



July 1, 2021

Dear St. Patrick School Community,

On June 22, 2021, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services released recommendations for schools to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. These recommendations were based on current positive vaccination, positive tests, and hospital trends across Michigan. The purpose of this communication is to share with you our plans for the 2021-2022 school year knowing that circumstances may change.

### **What will school look like?**

It is our intent to return to as normal a school year as possible within the requirements. It is important to understand that those requirements come from local (Ionia County Health Department), state (MDHHS, MIOSHA, and MHSAA) and the Federal government (CDC), which often appear to be in conflict with one another. At this time, the Office of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Grand Rapids is leaving it up to each individual school in our alliance to decide for themselves how they adopt these recommendations.

### **What will instruction look like?**

All students will be expected to attend in-person five days a week following the published school calendar. We are not offering a virtual option at this time. However, If a quarantine or isolation is needed, students will join class virtually.

### **When does school start?**

The first day of school for K-12 students is scheduled for Wednesday, August 25, 2021. The First day of preschool is scheduled for August 30 & 31, 2021.

### **When is the Back to School Open House?**

We are having an in-person open house on Monday, August 23 from 5:30pm - 7:00pm.

**Are face masks required at school?**

No! MDHHS states face masks as a recommendation for students while in school. Masks will be optional as long as the local or state health department does not require them. Please note that while masks will be optional for students while in school, masks will be required for students when riding on school buses per notification from Portland Public Schools.

**Will Students be required to get a COVID-19 vaccine to attend school?**

No!

**Will students be separated in classrooms based on who is vaccinated and who is not?**

No!

**Will contract tracing continue?**

Schools are required to report communicable diseases to their local health department within 24-hours regardless of the communicable disease. Positive or probable COVID-19 cases will be reported to the local health department of residence.

**Will students be required to quarantine?**

Not by St. Patrick School. This does not prevent a local health department from requiring quarantine for 1) a close contact to a positive case in the home or community, or 2) an “outbreak” in the school setting. An “outbreak” is defined as two or more positive cases that are directly related to each other.

**Will student-athletes be required to be tested for COVID-19 to participate?**

No! MDHHS and MHSAA lifted all requirements for student-athlete testing on June 22, 2021.

We will continue to keep our school community informed if anything changes. Thank you for your support and partnership in education!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Cortney Smith  
PS-8 Principal

Mr. Randy Hodge  
High School Principal

