



July 27, 2021

Dear Diocese of Sacramento Catholic School Families,

As the new Executive Director of Catholic schools for the Diocese of Sacramento, I want to welcome you back to school and briefly share with you some important information as we venture into the 2021-2022 school year.

As a Catholic community we are rooted in mission, carrying out God's will. Our Catholic schools have never wavered in mission, regardless of the challenges presented. As we approach the new school year, our mission remains the same: serving our students and families and creating disciples of Jesus.

The [California Department of Public Health](#) (CDPH) recently released updated guidance for K-12 schools reflecting updates from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). There are several elements of the guidance that will immediately benefit our students. The two most restrictive prevention measures that were included in last year's guidance are no longer required: physical distancing and stable cohort scheduling. The elimination of these measures will allow us to continue to provide full-time in-person instruction for every student enrolled in our Catholic schools.

CDPH has also created new options that will reduce, and in some cases eliminate the need to quarantine following a close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. This will allow us to avoid sending full classrooms of students home for quarantine. With the elimination of these requirements, CDPH is relying on a multi-layered prevention strategy approach, including continued masking indoors. County health officials have confirmed that all schools must comply with the guidance for schools included in the State Public Health Officer Order of June 11, 2021, which derives its authority from Health and Safety Codes 120125, 120140, 120175, 120195 and 131080 and other applicable laws.

The State of California/county health departments have issued the following requirements:

- All K-12 students are required to wear a mask indoors.
- Adults in K-12 school settings are required to wear a mask when sharing indoor spaces with students.

- Masks are *optional outdoors* for all in K-12 school settings.
- Consistent with guidance from the 2020-21 school year, schools must develop and implement local protocols to enforce the mask requirements.

CDPH/county health departments have not given school districts nor private schools the discretion to make face coverings optional, or to create their own standard for enforcement. We are required to enforce this mandate, as we would with any law, regulation, or policy. Locations may enforce stricter standards, but not less. Our adherence to these same public safety measures allowed us a successful return to Catholic school campuses last year. The current mask requirement is supported by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#). Masks remain optional outdoors, and I encourage our school site principals to be creative with outdoor activities as often as possible.

In consultation with the other 11 dioceses in California, the Diocese of Sacramento remains committed to following the public health requirement to keep our schools open and serve our students and families. We will continue to work with the appropriate authorities and our private school advocates to monitor our state's guidance and I will keep you updated on any changes that impact our Catholic school operations.

The past 17 months have been challenging in different ways for everyone. Whether you're excited for the future, feeling overwhelmed by changes, frustrated from the challenges, trying to process loss, or a combination of all these things, I want to acknowledge your role in making it through a historic school year. Our Catholic school communities and staff members supported each other, went far above and beyond to learn new ways of doing things, and did everything possible to take care of our students and families. In mission, we did it together, and we will continue to prioritize the well-being of our students and staff.

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding. May our faithful God shine warmly on you and your families.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Perata'.

Katie Perata, Ed.D.  
Executive Director of Catholic Schools  
Diocese of Sacramento