

## DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE

# FAITHFULLY FORWARD



## SAFE RETURN TO SCHOOL 2021 - 2022





# SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Families and Friends of our Diocese of Charlotte Catholic Schools:

Last year, we demonstrated how we were *Safer* and *Stronger* by working *Together*. All schools provided evidence for little to no spread throughout their communities. When tracing COVID cases, almost all of them originated outside our school campuses. All schools sustained in-person learning, most without a single shift on the learning continuum. Additional successes are apparent through our summer camp programs operating for two consecutive summers without a single COVID case. It truly was a team effort.

This year, working together as parents, school leaders, teachers, and students, we will continue to prioritize the safety of our school communities. The consistent validation we have received from school data and education and health professionals reinforces that our guidelines and protocols, outlined in the following pages, are appropriate and correct for the mission and needs of our schools. The protocols prioritize safety while supporting our goal to provide as normal a learning environment as possible.

As we move through the school year, we will continue to monitor the pandemic and use objective data to make decisions that support a safe and conducive learning environment for those we serve. The pandemic continues to affect populations throughout our community and beyond. We must remember that our decisions individually and collectively should focus on fulfilling our mission. Meeting our students' holistic learning needs, so that they may answer their calling to be intentional disciples of Christ, is our responsibility. We appreciate your trust and partnership this past year and look forward to walking Faithfully Forward with you in 2021-2022. May God bless you and your family.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dr. Gregory Monroe".

**DR. GREGORY MONROE**

*Superintendent of Catholic Schools - Diocese of Charlotte*

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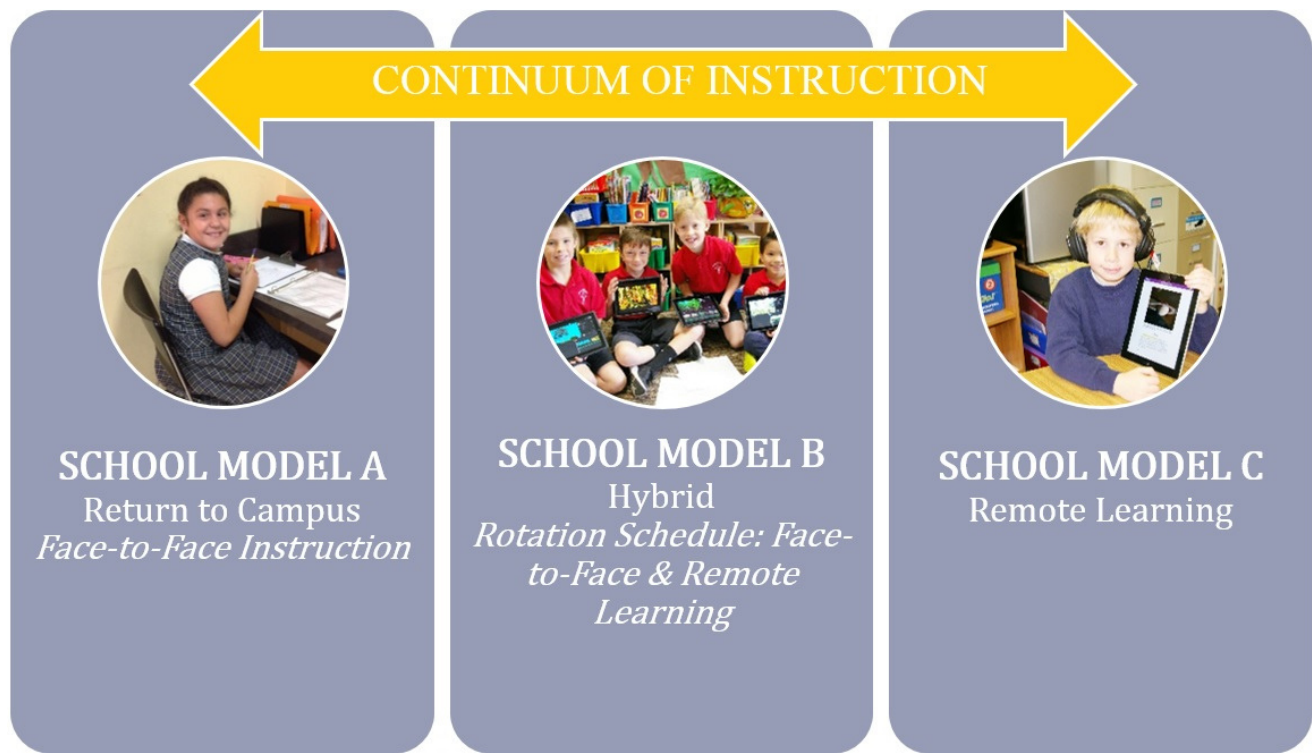
## COVID 2021-22 PROTOCOLS

**Students in School:** All schools will welcome students back for in-person instruction. We continue to prioritize in-person learning knowing this is the optimal environment for our students' holistic development. Sustained virtual learning options for individual families may not be available at most of our school communities, although our schools will be ready to temporarily shift to virtual instruction should the need arise. Should your family require a special accommodation, you should reach out to your local school administration.

**School Environment:** In the spring of 2021 schools began the return to our warm and inviting classrooms free of signage and barriers. This year hallways will once again showcase student work and art samples. No directional arrows or space markings will be visible. A safe and welcoming environment allows students to thrive.

### LEARNING CONTINUUM

The diocese will continue to monitor the pandemic and respond to the individual needs of our school communities. Our learning continuum will remain in place for the 2021-2022 school year. A decision to move from one model of instruction to another will be made in consultation with the local school administration and the CSO.



# FAITHFULLY FORWARD

## COVID 2021-22 PROTOCOLS

### *Gatherings*



#### **Mass, Large Gatherings, Field Trips, Sports**

All schools welcomed the opportunity to join as one community of Faith celebrating Mass in the spring of 2021. Field trips, sporting events, large gatherings for end-of-year celebrations and graduations enriched our sense of community without resulting in spread. All schools will offer the opportunity for Mass, field trips, sports (if available) and community gatherings with the outlined protocols from this document in place.



### *Cleaning*

In the spring of 2021 schools returned to normal routines for cleaning and disinfecting measures as updated guidance was released. Schools will return with standard cleaning and disinfecting protocols in place maintaining our safe environments.

### *Transportation*



Transportation, where available, will continue for the 2021-2022 school year. Buses will run at normal capacity with increased cleaning measures in place. Buses will have assigned seating with siblings paired together. Face coverings or masks are optional for bus riders and drivers.

### *Volunteers*



Volunteers were welcomed back to our school communities in the spring of last year. We are grateful to have strong supporters who make a large impact on our daily school operations. Please contact your local school to learn more about how you can volunteer in your school community.

### *Stay Home*



In partnership with our families, our schools were successful in providing in-person instruction for the 2020-2021 school year. If a student or staff member is not feeling well, you are encouraged to stay home. Please communicate with your school regarding any health updates. Should a student be required to stay out for an extended period due to health reasons, opportunities to continue learning may be available based upon school capabilities.



### *Face Coverings*

Face coverings are optional for students, staff and visitors on our school campuses. Please be respectful of others' decisions whether or not to wear a face covering.

### *Health & Handwashing Training*

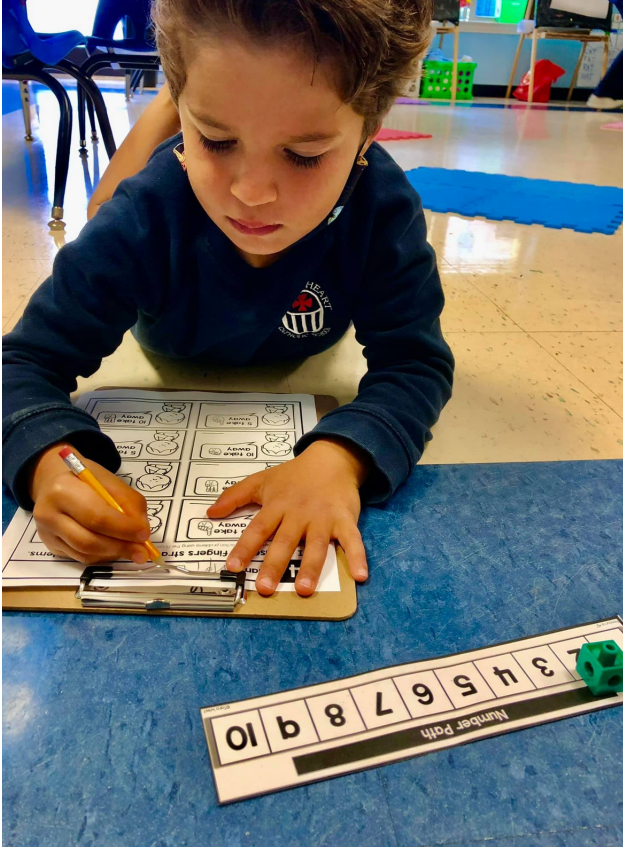


Prioritizing health trainings with our staff and handwashing with our school communities contributed to the success of our 2020-2021 school year. Routine and proper handwashing can significantly reduce the spread of germs. Schools will continue to provide handwashing opportunities to all students and staff throughout the day. Please reinforce handwashing practices at home.



## WHAT WILL THE RESPONSE BE FOR A POSITIVE COVID CASE WITHIN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY?

If a member of the school community tests positive for COVID, they must contact the school administration/nurse immediately. If contact tracing is necessary, the administration/nurse will communicate with the appropriate individuals, including the local health department. COVID cases will not be reported within school communities to protect the privacy of those affected.



## WHAT IS THE PROTOCOL FOR CONTACT TRACING ON CAMPUS?

In the spring of 2021 we decreased both our social distancing and contact tracing measures to 3 feet. Data collected diocesan wide during the implementation of this change has shown that no additional spread resulted in our school communities. Our protocol for contact tracing for the 2021-2022 school year will include siblings, carpool members and those identified as a direct contact (within 3 feet for 15 minutes or longer) with a positive case.