



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
DIOCESE *of* DES MOINES

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Announce Reopening Plan for the 2020-2021 School Year

August 7, 2020, Des Moines, IA — The Diocese of Des Moines released a comprehensive plan to re-open its sixteen schools this fall. All diocesan PS-8th grade schools plan to re-open for in-person instruction in August, and parents will have choices regarding learning options to meet their child's needs including five-day-a-week in-person instruction or a fully-remote learning option.

"It remains our goal to open our school doors for on-site learning for the first day of school," said Donna Bishop, Superintendent of Schools. "For some families however, the remote learning option may be necessary for medical or other reasons. Our schools are prepared to partner with any family that would like to explore the remote learning option for their child."

Key components of the reopening plan address the health and safety of students, teachers and staff while at school. These key components include: Health and Safety Measures, Academic Quality, Learning Options for Families, Continuity of Education, Social-Emotional Health, and School-Home Communications. Mitigation strategies outlined in the plan were developed in collaboration with local public health officials and health professionals to solidify decisions related to best practices surrounding infectious disease control.

Bishop added, "We recognize that this is a fluid situation, and we will continue to revise protocols and update parents as we approach the opening of school."

Parents were notified of the diocesan-wide reopening plan earlier this week and individual school Return-to-Learn plans approved by the Iowa Department of Education are posted on each school's website. In the event that schools are directed to close again, all students will be able to quickly pivot to remote learning that continues their rigorous and personalized education.

"We understand the importance of establishing a positive, safe and supportive learning environment as our students navigate the unprecedented challenges due to the disruptions caused by the pandemic," shared Bishop. "We want to ensure student learning continues. Schools are working with families to meet their individual needs. No student will miss out on a high quality education because of this virus."

The Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools includes 16 schools in 23 counties in central and southwest Iowa. Catholic schools in the Des Moines Diocese build Christ-centered, collaborative, inclusive partnerships with parents, students, and parishes to provide innovative academic excellence and inspirational faith formation for students.

To learn more about how diocesan schools are responding to COVID-19, visit

<https://www.dmdiocese.org/catholic-schools/covid-19>.

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