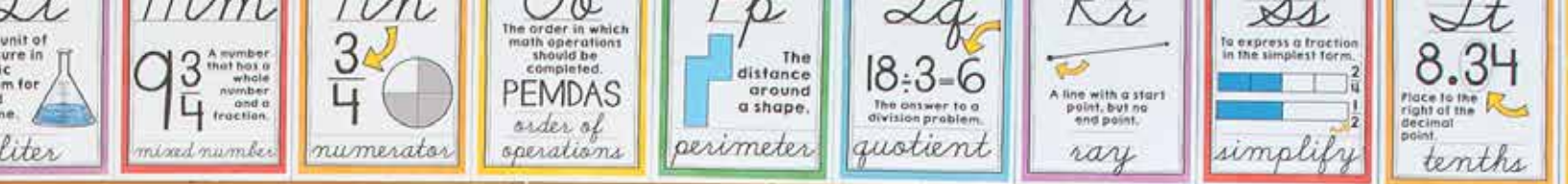


RISING ABOVE



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS *in the*
ARCHDIOCESE of NEW YORK
Faith-Based. Future-Focused.

2022-2023



PRAYER FOR THE START OF A NEW SCHOOL YEAR

Dear Lord, as we begin this new school year, we gather as a
community of believers, a family of your children.

We thank you for the renewal and safety of the past month as
well as the preparation for this new academic year.

We thank you for the promise of the days ahead and for the
blessing of your accompaniment. Be with us this year.

Open our hearts to become people with and for others.

Help us to be studious, open to growth, religious, loving
and committed to doing justice.

Keep us safe in body and spirit.

Let us be gentle with ourselves while striving to serve your
greater glory.

And may we always be a source of support, encouragement,
happiness and love to others.

We ask through the Most Sacred Heart of Your Son. Amen.





OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

1011 FIRST AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022

PHONE (212)371-1000 FAX: (212) 758-3018

MR. MICHAEL J. DEEGAN, SUPERINTENDENT

September 2022

Saint Jane Frances de Chantal

Dear School Communities,

Over the past several years, our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has spoken of the notion of encounter – the ability for individuals to come together to know one another from a special space, in a special way, with the intention of uplifting the other.

This past year, each of the pastors, principals and teachers engaged in this sacred encounter within the sacred spaces of school buildings, playgrounds, churches, chapels, and in reunions with parents, neighbors, and clergy.

The success of Catholic schools within the Archdiocese of New York relies upon this notion of encounter, what Pope Francis often calls the need to form synodality – “listening and walking together.” This encounter occurs when principals greet their students at the school doors, when teachers communicate with parents on the progress of student academics, when clergy and religious proclaim the word of the Lord at Mass and during prayer, when staff members come to common understandings about questions of challenges that are met with patience and love. It is my hope this document, “Rising Above,” will affirm our collective commitment to the health and safety of our school communities.

This defines our Catholic schools – and even more particularly as schools continue to reinvent themselves and transcend expectations “Rising Above” in a post-Covid-19 world. Success and achievement on MAP standardized test scores, excellence on the Archdiocesan Religion Exam, and the thoughtful use of new technologies, programs, and platforms geared toward maximizing student success and confidence-building are a part of this relationality that defines Catholic schools within the Archdiocese of New York.

In the Emmaus encounter, Christ was recognized immediately in the breaking of the bread – something we do both informally and Eucharistically in our school communities. May you continue to break bread with each other during this upcoming school year with open doors and hearts and may that openness be a sign to all of our vibrance and life-giving commitment to a Christ-centric education.

My prayerful best wishes for your health and success and my profound gratitude for your hard work and continued sacrifices on behalf of our precious students.

Sincerely,

Mr. Michael J. Deegan
Superintendent of Schools
Archdiocese of New York



***“Behold, I make all things new”
(Revelation 21:15)***

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Introduction

This document is based on a national and international review of standards and guidelines. As the CDC, NYS, NYC and Local Governments publish specific regulations, recommendations, and guidance, additional information will be disseminated to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local officials. COVID is an evolving situation, our plan, will evolve and remain nimble to protect the health and wellbeing of catholic school community.

