

June 8, 2021
Month of the Sacred Heart
Year of St. Joseph

Dear Catholic School Communities,

The New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) has issued new guidance on mask use while outdoors at school. Given this is now official state health policy, the Health and Safety Task Force of the Office of the Superintendent has reviewed this information and now recommends that masks are not required outdoors for students or adults, effective immediately, regardless of vaccination status at Catholic elementary schools in the Archdiocese of New York.

The new guidance is as follows:

- **Face Masks:** Responsible Parties must maintain protocols and procedures for students, faculty, staff, and other individuals to ensure appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is used to protect against the transmission of the COVID-19 virus when in indoor school facilities. Specifically, appropriate PPE means, at least, an acceptable mask, which is required to be worn by all individuals in all classroom and non-classroom settings, including but not limited to hallways, school offices, restrooms, gyms, auditoriums, etc. All visitors must wear masks. Masks should have at least two layers of material (e.g. 2-ply). However, Responsible Parties should allow students to remove their mask during meals. Acceptable masks include but are not limited to cloth-based masks (e.g., homemade sewn, quick cut,) and surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose. Effective June 7, 2021, face masks are not required to be worn outdoors on school grounds, including during outdoor school sports. However, Responsible Parties may choose to require face masks outdoors on school grounds, subject to the parameters of this guidance. No student, teacher, staff member, or visitor may be prevented from wearing an acceptable face mask voluntarily on school grounds.

Please note masks must still be worn by everyone indoors at schools and on buses.

Thank you for your patience as we have navigated the various mask use information over the last few days.

Sincerely,

Mr Michael J. Deegan
Superintendent of Schools, Archdiocese of New York