



ST. MALACHY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Dear parents,

The Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) held their weekly school webinar yesterday. They stated that while universal case investigation and contact tracing during the initial phase of the pandemic was justified as the phases of the pandemic evolved, public health experts agree this degree of response is no longer optimal. Therefore, the IDOH made updates to the COVID policies for school settings. Effective February 23, 2022:

- IDOH no longer recommends contact tracing and quarantining in schools
- Schools do not need to report any COVID-19 case information to IDOH, school dashboard will be discontinued.
- Schools should continue to isolate positive individuals for at least 5 days per CDC.
- Schools should continue to assist their LHD with exposure notification when there is a cluster of positive COVID-19 cases or an outbreak.
- Schools should notify their Local Health Department (LHD) when absenteeism reaches 10 percent for COVID-like illness or when schools are concerned about the level of illness.
- A negative test or doctor's note is no longer required to return to school.
- As with other illnesses, students should not return to school unless they are fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication and their symptoms are resolving

What this means to St. Malachy Catholic School beginning Tuesday, February 22, 2022:

- Masking is optional for all students and staff members.
- We will return to our pre-pandemic sickness policy in the student handbook.
- We will continue to send students home when they show signs of illness such as fever or vomiting. Students must be symptom free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications before returning to school.
- We may require a doctor's note to return after an illness at our discretion.
- We will not be contact tracing positive cases, quarantining students based on contact at home or at school, nor notifying the school community of positive cases.
- Students/staff that test positive will isolate for 5 days, returning on the day 6. We will collect homework for pick up; no Remote Learning.
- Anyone that is currently quarantined, can return to school on Tuesday, February 22.

Your prayers and support over the past two years have been appreciated as we have navigated the past two years together. Have a safe and relaxing weekend. God bless you all.

Mrs. Sandra Kennison

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