



January 12, 2022

Dear Faithful Shepherd Families,

The new year has arrived with continuing and new challenges relative to managing our response to Covid-19 and its variants. We are experiencing significant increase in school absences, but the largest percent of these is due to a valuable measure of caution from families who had known Covid exposure over the break or who had planned a post-travel quarantine before returning to school. We will, of course, make every effort to continue to notify parents of a given class when there is a positive case for a student in attendance. At the same time, the guidance of “monitor for symptoms and remain at home when ill” applies to basically all of us right now.

While teachers proceed with in-person schooling, they are not also conducting virtual school. However, for students absent for any reason, classroom teachers are continuing to provide materials and lesson updates. In some cases, a student might be invited into the online classroom for a specific lesson – or a teacher might suggest a face-to-face virtual check-in with you or your student. These arrangements are being made as needed, per teacher, with specific families.

Today’s letter comes to update you on three specific topics: 1) new guidance regarding quarantine/isolation periods; 2) access to home test kits from our school nurse; and 3) an upcoming vaccination clinic being hosted at Faithful Shepherd School gym.

Current public health guidance, as affirmed for all schools in the Archdiocese, continues to promote these key points:

- Students benefit from in-person learning, and safely returning to in-person instruction continues to be a priority.
- Vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Promoting vaccination can help schools safely return to in-person learning as well as extracurricular activities and sports.
- CDC recommends universal indoor masking by all students (ages 2 years and older), staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.
- The Minnesota Department of Education has adopted the new CDC guidance reducing the recommended time for isolation and quarantine periods to five days. For a detailed presentation, see CDC’s page on [Quarantine and Isolation](#).

For your convenience, **this guidance regarding quarantine/isolation is condensed in the table attached with this email message.** This will assist each family as you make decisions about the necessary period of quarantine or isolation and the criteria for determining a date for each child’s return to school

Our nurses' office has obtained a supply of at-home Covid test kits from MDH for students exhibiting symptoms or who may have been exposed to Covid. If you would like to receive a kit for your student, please use this form: [Request a Test Kit from School Nurse](#). The state of Minnesota also has a site where individuals can request free test kits: [Order a test](#) as well as a listing of test sites: [Find a Testing Site](#).

With the help of a local Community Care Clinic, we are able to host a vaccination site for school families and for the Eagan community. This is currently scheduled for Saturday, January 22, from 10:30am-1:00pm in the Faithful Shepherd School gym. The clinic team will be equipped with Pfizer vaccines for children ages 5-11, as well as with vaccines and boosters for students 12-17 and for adults. Parents must accompany any minors – and the **consent form attached to this email message** must be completed for each person intending to receive a vaccine. In order to pre-register for this clinic, please complete this form: [Vaccination Clinic at FSCS](#). For additional vaccine information and options, go to: [MDH Covid-19 Vaccines](#).

Our school faculty and administrative team members, along with the HSA and active Board committees, are diligently planning for the wonderful school events and traditional activities to which our students and families are accustomed for the upcoming months of the school year. We look forward to a lively Catholic Schools Week Celebration and the family Pizza Bingo scheduled for that week.

As always, we are grateful for the care and concern being exercised and expressed by school parents. We must confide, once again, that even as we plan for the “normalcy” we all desire and expect on the near horizon, we cannot make promises about exactly how or when the impact of Covid will subside. Before the end of January, we will communicate again regarding the broader picture of school life and the status of our Covid related protocols going forward.

Peace, in the Shepherd's care,

Catherine Butel, Principal
Dan Keller, Assistant Principal
Covid Response Team Members

*Attachments: Table with updated guidance for Quarantine/Isolation
Consent form for January 22 Vaccination Clinic hosted at Faithful Shepherd*