

ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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

Revised February 15, 2022

“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. ([Whatcom County Health Department for Students and Families, updated February 11, 2022](#))

Here's what we're changing it to:

- a. Masks are optional for all students, staff, and guests when outside the building. They are still required in the gym and any time inside the school building except while eating or drinking.
- b. Masks are optional for preschool students (anyone under the age of 6), but they are required for adults and teachers in that classroom. *Please note that if your child isn't wearing a mask, he/she may be required to quarantine or isolation for the full 10-day period after exposure or testing positive. The new 5-day rule may not apply.
- 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. **While eating (if less than six feet apart), students are encouraged to limit the amount of talking while their masks are off inside a classroom. Teachers use audiobooks or educational videos to keep them engaged while they are eating for this time.**
- 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.

- 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.
- 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.

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.)

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

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” around students indoors. 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.*
- 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.

PROCEDURES FOR DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

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 are no longer 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 [Symptom Decision Trees for Schools \(Department of Health, 1/24/2022\)](#) 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

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.

The *Test to Stay* program has been approved by the Whatcom County Health Department and we have permission to use these protocols starting from Wednesday, February 16.

Learn to Return provides:

Screening (on-site rapid antigen tests)- This is for high-risk groups, and high contact activities (sports). It is no longer used after travel. The guidance has changed to include students and staff who have been exposed OUTSIDE of school and are asymptomatic. Students with symptoms are still required to test at a lab using the PCR test. At-home tests for symptomatic students will not be valid.

- 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 three times weekly throughout the season. They may be tested again three days after a game or competition. All vaccinated and unvaccinated students are tested.
- Screening is not required for moderate contact sports like volleyball.

Test to Stay offers a chance for close contacts (regardless of vaccination status) to attend school based on whether:

- The exposure was outside the household and the student is willing to test. (Return to school on Day 1, tested twice in a five-day period.)
- The exposure was within the same household and the student is willing to test. (Return to school after last day of contact with the family member in isolation.)
- The student is not able to be tested.

In consultation with the health department, the school will use the [criteria on this site](#) to decide when the student might be able to return using the *Test to Stay* option.

TRAVEL QUARANTINE

The WA Department of Health recommends following the [guidelines of the CDC](#) updated on August 25, 2021. **This policy no longer applies for the current school year.**

~~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.~~

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 changed on **December 17, 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 high-contact indoor sports like basketball, regardless of vaccination status, students will need to have a rapid antigen test at least three times 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.

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

There is updated guidance from January 7, 2022 that we will now be following. You can find the full document here: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/820-105-K12Schools2021-2022.pdf>

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

- Three or more lab-positive cases among students or staff
- Cases have a symptom 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. 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 three feet, without a mask,

for more than 15 cumulative minutes over a 24-hour period. Not all students will need to quarantine or self-isolate, but we'll defer to direction from the health department.

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.

The guidance changed what is required for isolation and quarantine periods. A summary of the changes are here but all information can be found in the linked document above.

Isolation applies to all those who test positive for COVID-19: (If a child cannot wear a mask or hasn't been wearing one (preschool), he/she may still be required to isolate or quarantine for a full 10 days after testing positive or being exposed.)

- Isolate at home from day 0-5, with day 0 being the first day of symptoms or day of positive test if asymptomatic
- Return to school on day 6 if no symptoms or symptoms resolving,

AND

- No fever in the past 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications
- Continue to wear a high-quality, well-fitting mask during days 6-10 after isolation, both in and out of school
- Note: A negative test result is no longer required to return on Day 6 if a child has tested positive (per letter from WCHD to superintendents on January 14, 2022).

Who must **Quarantine** after close contact:

- 5-17 year olds who are unvaccinated or have not yet completed a primary vaccine series
- Those 18 years old or older who are not up-to-date with all recommended doses of vaccine, including third doses and boosters
- Students and staff with symptoms – they must isolate until they receive a documented negative COVID-19 test. A molecular test is preferred.

*Who does not need to **Quarantine** after close contact:

- People with confirmed COVID-19 infection within the last 90 days
- 5-17 year olds who have completed a primary vaccine series
- Those 18 or older who have completed a primary series and recommended booster doses

Remember, anyone who is exposed to someone with COVID-19 should:

- monitor for symptoms and wear a well-fitting mask around others
- isolate and test if symptoms develop
- test on day 5 after exposure even if asymptomatic

Quarantine options:

At-home quarantine:

- Isolate at home from day 0-5, with day 0 being the day of last close contact
- Documented negative test on day 5
- Return to school on day 6 if remain asymptomatic
- Continue monitoring for symptoms and wearing a well-fitting mask during days 6-10 both in and out of school, including during extracurricular activities

