



THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

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March 11, 2020

Dear Catholic School Families,

As you are no doubt aware, the State of Ohio has reported its first cases of the corona/COVID-19 virus, with reports of infection in Cuyahoga County. I reach out to you today to provide you with an update of how our schools plan to move forward in the wake of growing concerns about COVID-19, and what we all need to consider to remain healthy.

First, I wish to assure you that the Diocese of Columbus, the Office of Catholic Schools, and your local school is deeply concerned with the health and safety of everyone within our communities. We have and will continue to follow this evolving situation and consult and follow the directives of local health authorities. Our schools already have state-required action plans in place for illnesses, such as influenza; these plans are being modified and utilized to meet the challenges presented by COVID-19, including ongoing school disinfection efforts by school custodial staffs. Moving forward, both the Office of Catholic Schools and your local school will keep you updated as both this situation and our plans to lessen its impact evolve.

At this time, no plans have been made to cancel school. With this in mind, we encourage students and staff to take the following actions to keep everyone safe:

- If feeling ill, please stay home and seek appropriate medical care;
- Make sure to wash hands frequently and make use of hand sanitizers;
- Try not to touch your face, especially your eyes and nose;
- Use tissues or, if necessary, your sleeve if coughing or sneezing.
- If your family does travel, remember you must comply with CDC and Customs travel guidelines and advisories that may require you to be quarantined for a period of time. If students or their family members are quarantined, they may not attend school.

While currently there is no information indicating that suspending school is necessary, plans are being developed for this possibility. Actions being undertaken also include:

- Plans to provide off-site, digital instruction to students, either in the event of a school closure or the quarantine of individual students;
- Review of all domestic field trips, both foreign and domestic, to determine the risk of exposure to COVID-19;



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- Implementing a method to voluntarily catalog personal trips by students and families to determine the risk of exposure;
- Coordinating information and sharing resources with schools.

As a community of faith, we pray that these plans will prove unnecessary and concerns about this virus will lessen. But I assure you we will all continue to act with an abundance of caution to protect the health and safety of our students, parents, staff, and all whom we come in contact. We also ask your prayers for those who are already impacted by this virus; those who may become infected, especially those at most risk; and for the dedication and skill of all of our health professionals working to keep us safe.

I thank you for your support, patience, and prayers and we work to address your concerns. Only by working together, in prayer and faith, we can all remain both vigilant and healthy during this challenging and uncertain time.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Adam J. Dufault  
Episcopal Moderator for Education  
Superintendent of Catholic Schools