

COVID-19: NAVIGATING SCHOOL ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/2021

with [Appendix I: Can I go to school today?](#)

and

with [Appendix II: Acknowledgment of Risk & Commitment form for Parent/Guardian Signature](#)

We are grateful to God for His grace and provision.

Commencing in-person school learning in the midst of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic would not be occurring but for Him.

In our COVID-19 environment, in-person learning must and can continue; it is critical to our children's spiritual, mental, and emotional health. The goal with in-school learning in this continuing COVID-19 time period is successful, safe, rejuvenating classroom experiences. We are confident that, as members of the Body of Christ, God is giving us the grace to ensure the wellbeing of ourselves and others. **It's time to get learning and encounter the Lord!**

THE COVID-19 CONTEXT

COVID-19, a new type of coronavirus, has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. Though the science behind COVID-19 continues to evolve, it is reported to be contagious, and is currently thought to spread predominantly from person-to-person contact. Further, it appears an individual may be infected, show no symptoms, but nonetheless be capable of spreading the virus. At present, the exact methods of virus spread and contraction are not fully understood. Further, there is no known treatment, cure, or vaccine. Evidence has shown that in some individuals, COVID-19 can cause serious/potentially life threatening illness, and even death. But as Colorado emerged from its 2020 stay-at-home/safer at home phase, prevention methods have been identified, can be taken and continue to evolve.

As federal, state and local jurisdictions have monitored and evaluated COVID-19, state and local county/city agency guidance has been issued on day-to-day advised practices for in-person interactions. Consistent with this guidance, the Archdiocese, its Office of Catholic Schools, its ministries and its parishes are grateful for the commencement of in-person school learning and are committed to preventive practices to combat the spread of COVID-19.

The Archdiocese and its parish schools have therefore adopted and follow applicable mandates, protocols and guidelines issued by those entities that are guiding in-person learning both nationally and locally. But success requires disciplined cooperation by all; it is therefore incumbent upon all of our school families to follow the protocols and guidelines outlined below, as well as any additional protocols that our Catholic schools develop individually at the local level as part of their virus prevention measures.

How do we program success and safety for in-person school learning? Success and safety are dependent on mutual respect, compassion, patience, discipline and attentive cooperation between school families, staff and administration.

Before a family sends their child(ren) to school, they are asked to first carefully review the information, protocols and guidelines in this material, and engage the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE) COVID-19 Guidance "[Can I go to school today?](#)" (see **Appendix I** of this document with a link to this CDPHE guidance) to determine whether attendance is advised. If a family determines their child(ren) CAN proceed with in-person school learning, each family is to execute the **Family Acknowledgment of Risk AND Commitment Form** (see **Appendix II** to this document).

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- **DAILY STUDENT HEALTH SCREENING BEFORE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**
 - EACH DAY, families are to engage in a child health symptom screening BEFORE arrival at school grounds to determine if in-person learning attendance by their child(children) is prudent. See **Appendix I** to this document, with a link, for the home symptom screening instructions entitled “**Can I go to school today?**” (a Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment prepared document, updated 8/10/2020).

- **YES, MY FAMILY HAS DETERMINED MY CHILD’S (CHILDREN’S) ATTENDANCE IS APPROPRIATE**
 - AT THE BEGINNING OF THE ACADEMIC SCHOOL YEAR 2020/2021, if a family determines attendance for in-person learning is appropriate, each family is to execute one **Family Acknowledgment of Risk AND Commitment** form for EACH of their children attending an archdiocesan or parish school (see **Appendix II** to this document).
 - Please ensure you have delivered a properly executed **Family Acknowledgment of Risk AND Commitment** form to your school administrative office by the first day of class.

- **DAILY ARRIVAL AND ATTENDANCE PRACTICES**
 - **DAILY, UPON ENTERING YOUR SCHOOL.** Your school will provide your family further detail on its student symptom check pre-class arrival protocols.
 - **HAND WASHING; SANITIZER.** Students will be encouraged to wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds when appropriate (restroom use, before and after meals, playground time, etc.). Schools will supply hand sanitizer but families are encouraged to supply their child with a small supply for personal use. Please see the following link to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding the importance of handwashing: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/global-covid-19/handwashing.html>
 - **SOCIAL DISTANCING**
 - **Outside of the classroom:** Social Distancing of at least six (6) feet apart is the goal outside of the classroom.
 - **Inside the classroom:** Social Distancing of at least three (3) feet apart is permitted within classrooms.

There may be instances where schools will not be able to maintain the recommended Social Distance. In such cases, other control measures (i.e., masks) will be implemented.

For further discussion of Social Distancing “whys” and the “whats”, please see the following link to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html> Note: federal guidance has been modified at the Colorado state level for in-school learning.

