



## **Updated COVID-19 protocols and Mitigation Strategies (PPRP) for 2021-2022 School Year:**

Last May, we closed out the school year optimistic about our ability to significantly modify COVID-19 health and safety policies for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year. As we now move into full preparations for the new school year, we recognize that COVID-19 still poses risks for our community. At the same time, the circumstances are very different from last year. You may have read that the State of Minnesota no longer legally mandates specific COVID-19 mitigation strategies for schools. As we maintain vigilance, our school will still need to implement a health and safety plan to mitigate the spread of all infectious diseases, including COVID-19. We are prudentially evaluating all public health recommendations and implementing those that will best serve our students, staff, and entire community.

### **Overview of MHRS Mitigation Strategies:**

While our situation is different today than one year ago, we continue to be committed to maintaining the health and safety of our school community. We are taking an approach that includes a broad number of steps. Here are some of the mitigation strategies you can expect this upcoming school year:

- **Staying Home When Sick and Temperature Checks:**

We continue to require all individuals to stay home when they are sick. Since we will not be doing temperature checks before school, we are asking all parents to do a health check before sending your child to school each day. Students can return to school once they are feeling better and their symptoms have substantially improved (including being fever free for 24 hours with no fever-reducing medication). We will not require students to be tested for COVID-19 before returning to school.

- **Reinforcing Good Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette**

- **Physical Distancing**

We will encourage physical distancing during the school day when it does not disrupt the development and learning of our students.

- **Lab-Confirmed Cases of COVID-19**

State law requires us to report to the Minnesota Department of Health any cases of COVID-19 that occur among students or staff in our building. If your child has COVID-19, we will require that they not return to school or school-sponsored activities until they are no longer contagious. This means:

- They feel better. Their cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms are substantially improved;
- It has been at least 10 days since they first felt sick or tested positive for COVID-19;

- They have had no fever for at least 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers fevers.

Like other infectious diseases, we will notify impacted families of a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19 in the classroom.

The Minnesota Department of Health has trained staff to conduct contact tracing. We will be ready to assist MDH whenever they request our assistance in this area.

- **Quarantine:**

The Minnesota Department of Health no longer requires individuals who have been potentially exposed to COVID-19 to quarantine. In general, our school will not exclude any healthy individual from the learning environment, unless we are specifically counseled to do so in the particular circumstances by public health officials.

- **Face Coverings in the School Building:**

Last year, the Governor through an Executive Order required all individuals in public and nonpublic school buildings to wear face coverings. In our commitment to obey rightful legal authority, last year we implemented the face covering mandate at our school. This legal mandate ended over the summer. Districts and schools across Minnesota are making decisions based upon the actual COVID-19 circumstances that are present in their respective communities. The start of the school year remains several weeks away and the situation with COVID-19 continually changes. The Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis does not have a policy requiring face coverings in Catholic schools. For the start of the 2021-22 school year, we are putting the decision for a child to wear a face covering in the hands of each parent. Parents and guardians are well positioned to determine if their child should wear a face covering while outside of the home. We ask all parents and guardians to consider what is best for their child in making this decision while also being vigilant in the monitoring of symptoms and the health of their child. We know that there are a variety of positions and opinions on the use of masks, for children in particular, and so our school faculty and staff will be working diligently to eliminate any bullying or stigmatization for wearing or not wearing a face covering. We ask that you help us in this goal. We expect that a great number of students and families will decide to wear masks this autumn.

- **Face Coverings on the Bus**

All people are required by an Order from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to wear face coverings while in public transportation hubs and on all public transportation conveyances (airplanes, public buses, etc.), including school buses (both public and private).

- **Vaccination:**

We are grateful to the medical community who worked tirelessly to develop a safe and effective vaccine for COVID-19. We know many people have chosen for good reasons to get this vaccine for themselves and their family members. We also know that some others following their own good reasons have chosen not to be vaccinated. Honoring the health care decisions of all in our community and the importance of individual privacy for health related decisions, our Catholic

Schools will not be mandating any community member to receive the COVID-19 vaccine nor provide documentation of vaccination.

MHRS is excited to welcome our children back to the classroom and grateful for your trust to educate with excellence and help slow the spread of disease. In conjunction with the Minnesota Department of Health and the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, we will be monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic closely and will be promptly communicating any updates to this plan.

God Bless.

Mr. George J. Vondracek  
MHRS Principal