

February 23, 2022

Dear Assumption families,

After the governor's press conference last week regarding possible changes on March 21st, we started looking at what this will mean for our school. In his address, Governor Inslee gave permission for school districts to still have a mask mandate in place, if they choose. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have followed the Whatcom County Health Department's requirements and recommendations for schools. I continue to be on conference calls with the health department and all local school districts every other week, and I will update you as we know more from the DOH and WCHD.

It's our plan right now that if case counts and hospitalizations continue to decline, masks may be optional for Assumption students (indoors) starting on March 21st. This will be something to consider. At the same time, testing and screening through our new *Test to Stay* and *Learn to Return* programs may happen more frequently to accommodate this change in mask mandates. Quarantine, isolation periods, and physical distancing may also change, but this is still to be determined. We will continue to update the **Health and Safety Protocols** document on the school's website and provide updates in the Wednesday Newsletter. I am hopeful that things are improving, but also very aware that the pandemic is not yet over.

The other question I am getting often pertains to a vaccine mandate for children in the 2022-2023 school year. Some families were waiting to re-enroll until they had more information on this decision. We're still uncertain what the state is going to require. However, specific information will be coming from the Archdiocese in the next few weeks, and Assumption has been given permission to wait on implementation of a COVID vaccine for children in the 2022-2023 school year. **Vaccines will not be required for Assumption students in the 2022-2023 school year.** Future decisions starting in August 2023 will be dependent on authorization, future requirements, and allowable exemptions.

New mandates and protocols are developing quickly, and we recognize that much of this new information coincides with enrollment for the next school year. If you would like to meet with me individually, please email me directly to set up an appointment. I continue to be focused on the best way to keep all students in school with few disruptions to their learning. The financial health and success of our school are very important to me, and I am confident that Assumption will continue to thrive as we head into a new school year.

Respectfully yours,

Dan