

Dear Bishop McGuinness Students and Parents -

A huge thank you to all the members of our community for making the first week of school such a success. As we begin week two, I wanted to send an update and a few reminders related to *Faithfully Forward*. I appreciate the ongoing feedback from students and parents and acknowledge the varying opinions on the Diocesan mask optional policy for high schools. The Catholic Schools Office continues to review our data to ascertain the effectiveness of our protocols and safety of our campus. We appreciate everyone's patience and understanding as we work to fulfill our mission focused on the formation of our students.

We have had several confirmed cases of COVID-19 among members of our school community. Per our contact tracing protocols, there is no evidence to suggest that any of those cases originated on campus or at a school event. However, out of an abundance of caution, **we are altering our face covering protocols to require the use of a mask indoors for students, faculty, staff, and visitors beginning tomorrow, August 25.** Students and staff members who wish to be exempt from wearing a mask must complete the exemption form required by the Diocese which can be accessed in the Family Portal. The exemption policy will remain in effect at the discretion of the school administration and the Catholic Schools Office.

Below are some important reminders related to quarantine protocols:

- Individuals identified as having been in contact with an infected individual are required to quarantine for 7 or 10 days, depending on whether they elect to provide a negative Covid test on or after Day 5. If the test is negative, they may return on day 8 and continue to monitor symptoms until day 14. If they are symptom free, individuals must stay home for 10 days and return to school on day 11.
- Any individual who provides proof of vaccination OR has recovered from Covid in the last 90 days is exempt from the quarantine requirement but is required to wear a mask for 14 days (or after they submit a negative COVID test on or after Day 5). Additionally, any individual who is wearing a mask when exposed to an infected individual is also exempt from the required quarantine but must continue to monitor symptoms.
- If a student is not in school due to either a positive test or quarantine requirement, students and teachers each have a responsibility to be in communication with the other about instructional and learning expectations. Teachers have the option of either "Zooming" their class or

providing other means of direct instruction (such as before school, during lunch/planning, or after school). Teachers and students should be in communication each day of exclusion. Please be sure to check the Family Portal for daily lesson information.

As we move forward in the coming days and weeks, a decision to transition to a different, primary method of instruction will be made based on data indicating community transmission on campus and/or a substantial increase in the number of individuals quarantined. Please remember it is important that students, faculty, staff, and visitors refrain from coming to campus when presented with any symptoms associated with the COVID virus. We continue to encourage frequent hand washing and covering of the mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.

Thank you for partnering with us and working together to sustain a safe learning environment that meets all of our students needs at Bishop.

Under the Mercy,

Dr. Jared M. Rashford