PHILOSOPHY AND RATIONALE

The philosophy of the Catholic School Reopening Advisory Council is to return to in-person schooling while maintaining, to the extent possible, the mission of the Church and the Archdiocese of New York to ensure the maximum health, safety, and care for children and staff returning to school buildings. As a Christ-centric system rooted in more than two hundred years of serving families in need, we remain faithful in setting the stage for a catholic school experience dedicated to the continuity of excellence and education, which are the hallmarks of the Archdiocese of New York. Over the past three years- in the midst of global pandemic due to the heroic, self-sacrificing and dedication of the Catholic Schools Communities in the Archdiocese of New York- we demonstrated, yet again why Catholic schools will continue too “Rise Above”.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY AND MASS

Our Catholic faith begins and ends all that we do. Our goal extends beyond imparting knowledge of our faith; more importantly, our schools provide students with opportunities to experience the living faith. Our pastors in persona Christi are the role models of Christ among us. We encourage schools to coordinate with the pastors and/or parish priests to ensure students regularly participate in the sacraments, mass, and church-parish life.



Facility Requirements & Guidelines

BUILDINGS & CLASSROOMS

Classrooms should accommodate space for all students. There is no spacing or social distance requirement. However, our goal is that the maximum amount of distance between students and teachers be achieved ensuring all students fit in a classroom.

Hand sanitizer stations should be located at the entrance to the building as well as at the entrances and exits of each classroom and throughout the building as appropriate.

Touchless soap and paper towel dispensers should continue to be used where in place.

To ensure safety and best practices, schools must continue to maintain a designate “Guardian Angel” (isolation area) where individuals with COVID-19 symptoms are to be placed while they await pickup and safe exit from the building. This does not need to be a dedicated space and may be a nurse’s office and will only be used when there is a need.

VENTILATION

Proper ventilation must be ensured with airflow from outside air; and where installed, exhaust fans should be turned on at all times.

Windows and classroom doors should be open, weather permitting, even when the space is occupied by students, to allow for maximum ventilation. All appropriate security measures to secure the school must remain in place.

Schools may choose to add additional ventilation measures such as HEPA filters. Schools should not use other technologies (e.g., ionizers). The CDC has studied HEPA filters and published its recommendations here: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7027e1.htm>. It is strongly recommended that any HEPA unit have a UV light component so that the appropriate school staff members may change filters. Before schools purchase units, the Health and Safety Task Force of the Office of the Superintendent of Schools must approve the units.

PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES

Parents should screen their child every morning before they send them to school for possible symptoms or illness.

Staff and students should use a home test if they do not feel well. **THIS IS CRITICAL TO STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 AND ANY OTHER ILLNESS IN SCHOOLS.** If negative and symptoms continue, take a second test at least 24 hours after the first and it is **STRONGLY** recommended they wear a mask until the second negative test.

People who have symptoms of respiratory or gastrointestinal infections, such as cough, fever, sore throat, vomiting, or diarrhea, should stay home and are required to test. Staying home when sick can lower the risk of spreading infectious diseases, including COVID-19, to other people.

Staff and students who are exposed shall test and mask if they have been within six feet of a person for more than 15 minutes with COVID-19.

Principals and teachers will be responsible for sending regular reminders to stay home when sick or exhibiting symptoms that may lead to sickness as well as information about COVID-19. Strict visitor logs must be maintained.

The following is a set of directives regarding student and staff expectations related to procedures:

The CDC recommends that all people with a known or suspected COVID-19 exposure regardless of vaccination status or history of prior COVID-19 infection follow current CDC exposure recommendations which include:

1

Wearing a well-fitting mask for a full 10-day period

2

Getting tested at least 5 days after close contact or sooner if symptoms develop.

