



## Diocese of Laredo—Catholic Schools Office

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July 15, 2021

Dear Catholic School Families,

Greetings to our entire community of students, parents, teachers and staff for all of your support and the many ways you came together to assist our students and community to successfully reach the finish line during the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. Know we are very proud of your amazing accomplishments.

As health metrics continue to improve in the Diocese of Laredo and more students are vaccinated, we have heeded the recommendations from our local health authority and the Health Department. Keeping the health and safety of all of our students, staff, faculty and school communities, we are planning for all Catholic School students to transition to in-person learning for the 2021-22 school year. We can now begin to resume our regular school routines and we can't wait to see students back in our classrooms. The first day of class for this school year is set for August 9<sup>th</sup>. Teachers and staff will begin their professional development sessions during the week of August 2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

We encourage families to prepare for in-person learning for their child(ren). However, families not ready to make this change due to extenuating circumstances will have the opportunity to make the transition on an ongoing basis when they feel it is the best decision for their child. Virtual Learning Program families can request information on distance learning expectations and on the process to change a student to in-person school instruction from their respective school principal.

Due to the potential risk of contamination from the COVID virus new strains, we are asking all of our school communities to follow the Diocese of Laredo Catholic Schools health and safety protocols to minimize the spread of this virus. The Office of Catholic Schools has attached the back-to-school health and safety school protocol information sheet to prepare schools and families for the new academic year.

For back-to-school updates and answers to any of your questions on the reopening of schools for the 2021-2022 year contact your respective school or the Catholic Schools Office at your convenience.

Blessings,

Dr. Guadalupe M. Perez  
Superintendent  
Diocese of Laredo Catholic Schools

Diocese of Laredo Catholic Schools  
Health and Safety School Protocols  
August 2021

Schools

**Social Distancing-** Students will remain 3 feet apart in the classroom and during other school day activities such as PE and lunch breaks. The school cafeteria will enforce a 6-foot social distance between students and adhere to CDC (Center for Disease Control) school cafeteria guidelines.

**Sanitation-** School personnel will use disinfectants to periodically sanitize student used surface areas; as well as deep clean the entire campus on a daily basis at the end of the instructional day.

A PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) table will be available at the entrance of schools for use by anyone needing safety materials and sanitation stations will be available throughout the school for the use of students and adults within the facility.

**Visitors-** the schools will closely monitor any visitor, parent or community member entering the school by taking their temperature, asking screener questions for the possibility of COVID infection, and requesting the use of a mask upon entry into the school. This is in addition to the school safety monitoring procedures in place.

A Quarantine Room will be available for students who feel ill and possibly infected with the COVID virus. Procedures to contact parents and the Health Department will be followed.

**Water Fountains** will remain closed- all schools encourage students to bring their own water containers from home. However, there will be drinking water available at all schools for those individuals that need additional hydration.

**Outdoor Playground Equipment** will be open for use by students. Teachers and staff will ensure students wash their hands prior and after the use of the equipment.

All schools will screen students and staff periodically for the COVID virus- this process will include ongoing temperature checks, the use of COVID screener kits (provided by the Texas Education Agency – TEA) and close communication with Catholic School Parents.

School Population

All students, Faculty and Staff the will be required to wear a face mask (until further notice).

Although it has been proven that individuals with the vaccine have good immunity against the highly contagious new COVID virus strains, this does not exclude them from being carriers. Due to vulnerability of our elementary school children and the very nature of our schools, where we have many individuals in a relatively small space, it is best to take this extra precaution until further information is available from our health and safety authorities and the CDC. We must be patient and remember that the health and safety of all is the first and foremost priority of our schools.

Parents and Community

Keep watch on the possibility of the COVID virus symptoms in your family and child. If these were to appear, notify the school immediately. Keep your child at home and seek medical assistance. If you travel out of the city, advise the school administrative staff. We urge all parents and the community to adhere to the CDC and local health authority recommendations to prevent the spread of this virus. It will take all of us to ensure our students are kept safe and healthy!