



“My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God”

IMPORTANT COVID-19 UPDATE | Week of 3/9/20

Dear Principals,

This week Catholic Superintendents from New England gathered for our bi-annual meeting and as you can imagine, COVID-19 was a primary topic. Things are changing rapidly and as events continue to unfold it is clear that our system of Catholic schools need a plan in the event that one school, multiple schools, or all of our Catholic schools close for longer than a few days.



For this reason, I have asked Lisa Zolkos to organize a “train the trainer” model in order to train school leaders and teachers on how to use google classroom to deliver internet-based instruction in the event there is a need to close your schools. Since half of our schools are already Google friendly, Lisa Zolkos has arranged for Tinashe Blanchet, a representative from Google, to provide full day workshops this Monday and Tuesday on delivering instruction via Google Classroom. School participating in the diocesan plan for remote instruction should send **1-3 personnel** on either Monday, March 16, or Tuesday March 17, to the Chancery at 153 Ash Street from 8am to 4pm. As this is a “train the trainer” model, trained school personnel should return to the school and train the other teachers at mandatory scheduled staff meetings next week.

Right now, the NHDOE allows private schools to submit a plan for approval by the Commissioner that will allow schools to conduct instruction via the internet for **up to five days per year** when the school has been closed due to inclement weather or other emergency. Daily class work assignments must have been planned and prepared in advance. What should be included in the plan that needs to be submitted to the commissioner can be found at <https://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/division-of-educator-and-analytic-resources/bureau-of-educational-opportunities/public-school-approval-office/remote-instruction> .

In the meantime, the CDC has Interim Guidance for Administrators of US Childcare Programs and K-12 Schools located at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html> . Also, state and local health departments, including the New Hampshire (NH) Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division of Public Health Services’ (DPHS), are monitoring the rapidly developing COVID-19 situation. Information about this outbreak will be available at <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/2019-ncov.htm> and continuously updated.

The following are further suggestions for schools from the Chancery:

- No Business or school trip air travel before April 30, 2020
- Reinforce the “Stay home if you are sick” policy
- No attendance at all: out-of-state conferences
- Reconsider large meetings/assemblies for the next four weeks
- Consider contingency plans should you decide to postpone fundraising events or galas. Please call Brian Harrison and David Thibault should you decide to do so.
- If recently traveled abroad, refer to the CDC advisories for level 2 or 3 countries
- Employee should also be quarantined if any household member is quarantined for possible exposure to COVID-19
- Devise a school plan to prevent the spread.... i.e. best practices for disinfecting, sanitizing, etc.
- Follow pastors’ lead regarding liturgical practices

Most importantly, historically, in such times the Church and her faithful pray, fast, and do penance. Let us remember to pray and especially ask for the intercession of our Blessed Mother for the health and safety of all school communities and all those affected by this virus.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Dave T.