

ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC SCHOOL

COVID- 19 Reopening Health Protocols for the 2021-2022 School Year

Revised October 4, 2021

“Jesus said to me, ‘**My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.**’
Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.”
2 Corinthians 12:9

HIGHLIGHTS OF PROTOCOLS:

We know that four things when used altogether decrease the likelihood of spreading the virus:
Sanitizing, Distancing, Masks, and Screening. All four will be covered in this document.

- a. Face coverings are required **indoors** for all students and staff, ages 2 and older. Acceptable masks are cloth masks, disposable masks and KN-95 masks. Masks with one-way valves, gaiters/bandanas or face shields are not permitted. Exceptions to this may be made for students with special needs or with a medical condition. Masks are not required outside during morning recess or lunch recess but will be required at drop-off and pick-up due to the close congregation of students and adults coming onto the campus. Masks are required for physical education classes in the gym, but not while students are outside. Physical education is considered curricular and has a different requirement than after-school sports where mask use varies based on low, moderate, and high-contact sports. Playground Angels will be required to wear a mask while volunteering inside the school or on the playground. [Required by WA Department of Health](#) 820-105, Guidance published on August 11, 2021
 - a. Here's what we're changing it to:
 - b. 1.) Masks are not required outside during recess but will be required for students **and teachers/staff** standing near the signs and near to each other at drop-off and pick-up at the end of the day due to the close congregation of students and adults coming onto the campus. This is only a 10-minute period at the end of the day, and it's a way for us to show solidarity with the students. Thanks for following this. Parents may or may not wear masks, but they are encouraged if anyone asks. (Deciding what "battles" to fight...)
 - c. 2.) Based on Governor Inslee's new requirement for outdoor masks in groups of 500 or more, we want some leniency for parents (and staff) who need to be outside for an hour with students. Instead of "Playground Angels will be required..." we're changing it this week to "Playground Angels and staff on recess duty will be *encouraged* to wear masks outside, especially when close to children. When caring for a child or managing a conflict with a group, please put on a mask."
- b. Students will be spread out in classrooms to achieve a minimum of **three-foot** distancing and six-foot distancing when eating without a mask on. [Required by WA Department of Health](#) 820-105, Guidance published on August 11, 2021
- c. Main bathrooms can be used for **three** students at a time, separated by three feet. Individual bathrooms on each floor can be used by students. **(Decided by the school, not a requirement.)**
- d. School Masses- Students will attend Mass every other week. K,1, and 6-8 will attend the first week and 2nd through 5th grades will attend the second week. This rotation will continue through December and then re-evaluated. **(Decided by the school, not a requirement.)**
- e. Mandatory handwashing 3-4 times per day, hand-sanitizing stations in each classroom. Handwashing stations for students will be located:

- Kindergarten in classroom
 - 1st grade to teacher workroom
 - 2nd grade in classroom
 - 3rd grade- teacher bathroom on second floor
 - 4th grade to first floor bathrooms
 - 5th grade to teacher bathroom on third floor
 - 6th grade to teacher bathroom on third floor
 - 7th grade in classroom
 - 8th grade to separate bathroom in Spanish/Art middle classroom on third floor
- f. Cleaning and sanitizing is done once per day by custodial staff. (Recommendation from the DOH, p. 7 of the Guidance document, but decided by the school.)
6. Self-screening will be done at home for symptoms instead of screening by the staff in the morning. (See page 3 below for details of self-screening.) (Decided by the school, not a requirement.)

Training that will be provided for all students

- a. Students will be trained on the use of face coverings, including how to put it on and take it off, over the nose and over the mouth, and reinforcing how the mask should fit.
- b. Students will be given regular lessons on how to properly wash their hands.
- c. Staff and students will be reminded how to treat someone who might have COVID or shows symptoms with kindness, patience, and understanding. When someone has symptoms of COVID, staff and students are to treat that person with kindness, patience, and understanding.
- d. There is one hand sanitization station per floor, but we will encourage hand-washing.
- e. Bathrooms- students to stand and wait until others come out so that only three are in at a time.

Training that will be provided for all staff

- a. The school has designated staff members who are responsible for ensuring health protocols and proper cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting.
 - i. Mrs. Dennis will once again serve as our school COVID Supervisor this year.
 - ii. Cleaning Team: Dan Anderson, Rita Hawkes, Lisa Blas, Gary Green

NOTE: Emails sent Thurs-Fri will be answered on Mondays, so if you have a time-sensitive question please call the office to relay a message.

- b. Staff will be educated in the language they understand best about coronavirus and how to prevent transmission and the school's COVID-19 policies.
- c. PPE is provided to all staff at no cost including gloves, goggles, face shields and face coverings. If the individual has a medical condition or disability that makes wearing a facial covering inappropriate or when the job has no in-person interaction, he/she may have an exemption.

VACCINE MANDATE (This is required by the WA state government.)