Masking is Optional, except in the case of those who have been exposed; those individuals returning early from a positive case; or if government mandates change during a surge.

Students and staff may wear face masks that cover the nose and mouth when in the school building. The school will have surgical masks available for students and staff who request. Choosing to wear a mask of their own is acceptable as long as it meets the CDC mask guidelines.

Students and Staff who have been exposed should test day 5 or as soon as symptoms appear and wear a mask as outlined by government regulations.

When a mask is worn we must respect the choice of each parent and staff member. As part of our Catholic values infusion program, students learn we all have a moral responsibility for the good of all and must have respect for everyone. As a school community, we must respect each other's decisions but remain united as a community of faith. This is a truly teachable moment for our children.

Free N95 Masks from the CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/free-masks.html>

Non-disposable masks should be washed daily.

All constituents are to be taught—and will be expected to review on a periodic basis—the proper methods for using tissues and to cough or sneeze into a tissue or their elbow.

Hand sanitizer will also be available for when handwashing is not possible. It should not replace handwashing, which is the most effective protection against germs and the spread of disease.

Faculty and staff meetings may be held in person; social distancing should be considered, but is not required.

Parent drop-off and pickup, scheduled parent appointments are permissible

In-person meetings, including opening parent night and parent-teacher conferences, may be held at the school and/or may be scheduled via Zoom to allow maximum participation of families.



Facility Requirements & Guidelines (continued)

POLICY & PROCEDURE FOR A SICK CHILD OR STAFF MEMBER

Principals should monitor staff and students throughout the day for signs of illness.

Symptoms potentially include:

- Cough
- Stuffy nose; sinus
- Chills
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Muscle or body aches
- Fatigue
- Sore throat, and/or headache
- Fever of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher

Children or staff members exhibiting the symptoms above must be sent home according to the best judgment of school officials. They are required to provide a PCR or antigen test (RAPID or HOME).

Principals should monitor staff absenteeism as well as present symptoms or types of illness among students and staff to guide decision-making and next steps. Students, faculty, and staff must follow all orders issued by federal, state, and local government.



Facility Requirements & Guidelines (continued)

Children or staff members exhibiting the symptoms above must be sent home according to the best judgment of school officials. They are required to provide a PCR or antigen test (RAPID or HOME).

Principals should monitor staff absenteeism as well as present symptoms or types of illness among students and staff to guide decision-making and next steps. Students, faculty, and staff must follow all quarantine orders issued by federal, state, and local government directives.

STAYING HOME WHEN SICK/SYMPOMATIC

The CDC continues to recommend that people stay home when sick. Any student or staff member who has symptoms of respiratory or gastrointestinal infections, such as cough, fever, sore throat, vomiting, or diarrhea, should stay home and test.

Testing is recommended for people with symptoms of COVID-19 as soon as possible after symptoms begin. Those who are at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19 who test positive should consult with a healthcare provider right away for possible treatment, even if their symptoms are mild.

Per NYS: If an individual tests positive for COVID-19 and does not have a regular health care provider, evaluation for treatment can be obtained by either calling 1-888-TREAT-NY or visiting the NYS COVID-19 ExpressCare Therapeutics Access Website.



Cleaning

COVID-19 has necessitated special attention to the cleaning and disinfecting, of school facilities and materials. Although the CDC has suggested that COVID-19 rarely spreads through surface contact, schools will take special care with cleaning as needed.

With the above considerations in mind, the expectations and clear directives should be to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least once a day by custodial staff.



Remote Learning

COVID related remote learning can only be activated by the Superintendent of Schools. This is not for individual student remote learning.

Teachers and principals should always maintain technology to adjust to remote or hybrid instruction should approval be given for an emergent situation.

ISOLATION

From the NYC Guidance: People who have tested positive or who are symptomatic and are awaiting COVID-19 test results should remain home and follow the CDC's Isolation Guidance. The isolation period may vary based on COVID-19 symptoms.

