



OFFICE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION
CATHOLIC DIOCESE of JACKSON

October 1, 2021

Dear Catholic School Community Members,

Our schools have had a great start to the 2021-2022 academic year, and we are already impressed with the wonderful things happening in our schools each day. Unfortunately, on August 12, right as our students returned, our state saw the largest spike in COVID19 cases since the pandemic began in March of 2020. As a result, we implemented a mask mandate for all students and parents that went into effect on August 16. Since we began requiring masks, our schools have seen a decline in cases, and our state appears to be past the worst of this surge.

Recognizing that we will continue to see cases within our state and our communities fluctuate, we have worked to create a plan to ease our guidance when it is safe to do so and reinstate our mitigation strategies when deemed necessary. Attached you will find a document outlining our updated protocols. We have created five levels that schools will move between as needed. They range from level one, which allows masks to be optional for all individuals with minimal other mitigation strategies in place, to level five, which is a complete switch to virtual learning.

Today, our schools are following level three protocols, with masks being required for all individuals. Effective Monday, October 4, principals and canonical administrators will determine which level protocols best fit their school communities. Your local administrator will be issuing guidance by the end of this week with further direction.

The status of each school will be re-evaluated after two weeks. Please note that we will continue to monitor cases in our schools and our communities, and if necessary, will elevate our protocols as needed. While masks will be optional in some circumstances, they are still highly encouraged, especially for unvaccinated individuals. We hope that this will mark the start of our return to normalcy, but we will always prioritize the health and safety of our students, staff, and community members.

We appreciate your continued support and prayers, and we will provide updates as needed moving forward.

Sincerely,

Karla Luke
Executive Director of School Operations

Stephanie Brown
Director of Curriculum & Development

CC: Joseph R. Kopacz, Bishop of Jackson