

This week our Health and Safety Taskforce was hard at work! Tuesday, a group of us participated in a Conference Call with the former President of the University of SC, Dr. Pastides. Dr. Pastides is also an Epidemiologist and has provided consultations to various businesses and universities regarding safety during this time pandemic time. A parent from Cardinal Newman High School in Columbia arranged this meeting for all the Catholic Schools in our Diocese. In addition, a sub-committee (including parents) met to review our school Health and Safety Policies.

This week's message (Be sure to CLICK the blue font for links):

Schools may consider implementing several strategies to encourage behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Staying Home when Appropriate

- Educate staff and families about when they/their child(ren) should [stay home](#) and when they can return to school.
 - Actively encourage employees and students who are sick or who have recently had [close contact](#) with a person with COVID-19 to stay home. Develop policies that encourage sick employees and students to stay at home without fear of reprisal, and ensure employees, students, and students' families are aware of these policies. Consider not having perfect attendance awards, not assessing schools based on absenteeism, and offering virtual learning and telework options, if feasible.
 - [Staff and students should stay home](#) if they have tested positive for or are showing COVID-19 [symptoms](#).
 - Staff and students who have recently had [close contact](#) with a person with COVID-19 should also [stay home and monitor their health](#).
- CDC's criteria can help inform when employees should return to work:
 - [If they have been sick with COVID-19](#)
 - [If they have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19](#)

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- Teach and reinforce [handwashing](#) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring to ensure adherence among students and staff.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).
- Encourage staff and students to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).

Cloth Face Coverings

- Teach and reinforce use of [cloth face coverings](#). Face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger students) to wear in all-day settings such as school. Face coverings should be worn by staff and students (particularly older students) as feasible, and are **most** essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. Individuals should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to [wash their hands](#) frequently. Information should be provided to staff, students, and students' families on [proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings](#).
 - Note: [Cloth face coverings](#) should **not** be placed on:
 - Children younger than 2 years old
 - Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious
 - Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance
- [Cloth face coverings](#) are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms. [Cloth face coverings](#) are not surgical masks, respirators, or other medical personal protective equipment.

Adequate Supplies

- Support [healthy hygiene](#) behaviors by providing adequate supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, cloth face coverings (as feasible) and no-touch/foot-pedal trash cans.

Signs and Messages

- Post [signs](#) in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that [promote everyday protective measurespdf icon](#) and describe how to [stop the spreadpdf icon](#) of germs (such as by [properly washing hands](#) and [properly wearing a cloth face coveringimage icon](#)).
- Broadcast regular [announcements](#) on reducing the spread of COVID-19 on PA systems.
- Include messages (for example, [videos](#)) about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and families (such as on school websites, in emails, and on school [social media accounts](#)).
- Find free CDC print and digital resources on CDC's [communications resources](#) main page.

Helpful Links

[Social Distancing with Children](#) Coronavirus (COVID-19) is spreading through communities in many countries now. The best way to fight this spread is for everyone to practice social distancing and stay home. Social distancing puts space between people. When people who are infected with the virus stay away from others, it will stop the spread of the virus.

kidshealth.org

Helping Kids Get Used to Masks

Hand Washing: Why It's So Important Good hand washing is the first line of defense against the spread of illnesses, including coronavirus (COVID-19). And it helps protect you against everything from the common cold to more serious infections, such as meningitis, bronchiolitis, the flu, hepatitis A, and many types of diarrhea.