

Dear St. Monica School Parents,

In this Advent season, we are preparing our hearts for the hope, peace, and love that the birth of Jesus brings. Our school families have been models of faith, hope, and love throughout this school year as we as a school community have dealt with the challenges of COVID-19 and the added health and safety protocols. Thank you for your positive feedback, your honest input, and your continued dedication to helping make this week of virtual learning successful.

Our school task force continues to work with the Diocese of Dallas task force to analyze the numbers that led us to this week of virtual learning. St. Monica Catholic School numbers in September were 5 students and 1 staff member quarantined. The numbers for October were 4 students quarantined and no staff quarantined. In both months there were no student or staff cases. November numbers were 56 students and 6 staff members quarantined. There were 3 student cases that did not originate on school property. The significant spike of quarantined students in November resulted in St. Monica meeting more than one of the diocesan thresholds which in turn warranted the Diocesan-supported local decision for virtual learning. Moving forward St. Monica Catholic School will report monthly numbers in our Bearcat Byte. Please refer to Mrs. Trudell's video in the Bearcat Byte reflecting on this letter.

We are all eager to bring back our students who desire on-campus learning on Monday, December 7th. Due to the high number of COVID-19 cases within Dallas County and remaining in the red zone, virtual learning remains available for any family who desires it as well as for those who need to quarantine due to close contact of a positive case. If you as a family decide to move from on-campus learning to virtual, please let [Mrs. Shields](#) or [Mrs. Jordan](#) know by Friday, December 4th. If before Thanksgiving break your child was a virtual learner, no need to contact the school. As always all virtual students are welcomed back when a family feels comfortable.

Our staff asks our families to help keep us all safe and healthy. We ask you to:

- Do your health survey daily and submit, this is important for our tracking and control of the virus on campus
- Ensure all masks fit your children well, especially that they cover their noses. The children are remarkable about keeping their masks on, but we have noticed many still do not fit well. There are youth-sized masks made with nose fittings allowing the mask to remain in place even when talking.
- Report any close contact or cases to covid@stmonicaschool.org. Virtual learning will be available for any quarantined student. Please allow 24 hours for the teachers to prepare your child for virtual learning. Our contact tracers are here to assist you with your quarantine/isolation concerns.
- Notification of close contact/cases is essential to keep our current status of no case transmission on-site.
- Continue to follow CDC, State of Texas, and Dallas County guidelines to help mitigate the spread of the virus.

St. Monica Catholic School remains committed to excellence in our faith and academic programs. Working together, we believe we can remain below Diocesan thresholds. As a community of parents and staff, we need to follow protocols and help to mitigate the spread of this virus.

With gratitude,

Father Guadagnoli, Pastor
Mrs. Trudell, President