Governor Inslee announced on Wednesday, August 18th that all employees, coaches, teachers, and volunteers in K-12 schools are now required to be vaccinated. ([Proclamation 21-14.1 COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement](#))

- We cannot legally allow unvaccinated adult “workers” in the building after October 18th. This includes all volunteers, staff, teachers, and coaches.
- The mandate **does not exclude** parents and other adults from attending school events, activities, or sporting events. Parents are also welcome at school Masses regardless of vaccination status. Parent/teacher meetings may happen on campus regardless of a parent’s vaccination status.
- If one has a medical or religious exemption from the vaccination, that person may volunteer with other parents but will not be able to work where students are present. Note: *The Catholic church doesn’t currently allow for religious exemptions related to the Catholic faith.* (Requirement of the Archdiocese)
- Regardless of vaccination status, masks will be required indoors by everyone over the age of 2. This is a change for preschool and prekindergarten this year, but we are following the [recommendation of the CDC](#). (The school decided to require children ages 3 and 4 in the preschool.)
- We are required to check vaccination status for anyone “working” in the building (volunteers, coaches, teachers, staff, etc.). Students and parents have the right not to present the vaccination card, however, this may limit his/her capacity to “work” on campus or whether or not to be quarantined after possible exposure. To save time, please feel free to scan or take a photo of your vaccination card and send to Mrs. Dennis (ddennis@school.assumption.org). As we confirm vaccination status for parents, we’ll keep a list so as not to have to ask multiple times. (Required by the governor’s proclamation.)

PROCEDURES FOR DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP (All of these are decisions made by the school.)

Morning Drop-Off:

Parents will drop off students at the cross. They should line up by class until the bell rings at 8:00 am. At that time, students should be three feet apart and have their masks on to enter the building.

If your child is walking or biking, please have him/her come through the south gate by the gym and walk their bikes on the sidewalk.

Afternoon Pick-Up:

Students should line up according to the first letter of their last name. Parents can either drive through the traffic loop or park and walk to the sign where the child is waiting. Students will not be permitted this year to walk to a parent’s car in the parking lot. Only students with written permission will be allowed to walk or bike home. Please remember to drive 5 MPH in the loop and to hang up your cell phone while going through the loop. *Students will be required to wear their masks while waiting to be picked up at their signs.*

After-school Care:

EDP will meet in the library, but students will be spaced at least three feet apart and be seated by grade level. Students will be required to masks indoors, but not outside on the playground.

SELF SCREENING GUIDE FOR HOME

Assumption is following the **lead of PeaceHealth and other healthcare facilities** by asking our families to self-screen for wellness each day before coming to school rather than screening on site. A hard copy of this at-a-glance guide went home in the first Wednesday Envelope. We ask that you post it at home where it will be noticed and refer to it often.

Please remember that sending children to school with even mild cold symptoms can translate into many students having to be tested and missing school. Classroom quarantines have resulted in online learning and massive schedule changes for working families. If you are at all unsure of your child's wellness in the morning before leaving for school, err on the side of caution and keep him/her home. Thank you for your partnership to keep our students, teachers and staff healthy and able to attend school in person.

1. The following symptoms could be related to COVID-19. We are utilizing the [flow chart provided by Bellingham Public Schools](#) to determine whether or not a child or teacher should come to school. Has your child had any of the following symptoms that cannot be explained by an existing condition?
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - A fever of 100.4 or higher
 - Sore throat
 - Chills,
 - Loss of taste or smell
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
 - Congestion/runny nose not related to seasonal allergies
 - Unusual fatigue
2. Have you been in close contact with anyone with confirmed COVID-19?
3. Have you had a positive COVID-19 test for active virus in the past 10 days?
4. Within the past 14 days, has a public health or medical professional told you to self-monitor, self-isolate, or self-quarantine because of concerns about a COVID-19 infection?

LEARN to RETURN PROGRAM (New 10/4/21)

The Learn to Return on-site testing program is an optional program new for schools within the Archdiocese of Seattle to help keep students in school and receive test results sooner. Assumption School will be adopting Level I and Level II of the testing policy. **(NOTE: This program is not for staff or students who have been considered a close contact. They will still need to test off site through [testdirectly.com](#) or through their healthcare provider.)**

Learn to Return provides:

Level I Diagnostic (on-site, PCR test by Curative)-

- Symptomatic individuals will need to be tested each time. The student or staff member may not be on campus while waiting the result of the test. They can be tested on site use a PCR test by Curative, sent to a lab, and the results returned within 48-72 hours. Families can still choose to test through testdirectly.com. Students can return to campus once a negative result is received, and symptoms have improved. (This is for VACCINATED OR UNVACCINATED students and staff.)

Level II Screening (on-site rapid antigen test using BinaxNOW)- This is for high-risk groups, high contact activities (sports), and after travel.

- For students who have traveled by plane or using public transportation, they can be tested on site using the BinaxNOW rapid antigen test on all three of Days 3, 4, and 5 after their return to Bellingham. Students will need to stay at home for Days 1 and 2. They should still monitor for symptoms through Day 7. Students who have been screened can participate in extracurricular activities and athletics starting from Day 3, or whenever the student is attending school. (This is for UNVACCINATED students ONLY.)
- Athletes will be tested using the BinaxNow rapid antigen test before beginning practice for basketball at the beginning of the season (and for any high contact sport), and at least once weekly throughout the season. They may be tested again three days after a game or competition. (This is for UNVACCINATED students ONLY.) (Note: for Holy Hoops participants who are unvaccinated, the school only needs a negative test on the Monday before the tournament begins.)

