



St. Peter Catholic School
(A Mission of the Transfiguration of the Lord Catholic Church)
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St. Peter School Families,

September, 2021

We know the past few weeks have been uncomfortable, stressful, and tenuous for many of our families. We also understand the strong sentiments surrounding the subject of masking and we genuinely appreciate and respect the opinions of every one of our families. The decision to switch to temporary student masking was not an easy decision and we know it was an unpopular one for many however, it was made with the best educational intentions of our students in mind. As mentioned previously, we have evaluated the current COVID situation and after reviewing the local health department data and examining our own situation in terms of student and staff quarantines/positive cases, we have decided to rescind our temporary mask mandate and return to optional student masking at this time.

It is important that any decisions being made have tangible criteria and endpoints and we have reached that endpoint based on the best available data. Over the past few weeks we have developed a set of metrics that will help us determine when/if we need to return to student masking in the future and we want to share those with you in order to be transparent. We have established a school-wide threshold of student absenteeism and/or staff absenteeism that would require us to return to student masking. We believe these thresholds, if met, would greatly diminish our ability to offer quality in-person instruction and would require us to return to masking. The absenteeism threshold for students is 30% or approximately 38 students and 20% absenteeism or approximately three teaching staff members. In addition, we have revived and revamped our remote learning platform in order to serve any students who are forced to remain at home due to medical quarantine. Please note that this remote learning platform is for quarantined students **ONLY**. Please also note that quarantine rules are still in place which means that any students who are exposed and were not wearing masks will be required to quarantine for a specified period of time.

Ultimately, it is difficult to sustain a masking policy in school when there is no current policy mandating masking outside of school. Additionally, there will always be large gatherings that could potentially expose students and families to COVID-19 so being selective about masking is not a viable option. We will continue to monitor this situation and continue to adapt to what comes next. We want to continue to urge our families to practice the following safety measures at home to ensure everyone is avoiding unnecessary exposure.

1. We are asking that families continue to keep their child(ren) home if they are not feeling well. It is easier to make up a few days of school work than to potentially endure weeks of remote learning.
2. We encourage you to continue to help your child(ren) practice good hygiene at home so that they can remain healthy as possible.
3. Try to avoid situations outside of school that could result in potential exposure that would result in quarantine.

Again, we want to thank you for your continued support and patience during these tough times. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask.

With God's Blessings,
Mr. Blake England
Principal
St. Peter Catholic School