



January 12, 2021

Dear Colleagues:

Happy 2021! May this new year be a happy, healthy, and holy one for all of us. I hope the Christmas break was a time for well-earned rest and relaxation. I appreciate your work last week in teaching virtually. From the statistics described below, I believe you'll see it made quite a difference.

Thank you for your continued attention to COVID-compliant behaviors at school and at home. While we look to the distribution of a vaccine, we must continue to attend to the mitigation strategies.

Each week I have the opportunity to join in a meeting with Delaware superintendents and the Office of the Governor and the Division of Public Health. These meetings are very helpful in informing our COVID decisions for parish and diocesan schools. School nurses in Delaware have had the opportunity to be vaccinated; it is estimated that other school personnel may be eligible for vaccination by early February. Of course, vaccinations are dependent upon available dosages allotted to the state.

In Maryland decisions are regulated by the Department of Health in each county and the available dosages allotted. In the counties where parish schools are located, vaccinations of school personnel have not yet begun.

With regard to vaccinations for families, they will need to be attentive to the news for information about when they will be made available in both states and if there are qualifying features that distinguish the timing of the vaccinations (i.e. age, underlying conditions, etc.).

For school personnel and for school families, vaccination decisions are made by the employee or parents/guardians, respectively.

As of January 8, 2021, COVID-positive statistics for our 19 parish and diocesan schools since September 1 are as follows:

242 student cases out of 6026 students
44 staff cases out of 786 staff members

248 cases in the 14 schools in Delaware
38 cases in the five schools on Maryland's Eastern Shore

All cases, with the exception of one case, have been in the mild to moderate range. School transmissions have not occurred; transmissions have occurred outside of schools.

Of the number of cases reported above, 118 cases occurred during the Christmas break and weeklong virtual learning in January. It seems that the decision for virtual learning last week was helpful in containing a number of cases at home.

As we move forward in this second half of the school year, some schools will be able to welcome back additional students in person and/or to extend opportunities for students to gather appropriately for events (assemblies, plays, sports) provided that they are masked and socially-distanced. If a school determines that broadening its learning opportunities for students has an adverse impact on its COVID-positive numbers, then the school will curtail its plans. These decisions are made by the school in consultation with the Office for Catholic Schools.

I hope this monthly opportunity to write to you since last March has been valuable. Before closing, allow me to share some other news with you. Despite a different kind of instructional year last school year, we are pleased to report SAT data for the 2019-2020 school year showing our students' success.

Diocese of Wilmington Average Scores 2019-2020*

	Evidenced-Based Reading and Writing	Math	Total
Diocese	571	539	1110
Delaware/Maryland	497/522	481/507	978/1029
Nation	528	523	1051

Diocesan Mean Score includes scores from Padua Academy, St. Elizabeth High School, Saint Mark's High School, St. Thomas More Academy, and Saints Peter & Paul High School.

It is very encouraging to see these results. The commitment of teachers and the efforts of students in the virtual learning environment is surely demonstrated by the SAT results.

Bishop Malooly extends his greetings to you as we begin this new year. He has made it a priority to visit our high schools to lead a live-stream prayer service at each school. Know that his prayers remain with us as we move forward.

Thank you for your ongoing support and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Louis P. De Angelo

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