TRAVEL QUARANTINE

The [WA Department of Health](#) recommends following the [guidelines of the CDC](#) updated on August 25, 2021.

After travel if vaccinated: Fully vaccinated staff and students are not required to quarantine or be tested after travel.

After travel if unvaccinated: Students and staff using public transportation like a plane or bus to travel will now have three options (revised 10/4/21):

1. Get a PCR test 3-5 days after travel AND stay home and self-quarantine for a full 7 days after travel. Students **may not** participate in extracurricular activities or athletics during the 7-day quarantine period. Monitor for symptoms through Day 14.
2. Self-quarantine for 10 days and not get tested. Monitor for symptoms through Day 14.
3. Use the "Learn to Return" program (see above) and return to school on Day 3 with a negative rapid antigen test (BinaxNOW), and continue to test each morning before school on Days 4 and 5. Students **may** participate in extracurriculars and athletics starting on Day 3 or as soon as they return to school. Students monitor for symptoms through Day 14 after travel. Using the "Learn to Return" option will require an additional 15-20 minute wait during drop-off in the morning.

(This was a school decision. Public schools are not following this recommendation because it is difficult for larger districts to track, and it may be different than other private schools.)

Note: There is flexibility in this **school-based** policy according to individual circumstances. For example, *if a family **drives** to another part of Washington for a wedding or large gathering with unmasked, unvaccinated individuals, then the child(ren) may still be asked to quarantine when returning.* On the other hand, *if a family **drives** out of state to stay in a vacation rental with only the immediate family, a quarantine may not be necessary.* Parents are asked to be transparent with the school about their travel plans.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR, SPORTS, EVENTS/MEETINGS ON CAMPUS (Required by WA Department of Health 820-105, Guidance published on August 11, 2021)

The school is still determining which after-school extra-curricular activities will be offered. Choir and Orchestra are electives available for 5th-8th graders, and any time singing is involved the students will need two masks while singing and will need to be at least nine feet apart. Congregational singing will not be permitted temporarily at the school Masses by anyone other than the choir.

Sports will be offered according to the guidelines set by the Whatcom County League of Middle Schools. For indoor sports only, students who are unvaccinated will need to have a **rapid antigen test at least once per week**, typically before a game or match, and once three days after a game or match. All students, regardless of vaccination status, will be required to wear a mask when not competing or practicing indoors. Masks outdoors are encouraged when waiting to compete, especially when students are standing close together for long periods of time. **(These are requirements of the WA DOH.)**

WHAT IF THERE IS AN OUTBREAK OR AN INFECTION ON CAMPUS?

COVID-19 Outbreak is considered when the following have been met:

- Two or more lab-positive cases among students or staff
- Cases have a symptoms onset within 14 days of each other
- Cases are epidemiologically linked
- Cases do not share a household
- Cases are not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting during investigation

a. Isolation Room

If a child is symptomatic during the school day, or a staff member becomes sick during school hours, he/she will go directly to the isolation room where one of the office staff will meet them there. Isolation room is under the stairwell by second grade. Two cots set up in there if needed and parents will be asked to pick up the child when showing symptoms. Students can leave through side door to Virginia Street. A parent will be called to pick the child up and the child will be tested that day.

b. The Whatcom County Health Department will be notified.

We rely on the health department to inform us of next steps. All parents whose children are in that class will be informed without identifying by name the student who went home that day. If there has been an exposure at school, the health department will tell us who needs to be quarantined or isolated. They define “close contact” as fewer than six feet, without a mask, for more than 10 minutes. Not all students will need to quarantine or self-isolate, but we’ll defer to direction from the health department.

Not all students and their siblings will necessarily be quarantined or isolated right away, but parents will have the option to keep their children at home until the test results come back. If the results are positive and anyone has had close contact with that individual, steps will be taken for isolation and quarantine either by family, by class, or for the whole school. The dignity of the human person is so important in this stage, so we encourage all students to be kind to and not to stigmatize or tease anyone who may have gone home with COVID-like symptoms. Online instruction will not be offered for individual students this year, but may be offered if a whole class or multiple classes are required to quarantine.

c. Decontamination of the isolation room:

Decontamination procedures of the isolation room will be conducted immediately after the person with symptoms has vacated the isolation room. The cleaning team and COVID supervisor on site will provide instructions for this that include necessary PPE and solutions to use for disinfecting and sanitizing that space.

If the school is grouping in cohorts and there is an outbreak:

1. Dismiss the entire classroom for home quarantine for 14 days if two or more lab positive cases occur.
2. Close a school to switch to remote learning when 2 or more classrooms are dismissed due to outbreaks
3. 10% or more of classrooms are dismissed due to outbreaks in schools with more than 10 classrooms
4. Schools cannot function due to insufficient teaching or support staff.