

Dear School Families,

We hope you are having a wonderful summer break! We look forward to returning to school full-time, five days a week beginning Tuesday, August 31st. I know that with the constant barrage of news regarding the "Delta Variant" we are experiencing an uptick in concern. We will continue to monitor and utilize all our safety protocols that allowed us to:

1. Keep our teachers safe and healthy.
2. Keep our students and families safe and healthy.
3. Stay open all year.

We wanted to update our families on our ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic and plans for the new school year. Over the summer, we have been monitoring the Washington state Department of Health (DOH) and Labor and Industries (L&I) guidance updates related to COVID-19. Like last year and consistent with the Governor's most recent [proclamation](#), we will continue to follow the DOH [guidance](#). The most recent guidance gives us complete confidence that we will be returning in-person on a full schedule this fall.

Face Coverings and Masks

All staff, students and visitors must continue to wear face coverings/masks indoors. Students may remove face coverings to eat and drink, and when they are outside. (This is currently being discussed and defined for our students. Students wishing to wear masks outside, will be allowed and encouraged to do so out of an over-abundance of caution.) As Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal made clear in a [statement](#) recently, wearing masks in school is not a local decision, it is a state mandated requirement, regardless of vaccination status.

Other Mitigation Strategies

Along with wearing face coverings/masks, the DOH guidance includes layered mitigation strategies of physical distancing, improving ventilation, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfecting, staying home when sick and seeking evaluation, including testing as indicated, contact tracing in combination with quarantine and isolation, responding to cases of COVID-19, and meeting the reporting requirements to public health.

Please use the following links to access the most recent guidance documents: [K-12 WA DOH Guidance from July 28](#), [L&I Requirements and Guidance for Preventing COVID-19 from June 30](#), and the [WA DOH K-12 Sports Document](#). Additional updates to guidance and requirements for extra and co-curricular activities are forthcoming. When reading this guidance, please be aware that it will likely change many times throughout the year.

Quarantine Expectations

The most impactful change for staff and students alike this summer is that fully vaccinated persons who are determined to be close contacts of someone with COVID-19 are no longer required to quarantine so long as they remain symptom-free. However, with the highly transmissible Delta variant present in the region, any student, teacher, or staff who reports COVID-19-like symptoms at school will be immediately isolated from others and sent home and referred to diagnostic testing as soon as feasible. If a person tests positive for COVID-19, they may not return to school for 10 days after symptom onset, or 10 days after a positive test if no symptoms are present.

Vaccinations

The guidance directs school districts to verify student and staff COVID-19 vaccinations. Vaccinations are not required for students or Archdiocesan employees.

We still do not know when kids under 12 will be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. For the latest updates, please visit Public Health's [COVID-19 Vaccination for Children and Teens webpage](#).

We will continue to update families on any changes in the guidance from the state.

Sincerely,

Carissa Talley
Principal