



OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

August 9, 2021

Diocese of Dallas to reinstate mask protocol for its Catholic schools

In a letter to parents, the Superintendent of the Diocese of Dallas Catholic schools announced that effective Tuesday, August 10, 2021, masks will be required to be worn by everyone inside school buildings regardless of vaccination status. Dr. Matt Vereecke (pronounced Veh-ree'-kee) cited the "clear and present danger for unvaccinated children" caused by the Delta variant along with rising COVID case numbers as the reason for the decision.

As case numbers declined, principals and pastors were given authority to make local site decisions for their individual schools. The majority of the diocese's Catholic schools had already adopted masking protocols. The decision announced August 9 will ensure a uniform approach to safety on all diocesan campuses.

According to Dr. Vereecke, "While these protocols will be in place until further notice, it is our intention to return local control as soon as it is safe to do so." Vereecke says that will be determined by the same factors used to make the decision last year: local case rates, vaccination rates, hospital capacity, and internal data regarding school cases.

Local guidance will still apply for sports, outdoor activities and volunteer activities. There are approximately 15,000 students enrolled in the Dallas diocese's 31 Catholic schools. The return of the masking protocol comes as those students head back to class throughout this week.

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