

Joplin Area Catholic Schools

Est. 1885

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January 11, 2022

Dear members of the Joplin Area Catholic School Community,

Like many of you, we are aware of a growing number of area schools who have announced in the last couple days that they are transitioning to virtual learning due to high numbers of illness, some of which is Covid related. In most situations, this is necessitated by the inability of the schools to staff the schools with healthy teachers and other support staff.

For the time being, we will continue with in-person learning for our schools. While we have seen some increase in levels of illness; whether Covid related or other sickness, our staff has remained healthy, and we have only a couple active Covid cases within our student population.

Our ability to continue to be in school currently, depends largely upon the cooperation between the schools and families about monitoring signs and symptoms of illness and taking appropriate action if any symptoms develop. We would ask that all staff and families follow the following expectations:

- If students, teachers, or support staff are exhibiting any symptoms of being sick – sore throat, fever, cough, etc. we would ask that the individual remains at home until symptoms fully subside, are fever free for at least 24 hours without medication, or until he/she has been able to obtain a negative Covid test result.
- If we have students or staff in a particular classroom who test positive for Covid, families will be alerted to this information, and we will ask that all students and staff in the affected classes remain masked while in school for the 10-day quarantine period. Guidance regarding whether students may participate in extra-curricular activities during this quarantine time will be determined on a case-by-case basis based on vaccination status of the individuals.
- If a family member contracts Covid, we ask you to keep other family members who have had close contact with the individual who is ill, at home in quarantine for the amount of time described in the guidance we are providing you in our updated graphic. This information has been changed based on the updates made by the CDC on January 9, 2022. This information also reflects differences based on whether the individual is up to date with available Covid vaccines or has recently recovered from the virus.
- While many parents opted out of having their child wear a mask earlier this fall, if because of the rise in case numbers, you would like your child to wear a mask during the school day please let the school office know and we will work to assure that your child does so during the day.

Please know that if the number of cases in our area continues to grow and has a greater impact upon our school community, we will review our Covid procedures and adjust our protocols if deemed prudent.

As we continue to navigate this ever changing reality, I would invite us once again to pray I continue to invite us to entrust our schools, parishes, and Joplin community to the provident care of our God as we pray....

Holy Mary, Health of the Sick, pray for us.
Saint Joseph, Hope for the Sick, pray for us.
Saint Marco, protector against epidemics, pray for us.

Respectfully,

Sr. Julie Brandt, SSND, Ed. D.
Director of Schools