

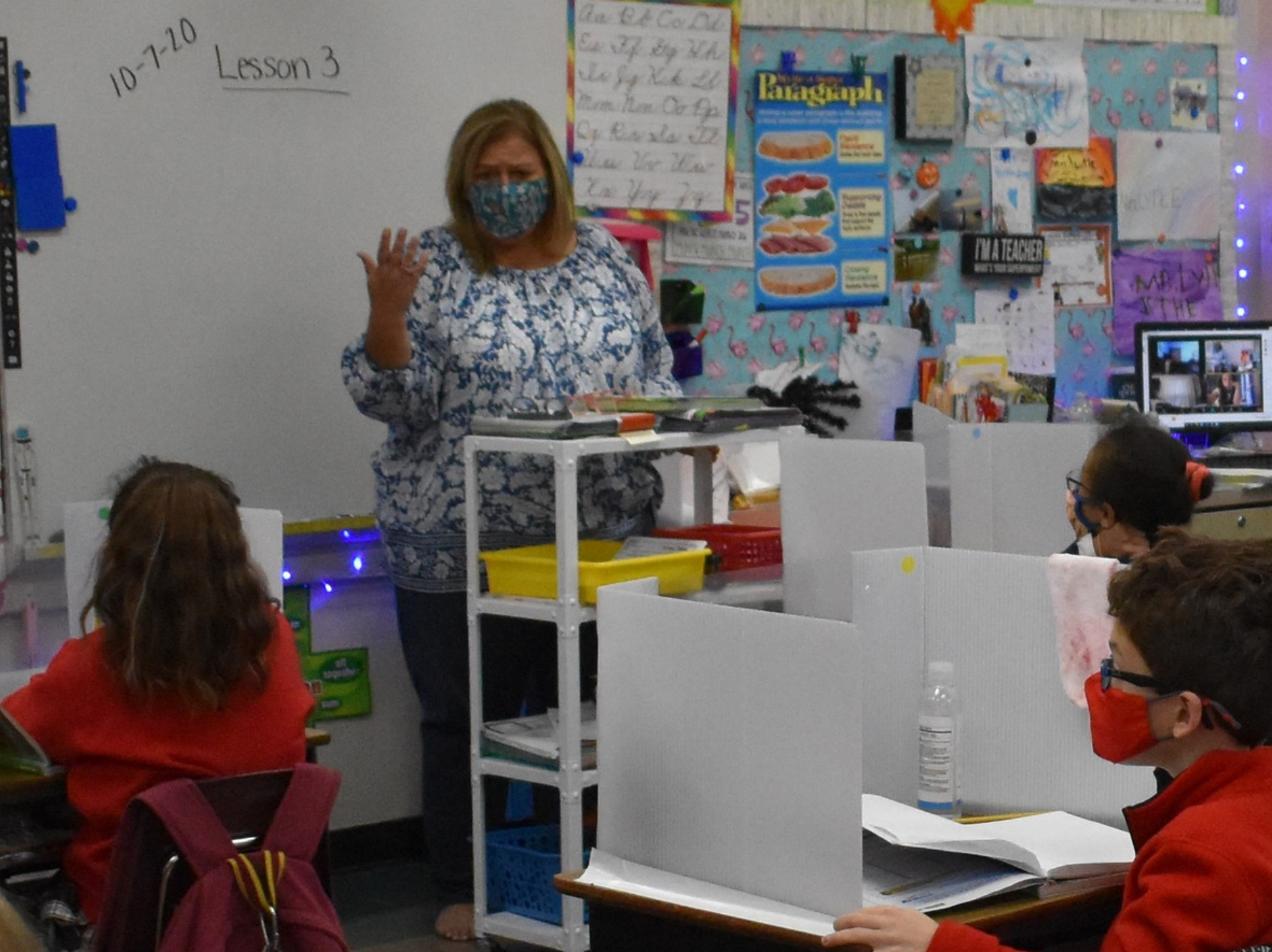
# Return to School 2021-22 Action Plan

August 2021

Preparing for another safe and in-person school year







We are preparing to welcome our students and staff into our schools on September 1, 2021.