If someone who tested positive has no symptoms, isolation may end after day 5.

If someone has symptoms, isolation may end after day 5 if they are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and symptoms are improving.

People should wear a mask through day 10 after ending isolation when they are feeling better (fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medication and symptoms improving).

ADNY schools will allow use of the “test-based strategy” to potentially shorten the length of time for post-isolation mask use. With two negative tests 48 hours apart, after day 5 (day 6 & day 8), people may remove their mask sooner than day 10. If a person's test result is positive, they may still be infectious and should continue wearing a mask and wait at least 48 hours before taking another test and continue taking antigen tests 48 hours apart until two negative results are received.

Note: After having ended isolation, if COVID-19 symptoms recur or worsen, restart isolation at day 0. Day 0 of isolation is the day of symptom onset. Staff and student's parents/guardians should be advised to talk to a healthcare provider about their symptoms or when to end isolation.





Procedures for Cases of COVID-19

1

Principals are to notify the regional superintendent of relevant details so that they or the principal will notify the Office of the Superintendent of Schools COVID-19 Response Team using the excel spreadsheet template.



2

Principals, pastors, teachers, and school staff will follow all Health Department directives related to COVID-19, which the Health and Safety Task Force of the Office of the Superintendent of Schools provides. A school closure and remote instruction decision rests solely with the Superintendent of Schools.



3

Principals will coordinate with the regional superintendent and the Office of the Superintendent of Schools for, exposures, isolation and disinfection procedures and timelines according to CDC, NYS, NYC, local guidance and archdiocesan policies.



4

In keeping with HIPAA law, at no time should the identity of an individual who is COVID-19 positive be revealed.



5

Schools, Students, and Staff must take extreme and extenuating measures to protect the identity of the sick individual and not foster gossip or watercooler talk. Revealing the identity of someone who is ill is a critical violation of that person's civil rights and doing so will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination, suspension or expulsion.



COVID-19 Vaccines

Pope Francis has made it clear that it is morally acceptable to take any of the vaccines and that we have the moral responsibility to get vaccinated. Cardinal Dolan has said the same. Because this is **not mandated** and parents are the primary educators or protectors of their children, the decision to have a school age child vaccinated rests with the parents.

COVID-19 VACCINES FOR TEACHERS, SCHOOL STAFF, AND CHILDCARE WORKERS

COVID-19 vaccination and boosters is a critical prevention measure to help end the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 vaccines are now widely available in the United States, and the CDC recommends all people eligible be vaccinated with boosters against COVID-19, which protects against COVID-19, including other variants. Where a local law or regulations mandate vaccination for employees we are required to follow local laws and mandates.

Search [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov), text your zip code to 438829, or call 1-800-232-0233 to find COVID-19 vaccine locations near you.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/specific-groups/teachers-childcare.html>



Early Childhood NYC Article 43/47 Permitted Programs

The Mayor of the City of New York executive order requires all staff, employees, and volunteers under Article 43/47 programs to be fully vaccinated. This mandate also applies to volunteers and visitors.

COVID-19 VACCINE: CHILDREN 6 MONTHS AND OLDER

Vaccination and boosters of school age children, while strongly encouraged, are not mandated by the Catholic Schools within Archdiocese of New York.

Getting a COVID-19 vaccination and boosters can help protect your child from getting COVID-19. Early information shows that the vaccines may reduce the likelihood of people spreading COVID-19. A vaccination also can help keep your child from getting seriously ill even if they do get COVID-19. Help protect your whole family by getting yourself and your children vaccinated against COVID-19. Please confer with your family medical doctor.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/children-teens.html>

COVID-19 SCREENING AND SYMPTOMATIC TESTING

Screening testing identifies infected people, including those with or without symptoms (or before development of symptoms), who may be contagious so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission. In schools, screening testing can help identify and isolate cases promptly before start of school, breaks, holidays, and other high-risk activities. The Archdiocese highly recommends that at any FDA approved covid test be used during these times so that it minimizes the risk of all students and families, especially those who are most vulnerable. Symptomatic testing will be required.