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- **MASKS/FACE COVERINGS.** Students are to wear masks/face coverings that cover the mouth and nose unless SUFFICIENT DISTANCE can be effectively maintained for (an) extended period(s) during the school day (as determined by school staff at the local level) and unless otherwise required under Colorado Executive Order (referencing the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment). See the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment regarding guidance, and Colorado Governor Polis' Executive Order D 2020 138 (in effect as of the date of issuance of these School Protocols & Guidelines):
<https://www.colorado.gov/governor/sites/default/files/inline-files/D%202020%20138%20Mask%20Order.pdf>
- **SCHOOL PLAYGROUND TIME, EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY and ATHLETICS.** Each school will directly provide families any additional local school guidance regarding COVID-19 school playground policies, extracurricular activities and athletics policies, and any additional expectations and best practices.
- **BRING YOUR OWN BEVERAGES.** Students are to bring their own water/beverage bottles. Label your child's bottle(s) to prevent mix-up and accidental sharing.
- **SCHOOL SUPPLIES.** There will be no shared school supplies between students.
- **RESTROOMS.** School restrooms will of course be available, but all of the above protocols are to be observed.
- **DEPARTURE ETIQUETTE and POST SCHOOL GUIDELINES**
 - Students are to continue to wear masks and observe Social Distancing upon departing school grounds.
 - At the conclusion of the school day, students are again encouraged to wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with warm water and soap, or otherwise use hand sanitizer, before and after touching any surfaces.
 - Families are encouraged to have their student immediately shower and launder their clothing upon returning home.

APPENDIX I (Page 1 of 1)

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See separately provided page addressing at-home symptom screening for parents, downloaded from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's (CDPHE) webpage and entitled: "**Can I go to school today?**"

Also, see link below for this CDPHE document:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VdL-vLQF9t1WQTYwFv8-Tmh_Dcvkbizf/view

APPENDIX II (Page 1 of 2)

COVID-19 In-Person School Learning Academic Year 2020/2021

Family Acknowledgment of Risk AND Commitment To Abide By School Protocols & Guidelines

School Name:

[insert name of archdiocesan or parish school]

BACKGROUND

COVID-19, a new type of coronavirus, has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. Though the science behind COVID-19 continues to evolve, it is reported to be contagious, and is currently thought to spread predominantly from person-to-person contact. Further, it appears an individual may be infected, show no symptoms, but nonetheless be capable of spreading the virus. At present, the exact methods of virus spread and contraction are unknown. Additionally, there is no known treatment, cure, or vaccine. Evidence has shown that in some individuals, COVID-19 can cause serious/potentially life threatening illness, and even death. As Colorado emerged from 2020's stay-at-home/safer-at-home phases, prevention methods have been identified, can be taken and continue to evolve. The Archdiocese, its ministries, and its parishes, have therefore adopted and follow applicable mandates, protocols and guidelines issued by federal, state and local jurisdictions that are guiding in-person activities locally and nationally. Successful in-person interaction nevertheless requires disciplined cooperation by all; it is therefore incumbent upon school families to follow the COVID-19 School Protocols & Guidelines, in addition to any additional protocols and guidelines that may be provided to you at the local level by your school.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RISK

Archdiocesan and parish schools cannot prevent students from becoming exposed to, contracting, or spreading COVID-19, or any other virus or disease, while attending school. **It is simply not possible to prevent against the presence of the virus.** If school families choose to have their child(ren) participate in Academic Year 2020/2021, your immediate family members may be exposed to and/or be at increased risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19, or any other virus or disease. **Your family therefore acknowledges that your child's attendance for in-person learning at your school is of such value to your family that your family is voluntarily choosing to participate in in-person learning at your family's own risk.** Your Archdiocesan or parish school, as applicable, is not responsible if anyone in your family contracts COVID-19 during your child's attendance at school during the Academic Year 2020/2021.

COMMITMENT TO FOLLOW SCHOOL PROTOCOLS & GUIDELINES

Before and during school, **your family commits to abide by** the COVID-19 School Protocols & Guidelines, including the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's "Can I go to school today?" at-home symptom screening check, as well as abide by any additional protocols and guidelines provided to you by your school at the local level.

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Family Acknowledgment of Risk AND Commitment To Abide By School Protocols & Guidelines

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As the Parent/Guardian for my minor child, and on behalf of myself and my family, my family and I acknowledge and commit as follows:

1. I have read and I understand the above Background, Acknowledgment of Risk, and Commitment to Follow School Protocols & Guidelines concerning COVID-19 and associated risks.
2. Having my child participate in in-person learning during Academic School Year 2020/2021 at my school is of such value to me/my family, that I choose to accept the risk of contracting COVID-19 for myself/my child, and/or other family members.
3. I have read, I understand, and I commit to abide by the School Protocols & Guidelines, including the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's "Can I go to school today?" (see link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VdL-vLQF9t1WQTYwFv8-Tmh_Dcvkbizf/view) at-home symptom screening check, and including any additional COVID-19 protocols and guidelines provided to me directly from my child's school.

ACKNOWLEDGED AND COMMITTED TO:

Student Name:

[print]

Date:

Student Parent/Guardian Name:

[print]:

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date:
