DIOCESE *of* SACRAMENTO
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Notre Dame School

BLUEPRINT FOR FALL

2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

PROVIDING APPROPRIATE INTERVENTION AS COVID-19 MOVES FROM PANDEMIC TO ENDEMIC

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Sacramento

v3.0

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Faith + Community + Growth

INTRODUCTION

Our schools responded heroically to the challenge of Covid-19, keeping students on campus while taking significant steps to mitigate the disease's spread. Our safety plan is currently in its eleventh iteration since last July. This updated document aims to create an expectation of what the coming year holds. While we embrace a less restrictive environment, the safety and well being of our students and staff remain our top priority.

Our priorities remain:

1. **Safety:** Our overall risk has been reduced because adults have had the opportunity to be vaccinated and students are less susceptible and suffer fewer effects. Our students remain unvaccinated thus, we will continue to manage our risk.
    a. **Hygiene:** We will continue to emphasize robust hygienic practices.
    b. **Distance options:** We have launched our Catholic Online School, Blessed Sacrament Online Academy which allows any family who desires to continue with independent, distance learning the opportunity to do so. The distance school is a full-fledged online school independent of the local parish school. For more information please visit the website here: Blessed Sacrament Online Academy
2. **Presence:** Keeping school open daily. We do not want to burden parents with challenging schedules that prevent them from working a full workday - we want our students at school in-person.
3. **Growth:** Despite limitations, we want our children to continue their academic progress at grade level in their faith and all core academic standards.

We have written this document specifically for our school environments, and we expect it to evolve as the public health situation changes. The school principal will share any updated documents on the school website and through the school information system.

COVID-19 PREVENTION PROGRAM

Layers of Safety: Infection Mitigation Strategies

For the past year, we have offered a variety of mitigation strategies working in unison to reduce our risk of exposure and transmission of Covid-19 on campus. We have effectively applied all recommended strategies, as well as our own novel strategies (such as behavioral screening), at our schools this past year. As Covid-19 rates of spread increased, we layered on the strategies. As we move from pandemic to endemic, people get vaccinated or recover from infection, and Covid-19 wanes, it stands to reason that we can move to less-intrusive interventions.

The new CDPH Guidelines for the 2021-2022 School year affirm this approach and at the same time, allow for our school sites to have a less restrictive environment as we move forward.

Vaccination

CDPH strongly recommends that all persons eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccines receive them at the first opportunity.

All Catholic school employees who desired a Covid-19 vaccine have had access to one. Though we are not mandating vaccination, we will not make special accommodations for employees who choose not to receive them; in other words, this plan is predicated upon a vaccinated teaching force or society achieving herd immunity. Though we are not currently mandating vaccination for employees in the hope that we will reach herd immunity before that step is necessary, we will review this policy if faced with new mutations or other changes that may require a mandatory vaccination strategy.

In addition to vaccines required for school entry, CDPH strongly recommends that all students and staff be immunized each autumn against influenza unless contraindicated by personal medical conditions, to help:

- Protect the school community.
- Reduce demands on health care facilities.

- Decrease illnesses that cannot be readily distinguished from COVID- 19 and would therefore trigger extensive measures from the school and public health authorities.

Antigen Screening

- Our schools may require employees and students wishing to return to campus to undergo antigen screening at a place, time, and frequency as designated by the Catholic School Department, in collaboration with our advisors and county health departments.

Social Distancing

Recent evidence indicates that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented.

- We will continue to encourage outdoor play and activities (masks optional outdoors), and we will encourage all persons on campus to continue to practice social distancing
- Close contact interactions (to determine contact tracing) are considered less than 6ft and longer than a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
- We encourage the continued use of signage throughout campus to support social distancing and proper hygiene norms.

Classroom Plans

- Windows will be opened for proper ventilation.
- Students have their own supplies, water bottle, cleaning materials, and hand sanitizer.
- Shared spaces are cleaned regularly.
- Teachers will utilize outdoor space as much as possible.

Screening

- Students and staff must conduct a daily self-check and temperature check before they come to campus. Student temperatures need to remain below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit.

- School employees may all function as designated screeners for students and non-employees. The principal or school office staff may serve as screeners for faculty and staff if a third-party screener is required.
- During the day, any person experiencing or showing symptoms will report to the office for screening.
- If a staff member already at school shows symptoms described above, a supervisor will allow them to go home without penalty for that day.
- The school principal and/or contact tracers shall update the Catholic School Department Executive Assistant and the school's county department of public health every Monday morning regarding confirmed COVID-19 cases amongst staff and students from the previous week.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE is not a substitute for social distancing or proper handwashing. In addition to using PPE, please remember to:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 30 seconds. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

Face Coverings

We will continue to comply with CDPH and county guidelines on the use of face coverings. The CDPH order may be found HERE.

FACE COVERINGS FOR EMPLOYEES

- Adults in TK-12 school settings are required to mask when sharing indoor spaces with students.
- N-95 masks are more effective than cloth masks.
- Personal hygiene, social distancing, and frequent cleaning efforts are critical parts of employee protection.

FACE COVERINGS FOR STUDENTS

a. Masks are optional outdoors for all in K-12 school settings.

b. TK-12 students are required to mask indoors, with exemptions per CDPH face mask guidance.

c. Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge.

d. A face covering will be provided to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering to school to prevent unnecessary exclusions.

e. Students who refuse to wear a mask indoors will be isolated from other individuals, a parent/guardian will be called to pick up the student. The student may return once a proper face mask/cover is worn.

Staff Training and Family Education

Delivering Instruction

- Principals will present the plan to their communities and make themselves available for questioning.
- Teachers will provide initial and routine instruction in mitigation strategies and health practices to their students in keeping with all provisions of this protocol.
- Schools will inform the community of changes to this plan via their information system (School Speak) and post the updated plan or a link to the diocesan portal website on the school website.

Cleaning & Disinfection Routine

- We will continue to maintain a high level of hygiene on campus. Students will continue to routinely clean and disinfect their desks and materials.

Healthy Hygiene Practices

Reducing the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by proper personal hygiene practices and disinfection is a critical part of ensuring student and staff safety.

- Staff and families will be trained and educated in sanitation and hygiene instruction through training if needed and review of protocols.
- Cleaning hands at key times with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not readily available is essential.
- Build time into daily routines for students and staff to wash hands.
- Families will be constantly reminded to maintain hygiene and distancing when necessary at home and in the community.

Volunteer Protocols

According to the new CDPH Order found HERE, all volunteers who are on-site at a school campus supporting school functions must follow employee vaccination requirements.

> F. "Worker" refers to all paid and unpaid adults serving in the school settings described in Section I. Workers include, but are not limited to, certificated and classified staff, analogous staff working in private school settings, and volunteers who are on-site at a school campus supporting school functions.

Food

a. Maximize physical distance as much as possible while eating (especially indoors). Arrange for eating outdoors as much as feasible.

b. Clean frequently touched surfaces. Surfaces that come in contact with food should be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before and after meals.

c. Given very low risk of transmission from surfaces and shared objects, there is no need to limit food service approaches to single use items and packaged meals.

Travel Restrictions

Our focus will be on behaviors and not the act of travel itself. We reserve the right to ask community members to quarantine if they have traveled to regions which are documented hotspots, so please be prepared for a revisiting of this policy.

COVID Symptoms and Case Response

Definitions

A **close contact** is defined as a person who is less than 6 feet from a case for more than 15 minutes over a 24 hour period.

Contact Tracers

- The school has a designated employee who is a contact tracer whose name is on file with the Catholic School Department and County Health.

- Contact tracers must be trained either by the county within which the school resides or take one of the following courses on contact tracing:
    - Webinar-Based as recommended by the CDC: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/general-training-modules.html
    - Coursera Option: https://www.coursera.org/learn/contact-tracing-for-covid-19

Symptoms

Due to the contagious nature of COVID-19 and its variants the following symptoms must be taken seriously. Should any staff member or student feel ill for any reason we ask that they please stay home and get tested for COVID-19.

Students

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher;
- Sore throat;
- New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline);
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain;
- New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever.
- (If a student is exhibiting symptoms refer to student health history form)

Adults

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher;
- Chills;
- Cough;
- Shortness of breath/ difficulty breathing; Fatigue;
- Muscle or body aches;
- Headache;
- New loss of taste or smell;
- Sore throat;
- Congestion or runny nose;
- Nausea or vomiting; Diarrhea

Testing

- Any student or staff person with symptoms not explained by another non-infectious condition diagnosed by a medical professional needs to be tested for COVID-19.

- Per this directive, symptomatic individuals must be tested within 48 hours of symptom onset, and provide test results within 72 hours.
- If the medical provider for the individual with symptoms cannot guarantee a 72-hour turnaround in test results, the symptomatic individual must seek out a different lab.
- The school principal should be notified immediately of a positive or negative result.

Parents and students are responsible for the cost of their own testing, unless the school directs an entire cohort to get tested at a designated site.

