



DIOCESE OF LAKE CHARLES + OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Dear Families and Employees,

As we all know these last few months have been a challenge. However, I am grateful for a deep faith and the knowledge that with prayer, God can calm all storms. Our COVID-19 task force has been and continues to be committed to bringing back a sense of normalcy for all our students. As stated before, we are focused on the following areas.

Commitment: Our continued commitment to families that we will continue to provide an excellent Catholic education focused on our Catholic faith and academic excellence.

Restore: Our plan to restore schools, opening August 24, 2020 and maintain schedules that will not present a challenge to working families. In addition, maintaining flexible attendance policies for both students and employees who are ill or must quarantine.

Opportunity: Exploring all opportunities for teaching and learning to maintain continued student academic progress throughout the year. Maintaining policies for athletics that are consistent with LHSAA guidelines at the secondary level and CCAL recommendations/policies at the elementary level. Encouraging extra-curricular activities with modifications to ensure the safety of students and staff.

Staff: Providing professional development to administrators, teachers, and staff on best practices to maintain a safe environment for students and staff members upon return to school campuses.

Safety: Logistical planning to ensure that all health, safety, and cleaning procedures are put into place to re-open for the 2020-2021 school year. This includes our office issuing clear directives aligned with CDC guidelines, BESE Nonpublic 741 standards and the Louisiana Department of Health and vetted by our task force and trusted health partners. Protocols related to student/employee exposure, social distancing throughout campus, required cleaning procedures and the use of face coverings, will be included in each school site plan.

As we plan for the re-opening of schools we continue to rely and are in constant contact with our school administrators, pastors, parents, school stakeholders and diocesan leadership. Also, I am fortunate to be able to speak almost daily with my Catholic Superintendent colleagues throughout the state. We continue to be grateful to CHRISTUS Ochsner Health Southwestern Louisiana and the medical professionals we have partnered with. As each school is completing their school site implementation plan, they are submitting it to my office for support and assistance. Parents will be receiving detailed information from their school sites the week of July 27th.

We will continue to be flexible to both the guidelines and medical recommendations as they are released and appreciate your patience in this process. We cannot accomplish this without the support of our families. As always, I understand the sacrifice that each of you make to support Catholic education, either as a parent, guardian, or employee.

In prayer, *Kimberlee Gazzolo* - Superintendent