

Friday, February 18, 2022

Dear Families,

Thank you for all that you have done to support and assist each other in these challenging years with the pandemic. The success we have enjoyed is in thanks to the strategies we have employed; while we, like many other organizations have learned and continue to receive guidance as to new data and best practices. While clearly the vaccines continue to be our strongest tool available for most of us, we are aware and sensitive that for some of our most vulnerable people, especially children under five years-old, the vaccines are still outside of reach. This along with what we have experienced with variants, call us to remain ever vigilant as well as responsive to this ever-changing situation.

We continue to use a multi-layer approach to our care as well as precautionary measures, for our church, as well as our day school/nursery school and the other ministries we serve. With new data and updated guidelines, we are adapting so that we can continue to more fully live into our life and ministry safely.

One such new guideline has recently been issued from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), particularly as it pertains to quarantine periods of identified close contacts. Thanks to new data and these recommendations we can adapt our own Health & Safety Plan Related to Coronavirus in the following way:

For our children and those unvaccinated who have been identified as a close contact (*someone who has come within 6 feet of the person up to a total of 10 minutes or more of someone diagnosed "positive" for COVID*):

The identified close contact would need to quarantine from school/programming for 5\* or 10 days, such as:

\* 5 Day Protocol = The close contact could return to school / resume programs on Day 6, provided:

1. Proof of a negative COVID test (either home test or by a physician / clinic)
2. Use of a face mask throughout the school day / program for the remaining 5 days

10 Day Protocol = Unable to provide a negative COVID test *and/or* unable to wear a mask for days 6-10.

This change would be based on the information from the CDC found here:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>

As a reminder, it is imperative that you continue to monitor your child and all family members for possible symptoms and keep your child home if he/she are experiencing any of the symptoms outlined by the CDC and contact your healthcare provider.

We will continue to follow all CDC and Health Department guidelines and directives to help ensure a healthy and safe environment for your child. We appreciate that we are all working together to prevent community spread of COVID through our shared practices and adhering to our protocols as explained in our Health & Safety Plan Related to Coronavirus. For the most up-to-date information on the COVID-19 pandemic, please visit the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov>

Please know how valued your family is to our school and parish. We remain ready to help and support your child and family in whatever way possible. You may always reach me directly at (513) 543-7631 or you may reach Fr. Darren by email at [darren@stthomasepiscopal.org](mailto:darren@stthomasepiscopal.org) or call him directly at (513) 448-7999.

Thank you once again for all that you are doing to help support St. Thomas and the well-being of everyone we serve. May God continue to bless you and keep your family a safe and healthy!

Emily Keiser

Ms. Emily Keiser, STNS Director

Darren Elin

The Rev. Darren R.S. Elin, Priest & Rector

## Updated Criteria Based on Current Guidance for the 2021—2022 Academic & Program Year

Following the latest CDC and Department of Health guidance, we have updated the Operational Criteria. St. Thomas uses as our Operating Guide a combination of key indicators, including:

- Safety provisions, supplies and adequate staffing available to maintain our COVID Health Policy and reliability of operation
- Number of known transmissions, both active and cumulative as well as the number quarantined due to an identified close contact
- Community Health Measures, including current Transmission Rate Levels by CDC

Following the state guidelines and best practices of our local school districts, St. Thomas will monitor and assess these indices on a weekly basis each Wednesday to determine any action needed for the following week to help ensure ongoing operations for both the school and parish. Each level will call for specific protocols of capacity and protective measures. We take these measures in an effort to better minimize the risk of infectious disease; we cannot eliminate all risks associated with COVID. Our policies and procedures stand subject to change within the context of the pandemic.

## Applying CDC Transmission Rating & Guidance to Operations for St. Thomas

Level 1 - Blue	Level 2 - Yellow	Level 3 – Orange	Level 4 - Red
<b>Low Transmission</b> 1 - 9.9	<b>Moderate Transmission</b> 10 - 49.9	<b>Substantial Transmission</b> 50 - 99.9	<b>High Transmission</b> 100+
Those not fully vaccinated are expected to utilize face masks as appropriate, masks optional for those fully vaccinated.  STNS: • Masks Reserved area available. • Full programming for Church and School (STNS)	In addition to Level 1: Face masks for ALL (children < 3 are exempt) are recommended while indoors  • Modified / hybrid programming in place for Church and School (STNS) • Reserved masks area available	In addition to Level 2: Face masks for ALL (children < 3 are exempt) are highly recommended.  • Communion with intinction • “Mask Required” zones • Modified activity & duration • Intersession Cleaning Protocols	In addition to Level 3 Face masks for those ALL (children < 3 are exempt) are highly recommended regardless of vaccination status and social distancing measures followed.  • Modified Communion • Liturgical practice variance • “Mask Required” zones throughout building • Limited capacity controls
STNS: • Lower student to teacher ratio • Enhanced cleaning protocols • Staggered drop-off & pick-up • Frequent hand-washing	Additionally for STNS: • Home health screening expected • Limited non-essential visitors • Cohort (pod) class arrangements • Air-filtration protocols • Hybrid programming	Additionally for STNS: • Staff use of face shields • Modified programming	Additionally for STNS: • Face masks required in common areas • Staff use of Masks & PPE throughout the day

*Protocols are subject to change, based on updated data, guidance, recommendations, and guidance received. Following the state guidelines and best practices of our local school districts, St. Thomas Nursery School would assess the key indicators on a weekly basis (each Wednesday) to determine the operational level and any needed actions for the following week.*