



Catholic Schools Office Diocese of Birmingham

2121 3rd Avenue North Birmingham, AL 35203 • (205) 838-8303

July 29, 2021

Dear Families of the Catholic Diocese of Birmingham Schools,

In spring and early summer of this year, with vaccination opportunities increasing and Covid cases dwindling, we had hoped that we could begin our school year without the need for mask requirements. Unfortunately, as you know, the situation state-wide is now drastically different due to the spread of the highly contagious Delta variant. Almost all our schools are in counties categorized as “very high” risk for transmission.

Our Covid guidelines for 2021-22 are written so that we can fluidly adapt to changing circumstances such as those we are now seeing. Within those guidelines, we now will require masks for all students (age 3 and up) and all staff for the first month of school. After Labor Day, we will evaluate the situation using criteria that has guided our decisions throughout this pandemic: the state-wide case count, the county and state risk levels, the circumstances that occur within our schools, and data reflecting the current impact of Delta (and any other relevant variants at that time) on children and on vaccinated individuals. To see more specific information about these criteria, please click [here](#).

Throughout all of this, we have looked to expert health organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, the CDC, and Alabama Department of Public Health, data, and medical professionals, as well as serious time in prayer, reflection, and collaborative consultation about the many levels of impact each decision has. This approach has served us well throughout this pandemic: our students have not missed any instruction since reopening, we have had no serious cases of Covid in our students or our staff and no in-school spread. Other schools and districts that have not taken a data-based approach and guidance from expert health organizations have not seen the same success.

Our students and our staff have been able to learn, pray, and grow together in person throughout this past school year through diligent adherence to our prevention, protection, and preparedness protocols. We must and will continue that level of commitment moving forward.

Thank you for your continued support of our schools and for your prayers as we make decisions to ensure the safest start to our school year. I will continue to keep you updated throughout this school year through email and video formats as we work together to have another happy, healthy year in our schools.

Sincerely,

Margaret Dubose
Director of Catholic Schools

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