



July 15, 2020

Dear Catholic School Families of the Diocese of Crookston,

I pray you are all well and are finding time this summer to enjoy the many graces this time of year offers.

I want to thank each family that took the time to offer feedback through the statewide survey that was disseminated last month. Your input was valuable to the work that has been done to analyze this past spring's distance learning, as well as aid plans for the future. The Diocese of Crookston had a strong participation rate. I feel this shows how invested parents are in their partnership with Catholic schools for the formation of their children.

There is much anxiety, anticipation, and curiosity as to what the return to school will look like this fall. I understand that families are pressed to plan and prepare for any changes to routines or personal needs that will be affected by your school's reopening plans. Collectively, school leadership across the Diocese of Crookston is committed to safely reopening schools this fall with in-person instruction. While your child(ren) will experience new protocols and procedures recommended by state and federal health guidelines, it is our intent that quality, faith-filled instruction continues in the Diocese of Crookston.

A few things that I want you to be aware of:

- School in the Diocese of Crookston have been provided guidance and instructions on preparing plans to return to in-person learning this fall. As previously shared, this guidance has been developed in collaboration with dioceses across the state of Minnesota, recommendations from the CDC and the Minnesota Department of Health, insurance companies, and numerous others. The guidance is comprehensive and is structured to allow individual schools to develop plans that make sense for their students, staff, and community.
- Principals from across the Diocese of Crookston gathered to review the guidance and develop common language, approaches, and a general collaborative methodology for completing school action plans. Each school will be working with school specific leaders and committees in the coming days to develop and finalize action plans for returning to in-person instruction.
- Detailed action plans will not be shared until local public-school districts have shared intentions for the fall. The reality is that our Catholic schools work with our public-school counterparts in many capacities and their plans will impact components of our return to in-person instruction. These impacts vary from school to school but include things like transportation and special education services.



Diocese of  
**CROOKSTON**

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- An essential part of our schools' action plans for returning to in-person instruction is communication of plans. Families will be well-informed of what school will look like this fall when students' return.
- It is essential to be mindful of local realities. While our guidance and plans are written with the intent to return to in-person instruction this fall, if local realities do not allow that to happen safely, individual schools throughout the diocese may have to toggle between in-person instruction and distance learning.

There is much work and planning happening in our Catholic schools across the Diocese of Crookston to ensure a positive, safe, and personal 2020-2021 academic year comes to fruition. The details of these plans will be shared with your local school community as soon as possible.

Please continue to pray for the teachers, staff, and principals who are working diligently for a safe and meaningful return to school this fall.

Many Blessings,

Andrew Hilliker  
Director, Office of Catholic Schools