier to prevent the droplets from traveling. Students and staff are still welcome to wear a mask if they wish to manage their own health care risk.
• Messages or images on facemasks must not be contrary to Catholic faith and morals. School administration has the final determination on acceptable facemasks.

Food:
• When food is served, it is suggested that it be pre-packaged in individual servings. If not, those who are serving food and those who are going through self-serve buffet lines must wear facemasks.

Quarantines/Isolations:
• In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to the school when all three of the following criteria are met: at least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications); and the individual has improvement in symptoms (for example, cough, shortness of breath); and at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

• In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and does not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, the individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to the school until the individual has completed the same three-step criteria listed above.

• If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to the school before completing the above self-isolation period, the individual must obtain a medical professional’s note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis. Do not allow an individual with known close contact to a person who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 to return to the school until the end of the 14-day self-quarantine period from the last date of exposure (with an exception granted for healthcare workers, critical infrastructure workers and those who have been fully vaccinated).

• An exposed person in isolation may return if they receive a second negative COVID-19 test after day 5 of isolation.

• The whole school campus may close down due to COVID-19 exposures. We will do our best to ensure a safe and healthy environment. If numerous cases appear in a single school resulting in the isolation of multiple classes/cohorts/pods, we may need to close the building(s) and transition all students to remote learning for a time (in consultation with the local health departments). Parents/Guardians will be updated regularly should that need arise.

• We are always striving for the goal of remaining on campus with our students. Safety and health, however, are our number one priority for our students, families, and staff. While we adhere to our plans as closely as possible, each case is handled based upon its unique circumstances. Aspects such as close contact, extended exposure time, and significant exposure area, are just a few of the items that are considered in the event of necessitating a quarantine of students and/or classrooms or an overall school. The schools shall notify parents immediately. It is important that we respect the privacy of the individual and not engage in any shaming, gossiping, or bullying of that person or their family. Instead, we pray for them.
Social/Physical Distancing:
- Out of charity for others, all are encouraged to maintain 3 feet of social distance. When this is not possible, they are encouraged to wear a facemask. All are to be respectful of those who choose to maintain social distancing.

Visitors in Diocesan Schools/Facilities:
- In the 2021-2022 school year, visitors will be permitted in schools. Visitors are expected to self-screen for symptoms of possible COVID-19. Facemasks will not be required for visitors. Visitors may wear a facemask if they are more comfortable doing so.

Field Trips:
- Day field trips will resume in 2021-2022.

Athletics and Activities:
- Athletics and activities will resume normal processes in 2021-2022 in partnership with governing bodies. The facemask protocols listed above also apply to athletics and activities.

Hand Hygiene:
- Hand hygiene is encouraged, such as upon arrival, after using the restroom, before meals, and throughout the day. Hand sanitizer shall be provided throughout campus buildings.

Sanitization:
- Touchpoints/high-touch areas (i.e., doorknobs, light switches, faucets, etc.) will continue to be disinfected throughout all buildings on a daily basis.
- Teachers and staff will continue to have access to disinfectant supplies, including sprays to clean high-touch areas regularly. Train personnel for sanitizing equipment and facilities.
- Health room supplies must include gloves, facemasks, and hand sanitizer.
- Shared items, such as athletic equipment and art supplies, must be sanitized regularly.
- School buses will be thoroughly cleaned after each use, focusing on high-touch surfaces such as seats, steering wheel, knobs and door handles. Provide hand sanitizers on the bus.
- Consult a list of COVID-19 resources and materials from the COVID-19 Coordinator of the Diocese of San Angelo (Deacon Marc Mata).

Ventilation:
- When possible, the circulation or exchange of outdoor air within buildings should be increased to assist in maintaining a safer environment.

School Masses:
- Follow the Diocese of San Angelo Protocols for Public Liturgies.

Sharing of Facilities:
When a school shares its classrooms and other parts of the facility with other parish programs, the school and parish leaders must plan together for building use, especially in areas of sanitizing the environment.