

Dear Parents,

This summer has been a roller coaster ride! Thank you to all the families who replied to the survey last weekend. Reading your comments really helped us solidify our decision for the beginning of the year. We were all looking forward to a more “regular” year for the 2021-22 school year. Unfortunately, with the Covid Delta variant that we are experiencing, that will not come to pass. The decision of what to do to keep our children safe and the school open, has not been far from our thoughts and prayers since the beginning of July. Every week brings more information about the new variant and the situation is constantly changing. Know that our response will take all new information into consideration and our response will be continually reviewed and will be updated as necessary. Nothing is set in stone for the entire year. We know we will have to be flexible.

Know that our main concern when making this decision has been for the safety and common good of the children in the building, and our community as a whole. We also know that no matter what decision is made, no one will be totally happy. So, in making the decision we needed to be able to say we did the best we could for everyone involved, and that we could live with the consequences of the decision. We also understand that you may not agree with our decision and you need to make the best decision for your child and family and one you can live with the consequences, too. We are hoping that you will not make the decision to leave us, however, if your decision does take you away from St. Veronica for this school year, we will understand, accept your decision and have no hard feelings. We also hope that families will give us the same understanding and acceptance.

### **OUR MASKING DECISION**

We want to give students the best possible school experience we can - being with friends, eating in the cafeteria, being in larger groups for celebrations, having assemblies, having Spirit Families, going on field trips etc.... To do that, students must be in the building. To keep them in the building we must ensure they are not quarantined. To ensure they do not need to be quarantined, we must mask them while inside.

We feel it is our moral and legal responsibility to provide a safe place for every student; we are going to take the precautions that have proven to be effective to keep all of our students in the building everyday, as healthy as possible. It is not appropriate for some parents to determine the safety of everyone else's child. As Catholics concerned with the common good we always consider the most vulnerable in making decisions, decisions in which sacrifice for the good of all is shared by all.

The Clermont County Health Department assures us that if we follow the guidelines listed below, students will not need to be quarantined even if they are exposed, regardless of vaccination status:

- **Masking** for students and staff (regardless of vaccination status).
- **Physical distancing** is maximized (at least three feet between desks).

- Documented **COVID-19 prevention policies** (e.g., identification of individuals experiencing symptoms, strategies to increase ventilation, protocols for cleaning, etc.)

This one sacrifice will allow us to be more normal in many other areas. Last year, masking, and other protocols, allowed us to stay in the building almost the whole year, with the exception of 2 weeks in November. We are hoping masking will continue to keep our students and teachers safe and in the building for the 2021-22 school year.

**Last year we made changes throughout the year based on the changing data, and we will do the same this year. We will also watch the numbers from any local school that offers a choice so we can learn more about how those schools are doing. We'll evaluate the need for continuing masking for all the second week of October in light of circumstances at St. Veronica and in the area.**

Below is a chart that outlines the COVID protocol changes from last year to this year, so you can see that we are working to make this school year a more joyful and "normal" year.

COVID Protocol Changes	Last Year	This Year
Optional remote instructions	Yes	No
Mask indoors	Yes	Yes
Mask Outdoors	No	No
3-6 Distance	Yes when possible	3' when possible
Block Scheduling for MS	Yes	No
Hallway traffic restricted	Yes	No
Temperature Checks	Yes	No
Masses spread over 3 weeks	Yes	No - every other week w/virtual still available
Hand Washing	Yes	Yes
Hand Sanitizer	Yes	Yes
Option for Outdoor classes	Yes	Yes
Water Bottles in Classrooms	Yes	Yes
Disinfecting shared items	Yes	Yes
Lunch in cafeteria	Yes except for MS	Yes for all
Indoor assemblies	No	Yes w/Masks

Field trips	Not until the end of the year	Yes
Volunteers in the building	No	Yes w/masks and Safe Parish
Parents attending Masses	No	Yes w/masks
School Play	No	Hopefully, yes
Computer class eliminated	Yes	No
PE class eliminated	Yes	No
Library closed	Yes	Hopefully no, but we need volunteers to help
Music class in gym	Yes to spread out	No, will be in the classroom
Spirit Families	No	Yes

**Masking protocols will start at the Ice Cream Social on Sunday while indoors.**

Thank you for supporting our efforts to give your children a more normal school experience and for your continued prayers for the health and safety of all our students.

Fr. P. Del Staigers, Pastor

Ms. Sharon Bresler, Principal