



DIOCESE OF TRENTON

Department of Catholic Schools

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Vincent de Paul Schmidt, Ed.D.
TO: School Administrators
RE: Safety Protocols 2021-2011
DATE: August 18, 2021

Principals of the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Trenton:

As I am sure you are aware, the Department of Catholic Schools (DCS) has been contacted many times over the past months/weeks regarding the mandating of masks in our Catholic schools for the 2021-2022 school year.

The Governor of New Jersey has declared, through Executive Order 251, that all schools (public and non-public) will start the school year 2021-2022 wearing masks in the classrooms.

Up until this point, the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Trenton have followed the mandates that were formally outlined in Executive Order 175 as well as the directives of the local health departments in which our schools reside. The protocol of following State of New Jersey mandates and the recommendations of the local health departments will continue.

I would like to clarify the position of the DCS as of this writing. Understanding that if the Covid pandemic forces a different path forward, the Catholic schools will (as we have done since March 2020), adapt and do everything possible to keep our schools open with the safety and health of our students as the primary concern.

Vaccines have been proven to assist people to avoid the most horrific effects of the Covid-19 virus. The DCS strongly recommends, but **does not mandate**, along with the Centers for Disease Control and the State Health Department, getting vaccinated to mitigate the effects of Covid-19.

Masks have been an effective tool in combating the spread of the virus through airborne transmission. The Executive Order 251 states that masks are mandated to be worn in our Catholic schools.

All students, faculty, staff and administrators will be required to wear a mask while engaged in school activities. The masks will ensure safety as the highest of priorities.