Employee Testing

According to the CDPH Order found HERE all unvaccinated employees must be tested weekly and provide results to the principal beginning immediately. Weekly tests are tracked accordingly.

For local testing information, visit https://lhi.care/covidtesting

Quarantine and Isolation

Students and staff who test positive for the virus that causes COVID-19, take the following steps to protect others regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status: Isolate at home and isolate away from others for at least 10 days.

- If you do not have any symptoms, you should still isolate yourself at home for at least 10 days.
- If you develop symptoms, continue to isolate for at least 10 days after symptoms begin as long as symptoms have improved, and no fever is present for at least 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications.
- Most people have mild COVID-19 illness and can recover at home without medical care.
- Contact your healthcare provider as soon as possible if you are more likely to get very sick because of being an older adult or having underlying medical conditions or if your symptoms get worse.

A close contact is defined as someone within 6ft of a COVID positive person for more than 15 minutes over a 24 hr period (indoors or outdoors.)

- **Close Contact At School: ADULT**

- Any adult who is not vaccinated and has been exposed at school to a COVID positive person, must quarantine for 10 days. Adults are not eligible for modified quarantine.
- Any adult who is vaccinated and not symptomatic may return to campus. COVID testing is recommended.
- Any adult who is vaccinated and symptomatic must get COVID tested. If positive, quarantine for 10 days from symptom onset.

- **Close Contact At School: STUDENT**
  - If the exposed student and the COVID positive student were both wearing masks during the exposure, the student must do one of the following:
    1. Modified quarantine
    2. Quarantine

    May end either quarantine after Day 7 if a negative test is collected after Day 5 of exposure.
- **Close Contact Outside of School**
  - If the student or staff member lives with the person who has COVID
    - Test for COVID. Quarantine for ten days. Not eligible for modified quarantine.
  - If the student or staff member does not live with the person who has COVID
    - If vaccinated with no symptoms, may return to campus.
    - If vaccinated with symptoms, test for COVID. Quarantine for ten days from symptom onset. Not eligible for modified quarantine
    - If not vaccinated, quarantine for 10 days from last exposure. Test for COVID. Not eligible for modified quarantine. May end quarantine after Day 7 if a negative test that was taken after Day 5 post-exposure. If ongoing exposure is occurring in the home, the quarantine period may need to be extended.
- **Modified Quarantine**
  - Remember that modified quarantine is a new exemption to full quarantine that allows students who would otherwise be in full quarantine to attend class if their exposure was mask-on-mask in a school setting. Modified quarantine is only allowed for students, not adults. To participate in modified quarantine, students must:
    - Be asymptomatic;
    - Continue to appropriately mask, as required; students with a medical exemption preventing the wearing of face coverings do not qualify for a modified quarantine.
    - Undergo at least twice a week testing during the 10-day quarantine
    - Continue to quarantine for all extracurricular activities at school, including sports, and activities within the community setting.

- Students unwilling or unable to meet all of these conditions must complete full quarantine (which means school work will be provided to them during this time.)
- A principal may choose to require a quarantine instead of a modified quarantine, but must have this option documented in the school's Blueprint for Fall.

Additional Details

Virtual Academy

The Diocese of Sacramento will offer a dedicated virtual academy for any family opting for remote learning for their student. Our traditional parochial elementary schools will not offer dual delivery of instruction (ie, in-person and online simultaneously) and instead will focus on in-person instruction. Information can be found here: https://www.scd.org/schools/online

Distance Learning

If a grade level group (entire class) must quarantine for a period of time, we will transition to distance learning as in the 2020-21 school year until quarantine is over.

School Closure and Subsequent Reopening: The Catholic School Department, in consultation with Public Health, will determine if a partial or full school closure is needed based on guidance and recommendations from CDPH. Both the school and the county must meet current state guidance to reopen.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

The safety of our employees and students is our first priority. Upon reopening, our schools have been completely cleaned and disinfected, and we will continue to adhere to all necessary safety precautions. In addition, the process outlined below will routinely serve to protect everyone and reduce the risk of spread of infection.

- Custodial staff and any other workers who clean and disinfect the school site must be equipped with proper personal protective equipment, including gloves, eye protection, respiratory protection, and other appropriate protective equipment as required by the product instructions. All products must be kept out of the reach of children and stored in a space with restricted access.
- Establish a cleaning schedule in order to avoid both under- and over-use of cleaning products.

- Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectant and keep products away from students.
- Ensure proper ventilation during cleaning and disinfecting. Introduce fresh outdoor air as much as possible for example by opening windows where practicable.