



DIOCESE of SACRAMENTO
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

December 9, 2020

Letter re.: Steps we are Taking in Support of our Elementary School Educators

Dear Catholic Elementary School Parents:

As we prepare ourselves for the celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, I am writing to you today about offering special support to our dedicated teachers, principals, aides, and staff. During this pandemic, our principals and teachers have been working harder than ever before to be there for your students, whether in class or at home. We are all proud of the way that they have gone above and beyond for their students and our Church.

Their efforts have been tireless, but these past weeks have been particularly challenging. Though our on-campus safety record remains strong, many of our educators have had to quarantine for a variety of reasons, which has left us stretched very thin. It's not easy to find substitute teachers right now, and many of our principals are covering classes personally to make sure that we can keep our campuses open, and though it does not affect our ability to keep our campuses open, we have all needed extra time to prepare for the impending stay-at-home order.

Taking all these interests into consideration, here is our plan:

- Please be extra kind to your school's educators. Your gratitude goes a long way in making it all feel worthwhile.
- To give our teachers more time to prepare for the final week of instruction before Christmas break, Friday, December 11 will be a minimum day. Extension programs will remain open that afternoon for students who need an on-campus option.
- In order for our teachers to not have to lesson-plan during their much-needed Christmas break, we will give our teachers an extra prep day on Monday, January 4, and begin with actual instruction on Tuesday, January 5th.
- In consultation with Bishop Soto and the school boards, we have decided to extend the Easter break for all schools to two weeks, from Monday, March 29, to Friday, April 9. Some schools may offer extension programs from March 29 to 31.

In regards to community safety, I am happy to share that we have completed the second week of antigen testing of all employees and 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students at five pilot schools, and for the second week in a row, no one tested positive. When we created the

post-Thanksgiving questionnaire asking families who had traveled out of state or participated in large gatherings to remain in distance mode, we did so because we hoped that it would bring down the number of potential cases on campus. For your reference, I am attaching the questionnaire to this letter; we are working on a version to send via SchoolSpeak.

Our testing data shows that the steps we took after Thanksgiving were effective. As such, we will be asking the same questions of all families after our return from Christmas break; please see the questionnaire for details on when your student may return to campus. To all of our families who have followed our policies, thank you for your sacrifice; you have contributed significantly to a lower rate of Covid-19 in our communities. We are also working to expand our antigen testing program after the break; I will share more information regarding testing in a future letter.

Thank you for choosing Catholic education, and may you enjoy a blessed Advent.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "LINCOLN SNYDER". The letters are in all caps and have a cursive, slightly slanted appearance.

Lincoln Snyder
Superintendent and Executive Director of Schools
The Diocese of Sacramento

Diocese of Sacramento Catholic Schools - Post-Christmas-Break Questionnaire:

January 5, 2021

In order for your child(ren) to return to on-campus learning, post-Christmas break, please answer the following questions:

1. My child(ren) has (have) been in contact with anyone who currently has tested positive for COVID-19.

___ Yes (True) ___ No (False)

2. During Christmas break, did members of your household travel out of state or country or did your family have visitors from out of state or country?

___ Yes ___ No

3. During Christmas break, did your household gather at any time with more than two other households?

___ Yes ___ No

If you answered "Yes" to any of the above questions, your child(ren) will need to be remote learners through January 19th unless:

a) The student has taken a COVID test 4-5 days after returning to California and has written proof of a negative COVID test, AND

b) The student has completed a 7 day quarantine in California, AND

c) The student is free of any COVID symptoms

If you have answered "No" to these questions, please continue with this questionnaire and answer the following:

4. Does your student have **one** of the following symptoms?

Fever of 100.4 or greater and/or chills ___Yes ___No

Cough ___Yes ___No

Difficulty breathing ___Yes ___No

Loss of taste/smell ___Yes ___No

If you answered "Yes" to any of the above symptoms, your child(ren) will need to be remote learners and may return per policy.

5. Does your student have **two** or more of the following symptoms?

Congestion/running nose ___Yes ___No

Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea ___Yes ___No

Sore throat ___Yes ___No

Headache ___Yes ___No

Fatigue/muscle or body aches ___Yes ___No

If you answered "Yes" to any two of the above symptoms, your child(ren) will need to be remote learners and may return per policy.

I certify that the answers to the above questions are true to the best of my knowledge.