

St. Joseph's Catholic School

COVID Response Update

Since the beginning of the pandemic, St. Joseph's Catholic School's main goal has been the health and safety of our students and staff. Our secondary goal has been to continue to provide in person learning for our students. We are adding a third goal of the importance of our students' social/emotional health.

The considerations for moving to masks optional are four-fold.

1. We met the criteria set forth two weeks ago of fewer than 8 positive cases and fewer than 15 people in quarantine
2. Looking at data of positive cases in Catholic schools requiring masks and those having masks optional – the schools requiring masks have a slightly higher number of positive cases than those schools not requiring masks. In addition, most Catholic schools across the state of Idaho have already lifted mask requirements with little to no changes in positive cases (We are aware that many factors play into this data)
3. The social emotional health of our students must be considered. Research is showing an increase in poor student behavior and an increase in student depression.
4. Parental choice - Vaccinations are now available to students within our school age group. A significant percentage of our staff and students have made this choice. Parents are the primary educators of their child/children and can guide the choice that is best for their family.

Beginning Monday, February 14th, St. Joseph's Catholic School will move to optional masks for all students and school personnel. There are a few circumstances with individuals or classrooms that may require temporary mask requirements (Please see guidelines below)

In continued consultation with our school nursing staff, as we evaluate the health of our school community, we are adjusting the guidelines for students and staff for the foreseeable future. Our protocols follow many of [CDH's recommendations](#) but supersede some based on data within our St. Joseph's school community. We will evaluate and adjust these protocols as needed.

For the time being, these protocols are in effect regardless of vaccination status. Our rationale is most of the positive results we have seen are in those who have been vaccinated.

For those who provide the school with a positive test result, there will be a 90-day grace period to avoid quarantine after an additional exposure.

Positive COVID Test Result

Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 must isolate at home for 5 days with a return to school on day 6 if asymptomatic. If returning on day 6, the parents must agree to have their child wear a mask for another 5 days while in the classroom. If parents do not want the child to wear a mask, child must quarantine for 10 days. If symptoms persist after day 6, remain home until symptom free for 24 hours. Continue to wear a mask for 10 days. It is recommended that siblings stay home.

COVID Exposure Within the Household

It is recommended that siblings stay home for 5 days with family exposure. If a family chooses to send their child to school, they must remain asymptomatic, and parents must agree to have their child wear a mask for 10 days while at school following household exposure.

COVID Exposure at school

Student/staff exposed to COVID at school but presenting no symptoms (asymptomatic) may stay at school. Monitor closely for symptoms for 10 days

COVID Exposure Within the Community – Outside Exposure

Student/staff exposed to COVID at school but presenting no symptoms (asymptomatic) may stay at school. Monitor closely for symptoms for 10 days

If you choose not to have your child tested, a 10-day isolation/quarantine is required.

Tests Accepted

PCR, NAAT, or medically administered Rapid Antigen test. Test results must be provided to the school. No at home tests accepted.

Sick Child – non COVID symptoms

Sick child stay home for 24 hours. When **symptom free** for 24 hours, may return to school. Please keep your child home if he/she is not feeling well. Siblings can remain at school

Considerations for adjusting mask requirements

- If 10-15% of students in a particular class (grade level within middle school) test positive within a week's time, the students in the class will be required to wear masks for ten days. This could be an indicator of spread within the school

Thank you for your understanding as we continue to navigate through the repercussions of COVID.