

Dear St. Eugene's Families,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year at St. Eugene's Cathedral School! It promises to be an exciting, eventful (and interesting) year. As it seems we are still in flux concerning federal, state, and local mandates/recommendations concerning the COVID virus, be assured that our number one priority is the safety of your child(ren). I will update everyone on our protocols and action plan once I get all the information from the proper authorities. It is important to remember that during these "turbulent" times, it is Jesus that calms all storms. When the disciples were together "with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." (JN: 20:19). As long as we put our work in His hands, we have nothing to fear and will be at peace.

<https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/ETS.html>

- Plan Updates:
 - Student temperatures and screenings will be conducted at home.
 - In the event of a case at school, we will follow the protocol (student returns home, classroom parents notified, differential quarantine as required by SCOE Mandate.
 - Masks are not required outdoors.
 - There is no distancing mandate.
 - Serving food to students will be on hold.
 - Volunteers will be required to report their status as per county guidelines to a confidential designated COVID liaison for the purpose of reporting any case on campus, testing and determining length of quarantine.
 - For class celebrations, individually wrapped treats may be provided and enjoyed outside.
 - Events will continue to be in person however we will not be providing food.

August 17, 2021

Dear Catholic School Families,

With the close of the 2020-2021 school year, and with summer midway through, we'd like to update you on changes to state guidance for schools as we approach 2021-2022. Let this serve as notice of our Back to School Plan Update August 17, 2021-22. It will also be posted to our website.

On August 2, the [California Department of Public Health](#) (CDPH) released updated guidance for K-12 schools reflecting recent updates from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). There are several elements of the guidance that will directly benefit our students. The two most restrictive prevention measures that were included in last year's guidance are no longer required: physical distancing and cohort scheduling. The elimination of these measures

will allow us to continue to provide full-time in-person instruction for every student enrolled in our Catholic school.

CDPH has also created new options that will reduce, and in some cases eliminate, absences required for quarantine following a close contact with someone who has COVID-19. This will allow us to avoid sending full classrooms of students home for quarantine.

With the elimination of these requirements, CDPH is relying on a multi-layered prevention strategy approach, including continued face covering guidance and robust testing programs provided free by the state.

We understand that many of you may consider the face covering requirement unnecessary, while others may believe the guidance does not go far enough. Some media reports have implied that districts have the discretion to make face coverings optional, which is not accurate.

The State of California has issued the following requirements:

- All K-12 students are required to mask indoors.
- Adults in K-12 school settings are required to mask when sharing indoor spaces with students.
- Masks are *optional outdoors* for all in K-12 school settings.
- Consistent with guidance from the 2020-21 school year, schools must develop and implement local protocols to enforce the mask requirements.

County health officials have confirmed that all school districts must comply with the guidance for schools included in the State Public Health Officer Order of June 11, 2021, which derives its authority from Health and Safety Codes 120125, 120140, 120175, 120195 and 131080 and other applicable laws. As a public entity, the Sonoma County public health order includes a similar requirement.

Schools are still responsible for contact tracing should a positive COVID result occur in their community. Updated contact tracing protocols have different quarantine mandates for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. Therefore, for a school's ability to manage contact tracing and exposure mandates, schools need to know the vaccination status of both employees and students. **Next week, St. Eugene's Catholic School will be asking families to provide vaccination status of their students.** This will be done in a discrete and private way. We will not be collecting any medical information or asking for elaboration. Your answer will be confidential and will be kept private.)

The state has **not** given school districts or schools the discretion to make face coverings optional, or to create their own standard for enforcement. We are required to enforce this mandate, as we would with any law, regulation, or policy. Schools may exact stricter standards, but not less. Our adherence to these same public safety measures allowed us a successful return to Catholic school campuses last year. The current mask requirement is supported by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#).

The Diocese of Santa Rosa remains committed to following this recommended public health guidance, and for this reason, students, faculty and staff in every one of our Catholic schools are required to wear masks while indoors for the coming school year.

Your school's administration and the Department of Catholic Schools will continue to monitor our state's guidance and will keep you posted on any changes that impact Catholic school operations.

The past 17 months have been challenging in different ways for everyone. Whether you're excited for the future, feeling overwhelmed by changes, frustrated from the challenges, trying to process loss, or a combination of all these things, we want to acknowledge your role in making it through an historic school year. Our Catholic school communities and staff members supported each other, went far above and beyond to learn new ways of doing things, and did everything possible to take care of our students and families. We did it together.

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding. May our faithful God shine warmly on you and your families this school year.

Peace,

Sharon Jeffrey