



ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE of PORTLAND

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Dear Parents, Guardians, and Staff,

On December 30th, the Maine CDC and DOE released an updated version of the [Standard Operating Procedures \(SOP\)](#) for Maine schools. This is good news for our Maine Catholic school community as these changes allow for less quarantining and more opportunities for students and staff to remain in classroom settings at a difficult time. The updated guidance now allows anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 to return to school after five days of isolation if symptoms have resolved or improved, and your child has been fever free for more than 24 hours without medication.

Regarding changes relevant to close contacts, thanks to our universal masking policy, students and staff are eligible to attend school even if exposure took place within the home or community. The only quarantine required (five days) is relevant outside of school for those who are not fully vaccinated. Children on the bus and outside sports are no longer considered close contacts if exposed.

The testing policies have also been modified. Asymptomatic close contacts should test on the fifth day following exposure (our schools will accept home testing results). Naturally, symptomatic close contacts should be tested as soon as possible, and students and staff who are exposed must wear a mask outside of school when around others for 10 days. Please continue to update the school expeditiously if your child will be out of school for COVID-related reasons. If you have any questions, please contact your school nurse, or if your school does not have a nurse, contact the school principal.

As we return this week from vacation, our focus is on keeping students and staff in a safe environment while keeping our schools open. To that end, we remain committed to all the mitigation strategies we have in place such as universal masking, handwashing/hand sanitizer use, physical distancing, and where available, pooled testing. These strategies help to ensure that our schools are safe for students and staff. We thank you for your continued support and look forward to a healthy new year.

Marianne Pelletier

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The table below has been designed to assist contact tracers, staff, and families to identify their quarantine status.

For each close contact who is asymptomatic and who has not tested positive for COVID-19:			
Where was the exposure? 		In Community	At School
What exceptions to quarantine do they qualify for? 			
1	Is boosted	No quarantine; wear a mask around others x 10 days	
2	Is a fully vaccinated 16-17 year old student who, according to the U.S. CDC, may receive a booster, but has not yet done so		
3	Is not eligible for a booster, but is fully vaccinated		
4	Completed their second dose of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within 6 months, or J&J vaccine within two months		
5	Participates in school pooled testing	Community quarantine x 5 days; wear a mask around others x 10 days	
6	The school is enforcing a mandatory masking policy		
7	None	Quarantine x 5 days; wear a mask around others x 10 days	