



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

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MR. MICHAEL J. DEEGAN, SUPERINTENDENT

December 4, 2020

Dear Staten Island Catholic School Families,

Thanks to your efforts and attention to detail, along with the arduous work of your principal and teachers, your school has complied with the onerous demands of the original New York State testing requirements. It appears that we collectively **have satisfied the original orange zone testing process, and your school will reopen its doors for in-person learning this coming Monday, December 7. You will receive individual communications from your school principals as some grades, classes, or school buildings may remain remote due to a positive case's quarantine requirements.**

If you are in the small group of those with tests still pending, we are currently working with our testing professionals to ensure your child's results are received as soon as possible. No one may be in a building without a confirmed negative test result. Labs are currently experiencing both national and local delays due to the extraordinary number of tests being processed.

As you return to your building, please remain mindful that the vast majority of risks of encountering COVID-19 exist *away from school and outside school hours*. Given the number of asymptomatic positive test results in our schools, it is clear that we must continue to be vigilant. Get yourself tested, stay socially distant, and please limit those who you are around. Please continue to be mindful of the choices you make in terms of family activities and gatherings. Know that your school is only as safe as the people who enter it.

This week, Governor Cuomo announced changes to the guidelines under which we all must operate. Once we receive those new measures, we will continue to work with you to keep our schools open as long as they are safe. **Our understanding is that these new mandates are less stringent than the previous guidelines in response to the scientific evidence that our schools are safe.**

While it has been frustrating to adapt to the ebb and flow of the continually changing requirements from Albany and New York City Hall, these very protocols allow us to keep our doors open and provide the safe learning environment for which we are now known across the country.

When we look back on these difficult days, history will show it was the *God-given resilience and adaptability* of our families and our staff that kept our schools moving forward in the face of these challenges. Let us continue to work together and pray together to Our Lady, Health of the Sick.

Sincerely,

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