



Covid-19 Protocol Update

December 10, 2021

Dear Parents,

As we head into the Christmas season, I want to provide you with a COVID-19 update. We have continued to monitor the virus and its impact on the elementary schools this first semester. Since August 6, 2021, the Archdiocese of Louisville elementary schools have followed the guidance from our local health department, Kentucky Department of Health and the CDC as it relates to COVID-19 and recommended protocols for schools.

In late October and through November we saw a decrease in cases in schools and in the community. Vaccinations also became available for children ages 5-11. We had discussions with school leaders about making changes to our protocols, particularly the requirement of masks. We have continued discussions with our local health department through these many months.

Last week, Louisville Metro Health communicated the following as it relates to the week after Thanksgiving and the beginning of December:

- Cases have increased community-wide and in some schools. (Cases doubled in the community from November 28 to December 3). The statewide positivity rate is over 9%, and almost every county is in the red zone.
- A new variant has been identified, and little is known about it at this time.
- The case count for those with breakthrough infections has risen.
- Louisville Metro Health requested that we continue with the mask requirement through mid-January to provide a buffer after the Christmas holidays and so that we do not contribute to further community spread.

Therefore, after meeting with our elementary school leaders, we will delay any changes to the protocols until mid-January, at the earliest, to monitor any impact on schools from the Christmas holidays and further information that may develop regarding the omicron variant. It is our hope that we will then be able to provide a time frame for moving to a mask optional protocol for parents and families. I will provide an update following our January 11 elementary principals' meeting and further consultation with the health department.

I want to close this communication with a short Advent message.

During the Advent season, I ask you to consider this quote, "How often do we fail to see what's right in front of us simply because we're not looking for it?" It's easy to see differences and call out all that is wrong with the world. Advent challenges us to look for the thoughtful deed, easy smile or kind word that shows us Christ is present and among us in the spirit of this season. Your children, our students, will see you, notice and emulate what you practice. Partner with your faith community to be that example for your own children and those in your faith community.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas,

Dr. Mary Beth Bowling
Superintendent of Schools