Mental Health & Social-Emotional Development

Principals, teachers, and school staff must establish a culture that supports and emphasizes mental health services available for faculty, staff, students, and families. Key responsibilities in this aspect include but are not limited to the following considerations:

- Educating staff, parents, and students on symptoms that identify mental health needs
- Promoting social-emotional learning competency and building resilience
- Helping ensure a positive, safe school environment
- Teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors and decision-making
- Encouraging and helping others
- Encouraging good physical health
- Helping ensure access to school-based mental health support
- Ensuring the integration of Catholic spiritual doctrine as it relates to ministering to the whole person—body, spirit, and soul



Staff and families must know they can consult with a school counselor, nurse, or administrator and with the student's parents if they observe one or more of the following behaviors:

- Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than two weeks
- Seriously trying to harm oneself or making plans to do so
- Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart or fast breathing
- Involvement in many fights or a desire to badly hurt others
- Severe out-of-control behavior that can hurt oneself or others
- Drastic weight loss or weight gain
- Intense worries or fears that provide obstacles to daily activities
- Extreme difficulty concentrating or staying still, which places the student or staff member in physical danger or causes problems in the classroom
- Repeated use of drugs or alcohol
- Severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Drastic changes in the student's or staff member's behavior or personality

In keeping with the notion of the Jesuit motto of the cura personalis, or ministry of "personal care," many useful resources from ADAPP are available to support principals and all school community members in this regard.

Archdiocese of New York Drug Abuse Prevention Program

2789 Schurz Avenue

Bronx, NY 10465

718-904 -1333

<https://adapp.org/>

New York State Mental Health Assistance Hotline

1-844-863-9314

or

1-888-NYC-WELL (1-888-692-9355)

<https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/covid-19-resources.html>

Additional Resources

VENDORS TO CONTACT—APPROVED BY ADNY INSURANCE

ICS-Institutional Commodity Services of the Archdiocese of New York are to provide the required equipment and materials for schools.



Covid Surge Plan

The Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of New York, in the event of a COVID surge will rely on the previous two re-opening plans as the baseline for our response. Updated or newly published, relevant guidance from CDC, NYS, NYC, and Local Governments as well as trusted medical professionals will be considered, in consultation with the Health & Safety Task Force of the Superintendent of Schools. The sole decision of all adoption of guidance, policies, procedures, and elements of the plans remains with the Superintendent of Schools.



Catholic Schools Reopening Advisory Council 2022

Michael J. Deegan

Superintendent of Schools

Maureen McElduff

Coordinator of the Catholic Schools Reopening Advisory Council

Michael J. Coppotelli

Senior Associate Superintendent of Schools;

Mary Jane Daley

Regional Superintendent of Dutchess, Northern Westchester and Putnam

Tracy Keelin

Principal of Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Scarsdale

Sr. Anne Massell, PBVM

Associate Superintendent of Leadership

Dr. Walid Michelen

Chief Medical Officer of ArchCare

Frank Napolitano

Chief Operating Officer, Archdiocese of New York

Steven Pallonetti

Director of Government Programs and Student Services – ADNY

Kevin Quinn

Operations Manager of Catholic Mutual Group

John Riley

Regional Superintendent of Northwest and South Bronx

Amy Rodriguez

Principal of Immaculate Conception School, Bronx

Jane Schwedfeger

Director of Property Management – ADNY

Joanne Walsh

Associate Superintendent of Early Childhood Education

CONSULTANTS**Paul R Checco**

AIA – PC Studio Architects, PLLC

Dean Jackson

Senior Operations Manager, Service Master



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Office of the Superintendent of Schools
1011 First Avenue, 18th Floor
New York, NY 10022

 CatholicSchoolsArchdioceseNewYork
 ArchNY_Schools
 @nycatholicschools

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