



February 15, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians:

This letter marks the twelfth month that I have written you since the onset of COVID last March. Needless to say, it's been quite a year for all of us!

As I have done each month, below you will find our current statistics since the start of this school year. While the total caseload appears high, our weekly average now hovers between 20-30 cases for students and staff. Of course, we'd appreciate no cases for either group, but given our numbers, our schools appear to continue to address the situation successfully.

As of February 1, 2021, COVID-positive statistics for our 19 parish and diocesan schools since September 1 are as follows:

295 student cases out of 6047 students
59 staff cases out of 786 staff members

299 cases in the 14 schools in Delaware
55 cases in the five schools on Maryland's Eastern Shore

We are pleased to report that at the mid-term, our student enrollment has grown since September 1 from 6026 students to 6047 students.

Vaccination of school personnel is underway. Maryland administrators, faculty, and staff have been vaccinated; Delaware vaccinations continue to occur. Catholic school personnel in Delaware apply for vaccinations through the same processes as public, charter, and other private school personnel. There are no separate vaccinations for any one group of educators. For school personnel and for school families, vaccination decisions are made by the employees or parents/guardians, respectively.

Currently, 11 schools (10 elementary schools and 1 high school) are fully in person for students. Three of four parish and diocesan high schools are in a hybrid format for instruction. Due to physical space, it is unlikely that these high schools will return to full in-person instruction before the end of this school year. Five parish and diocesan elementary schools are in a hybrid format for instruction for some grades while other grades are fully in person. Elementary schools will attempt to return more students safely to full in-person instruction as the year progresses.

In all schools the importance of adhering to COVID-compliant behaviors cannot be emphasized enough, even with declining COVID positivity rates and vaccinations underway. Mask-wearing, social distancing, hand sanitizing, and daily wellness checks remain the best ways to mitigate the spread of COVID. Now is not the time to relax any of these strategies.

You are probably aware that Bishop Malooly underwent heart bypass surgery recently. He continues to recover well and is grateful for the prayerful best wishes extended by our school communities to him. Please hold him and all who are ill, especially as a result of COVID, in your daily prayer.

We begin the liturgical season of Lent on Ash Wednesday, February 17. Perhaps during Lent we could offer our inconveniences, suffering, sickness, pain, and even death of loved ones resulting from COVID in reparation for both personal sin and for the communal sin that exists in our world. May this Lent bring each of us closer to the Lord of life who overcame all sin out of love for us through His passion, death, and resurrection.

Thank you for your ongoing support and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Louis P. De Angelo

Louis P. De Angelo, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools