

## COVID-19 Update: August 6, 2021

On June 22, 2021, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) lifted all remaining public health orders pertaining to COVID-19. Previous coronavirus requirements for schools and child care programs have now been replaced by the [Aug. 4 recommendations](#) from the MDHHS for consideration by schools and their parents. Please consult your school's leadership for further direction.

The goal of each Catholic school in the Diocese of Gaylord is to care for the well-being of our students, teachers, and staff. We define well-being as the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and social well-being. Because of this holistic approach, we set our goals to conduct in-person learning as much as possible, with as few restrictions as possible.

- We will always follow mandates; however, recommendations allow our own experience and local expertise to bear weight on final decisions.
- At this time and given current health conditions, the diocese will not require the use of masks at school/school events, but schools must allow individuals (students and staff) to wear masks if they choose. This guidance could change in response to local health data and State mandates over the course of the school year.
- The diocese recognizes that vaccinations are the decision of the families but are strongly encouraged by the diocese.
- Schools will foster an environment of Christian charity and respect for others' decisions regarding vaccination status and use of masks.
- Schools should continue to utilize the CDC guidance for cleaning, disinfection, and hand hygiene.
- Spacing of 3-6 feet between students is recommended for indoor activities in shared spaces.
- Parents/guardians should monitor their children for symptoms of infectious illness every day before arrival at school.
- Students who are sick or displaying symptoms of infectious illness should not attend school and seek medical care when necessary.
- Schools should continue to report positive cases to Health Department and report positive cases to school families.
- At this time, there are no COVID-related restrictions for athletics; schools will follow MHSAA requirements.
- While the diocese is not requiring masks at school events, the use of facial coverings is required by federal order on school buses and other forms of public transportation in the United States.
- Individual schools may put in place additional safety policies, above and beyond the diocesan guidance.