



MEMO

TO: Diocese of Crookston Catholic School Families and Staff Members

FROM: Andrew Hilliker – Director, Office of Catholic Schools

DATE: March 12, 2020

RE: Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Catholic School Impacts

Many people have questions about the outbreak of a respiratory illness caused by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), especially how it may affect our Diocese of Crookston Catholic Schools. Be assured that diocesan and school leaders are reviewing emergency management plans to prepare for the spread of COVID-19. There is still a great deal of unknown with COVID-19; this communication is provided with the priority being the health and wellbeing of the students we serve. As we continue to learn more about this virus and collaborate with other agencies and organizations, the response and actions by schools in the Diocese of Crookston will adjust accordingly.

Points of consideration:

1. The Diocese of Crookston is in communication with the Minnesota Department of Health and local/county health agencies. The outreach and collaboration from appropriate personnel will continue to be integral in the preventative responses as well as possibility of a school community member being infected with COVID-19.
2. Precautionary measures being taken:
 - Review and updates to emergency operation plan for appropriate implementation in the event of a local outbreak.
 - Monitoring absenteeism for atypical patterns and requesting more detail regarding symptoms when families call in with children who are ill.
 - Requesting notification from school community members that have had extensive travel; if to areas of high contamination, a request for delay in return to school will be made.
 - Diligence in school policies related to attendance for students and staff with fevers and other flu related symptoms (students and staff must be fever free without aid of medication for 24 hours before returning to school).
 - Performing routine environmental cleaning.

- Creation of communication plans for the school community, including open communication lines with emergency folks in the county.
 - Field trips requiring extensive travel out of the region or to events with a substantial amount of people are discouraged.
 - Building handwashing routines into the school day (e.g. transitions between classes, and activities) and emphasizing best hygiene practices (washing your hands often with soap and water; covering your cough and sneeze; avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands, etc.).
 - To learn more about COVID-19 and other preventative measures, visit:
 - Minnesota Department of Health Coronavirus (COVID-19) Website (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html>)
 - CDC Coronavirus (COVID-19) Website (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>)
3. Considerations in the event of an identified case of COVID-19 within a Diocese of Crookston Catholic School:
- Collaboration with local/county public health officials to properly communicate and identify individuals that may have been exposed.
 - Communication to the school community that a case of COVID-19 has been identified.
 - Following directives from the Minnesota Department of Health in closing school for a specific period of time to reduce the opportunity of spreading the virus.
 - Canceling out of school activities, including but not limited to retreats, athletic events, fine arts performances, parent and staff meetings.

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