



# Catholic Diocese of Richmond

## Press Release

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### **Diocese of Richmond Office of Catholic Schools Will Resume In-person Classes on August 24**

RICHMOND, VA – The Diocese of Richmond Office of Catholic Schools will begin the 2020-2021 academic year with in-person instruction five days per week on Monday, Aug. 24.

“For the most part, we are so different than the public school system. Our size is really what is allowing us to be able to do this,” said Kelly Lazzara, superintendent of schools for the Catholic Diocese of Richmond. “We’ve been able to look at our classrooms and say, ‘How can we adjust? How can we maintain a six-foot distance or even down to a three-foot distance with wearing masks and still really provide them with an in-person instruction?’”

Diocesan Catholic schools were required to establish preparedness plans based on the “Phase Three Guidance for Virginia Schools” released by Governor Northam and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and the Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE).

While day-to-day operations at each school will differ slightly, requirements for all diocesan schools include implementing a health screening process for staff, students and visitors; enforcing physical distancing; and reinforcing the use of face coverings for all staff persons and students.

Most diocesan Catholic schools applied for the Intent to Vary, meaning each school submitted an application to maintain a physical distance between three and six feet in classrooms to the local health department and the VCPE. The distance between students could be as few as three feet apart when space is limited; however, a six-foot distance will be maintained wherever possible.

Additionally, all diocesan schools have created a health mitigation plan. Committees at each school will continue to meet throughout the school year to discuss plans and evaluate progress.

More information on the reopening of diocesan Catholic schools is available at <https://richmonddiocese.org/reopening-our-schools>.

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