



Wednesday, December 1, 2021

## ***Important Bulletin from the Principal: School Announcements on COVID***

**To All Saint Michael School Parents, Guardians, Teachers, Staff and Friends**

When Father Chris appointed me interim principal last July, I made the promise that despite the pandemic, we will conduct a “**normal school year**”. Together we deemed this as essential for the emotional, social and educational progress of your children.

So far we have proceeded with a normal school year with our one mask rule firmly in place. Until this week we had only four COVID cases or exposures in a school population of over 250 students, teachers and staff.

However, since we have returned from Thanksgiving, we have experienced a significant increase in cases. Our PreK-4 and Second Grade have been the most affected so far with a total of ten positive cases in a total population of 34 students. One of our staff has also tested positive. We will keep these members of our school family in our daily prayers.

As a rapid response to this situation, I am reiterating the policies and procedures we have had in place since the beginning of the school year and I am making the following announcements:

- 1. We continue with a normal school year with the mask rule in place.**
  - All regular classes will continue to meet at the school.
  - All regular athletic practices and games will continue.
  - The School Mass next week and the Christmas Concert on December 17<sup>th</sup> will go on as scheduled as these are part of our religious studies program.

- Parent-Teacher Conferences will go on as scheduled tomorrow. Parents of children who are COVID positive are asked to contact the teacher to make an appointment for a phone conference.
2. **We will not close the school or go to online instruction as an entire school.** But we have prepared to go to online instruction next week in case many students or one or more of our teachers are at home on quarantine.
  3. **All social and similar non-instructional gathering events have been cancelled.** These include Drop and Shop, the Bake Sale, and the Junior High Dance. Also, as Scrooge-like as this may seem to us, we should not make plans for the usual hosted in-school or after-school Christmas gatherings, dinners and parties.
  4. **If you self-report to Nurse Stephany that your child has tested positive for COVID or if you report that your child has been exposed by a family member outside of school:** Your child remains home in quarantine for seven days and needs to present a negative test to the School Nurse to return to school.
  5. **If Nurse Stephany informs you that your child may have been exposed *in school*:** If you consent, your child will be tested here at school, no charge. If negative, the child can remain in school without quarantine. Then the student will be tested each day for seven days to remain in school. The test is quick and easy. Nurse Stephany can administer the rapid test here, no charge.
  6. **We must have your consent** to test your child at the school, so follow this link to full out and submit the consent form:  
<http://www.cic-health.com//consent/ma>
  7. If you have questions. To contact Nurse Stephany:  
[nurse@saint-michael.com](mailto:nurse@saint-michael.com)  
Phone: 978-453-9511. Extension 106
  8. **All staff tested.** I am asking all teachers and staff to get tested this week by Nurse Stephany or elsewhere.
  9. **We strongly recommend that all eligible children be vaccinated as soon as possible.** All our students age 5 and older are eligible to be vaccinated right now.
  10. **No School on Monday, December 20<sup>th</sup>.** The Christmas vacation begins at the end of the Christmas Concert on December 17<sup>th</sup>.

**11. Return from Christmas Vacation:** School will reopen as scheduled on Monday, January 3, 2022. We can expect that with all the holiday season travelling and gatherings that will undoubtedly occur over the vacation that cases may spike again. So we will ask that all students, teachers and staff be tested at the school, no charge, on Monday, Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> and Monday, January 10<sup>th</sup>.

**12. Open Meeting with Parents on Conference Day, Thursday, December 2, 2021.**  
Father Chris, Mary Fran and I will hold an open Q&A session on COVID and any other matter of concern to you, from 5:30 – 6:30 PM in the School Hall.

All our families and students have been wonderful this year in showing care and concern for each other and doing what it takes to have as normal school year as possible. I thank you sincerely for managing through this pandemic with us. And I also thank each of our faculty and staff for their great work.

The most significant action of all in our school community is prayer. We will continue our prayers for the strength to keep moving forward and for the day when the pandemic is behind us and we are restored to full community.

God Bless,

*Mark*

Principal Mark

Mark Rocha, Principal  
Saint Michael School  
[mrocha@saint-michael.com](mailto:mrocha@saint-michael.com)  
Mobile: 917-880-9648