

# United in Faith, Continuing with C.A.R.E. Communities & Academics Re-imagined Effectively

2021 – 2022 SCHOOL YEAR

## INTRODUCTION

As the State of Vermont continues to experience the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington remain vigilant in implementing mitigation strategies in an effort to support the well-being of those who participate in our educational programs. We recognize that we were blessed to be able to offer full-time in-person learning during the 2020 – 2021 school year and we are committed to ensuring this same level of success for the 2021 – 2022 school. We are, however, deeply aware that our success last year was primarily due to the efforts at the local school level. We will continue to rely on the knowledge and experience of our school leaders and will support them in their efforts as they seek to effectively manage the impact of the pandemic within their school community.

## GUIDANCE FROM THE STATE OF VERMONT

On August 5, 2021, the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) and the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) jointly issued a [COVID Advisory Memo](#). This memo provided recommended strategies for schools to consider in planning for the 2021 – 2022 school year. The principals of our Catholic schools take seriously their responsibility to provide the safest learning environment possible for the students and staff of our schools. Their efforts in leading our schools are focused on ensuring the needs of their individual community are honored amidst their efforts to address the many challenges that this pandemic has presented. To that end, each principal worked with his/her community to utilize this document as a guiding tool in developing their local plan of action.

## STRATEGIES BEING IMPLEMENTED

While each school's plan of action is unique to the needs of the local school community, below are strategies being implemented to some extent within each of our schools:

- Proper cleaning and disinfecting procedures.
- Masking for students and staff.
- Staff and families are asked to assess wellness prior to coming to school and are required to remain home when sick.
- Limiting visitors to those who are not experiencing symptoms of illness.
- Sending staff/students home should they become ill at school and implementing strategies to keep these individuals a safe distance from others while waiting to go home.

- Encouraging students to maintain proper distancing from one another while not hindering the learning process.
- Providing time for proper hand sanitation.
- Maintaining accurate school/course attendance records to support contact tracing if needed.
- Supporting families in their decisions regarding vaccination.

As local needs warrant, schools are implementing the above in various ways and there may also be additional strategies as part of an individual school's plan of action.

## **NOTIFICATIONS TO THE COMMUNITY**

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In the event of a positive case of COVID-19 within one of our school communities, the school will:

- Reach out the VDH to discuss the situation and seek guidance.
- Notify the Office of Catholic Schools for the Diocese.
- Notify the families who may have been impacted to alert them of the situation and to relay expectations from the school and/or those provided by the VDH.

As an ongoing mitigation strategy, our school leaders will provide regular reminders to staff and families of the importance of honoring the school's plan of action in an effort to help ensure everyone's health and safety.

## **CLOSING COMMENTS**

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The pandemic is a fluid situation, and our school leaders recognize that their mitigation strategies may need to change as the school year progresses. They are committed to remaining vigilant and will work with their local communities and the Office of Catholic Schools to ensure their plan of action is reviewed regularly and updated as needed.