In-person learning and the safety of our students and staff are our top priority. The mitigation efforts of our schools attributed to the success of the 2020-21 school year.

Throughout this document, our pandemic task force, with the guidance of the Department of Health, Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit 5 and the Diocese of Erie, Catholic Schools Office revised the 'Return-to-School Plan' for 2021-22 school year.

**This is a fluid document and any changes to this document will be communicated with parents and staff via email.**

I wish to thank the ECSS board, principals, teachers, staff, parents, donors and most importantly students who believe and invest in our schools.

We are ready for another great year!

Sincerely,  
*Bridget Philip*

Bridget Philip  
Interim President  
VP of Enrollment Management





# Daily Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in our Schools

## Bus and Drop Off Procedures

- Temperature checks and COVID-19 symptoms should be monitored daily, at home, prior to coming to school
- Parents must report a student's absence and any COVID-19 symptoms to the school office
- Students riding a bus must wear a mask (CDC mandate)
- Students, staff and visitors to the school must hand sanitize upon entering the building

## Morning Routine

- Schools with before care will direct students to a socially distant area prior to their release to classrooms
- Students participating in the breakfast program will be directed accordingly
- Classroom desks will be socially distant at least 3 feet
- Students and staff are required to bring a water bottle to school - bottles can be filled at the water bottle filling stations - water fountains will not be used

## Day to Day

- Students in Preschool - 8th Grade may change classes throughout the day
- Schools will utilize the cafeteria for lunch and in some cases may use classrooms, dependent on school population
- Students K-8 wear their gym attire on their designated gym class day - school uniforms are not to be worn on that day

## Dismissal and After Care

- Dismissal procedures will vary by school and each school will communicate with families the procedures to maintain social distance
- Schools with after care will direct students to a designated area after dismissal from classrooms
- Student clubs and after school activities may resume and can vary by school

# Mitigation Strategies for In-Person Learning

## Desks

Classroom desks will be socially distant at least 3 feet.

## Hygiene

Students will sanitize their hands prior to entering the school and hand wash or sanitize before and after lunch.

Respiratory etiquette will be reviewed frequently with all students in classrooms.

## Face Coverings/Masks

Due to our multi-layered approach to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we encourage students and staff to follow the CDC guidelines and mask if unvaccinated. Children under the age of two should not wear a mask. This can change at anytime based on the levels of community transmission in Erie County. Masks will not be required outside the school building, except as mandated on school busses.

We support any student or staff member who chooses to wear a mask regardless of their vaccination status.

Erie Catholic School System's multi-layered safety approach includes: vaccine promotion, physical distancing, school ventilation, hand washing and respiratory etiquette, staying home when sick, contact tracing with isolation and quarantine, cleaning and disinfecting. Details regarding these strategies are discussed in this document.

Schools and/or classrooms may elect to implement universal masking based on school or community transmission levels.

## Cleaning and Ventilation

Cleaning and ventilation strategies from the 20-21 school year will remain in place.

When applicable, we will be opening our classroom windows daily as often as possible.

All schools received iWave technology air purifiers that efficiently kills negative pathogens without emitting any harmful byproducts or creating ozone emissions. An iWave connected to our HVAC will allow the air to flow past the iWave, and positive and negative ions will actively purify the supply air, killing mold, bacteria and viruses in the coil and living space.



# Vaccinations, Contact Tracing and Quarantine

## Vaccination Cards

Erie Catholic School System is not requiring vaccinations, however encouraging staff and eligible students to vaccinate against COVID-19.

Based on the guidance of the CDC, we are recommending that staff and students share their vaccination information with our schools. A copy of their vaccination card should be submitted and kept in the school office.

If a student or staff member is exposed or is positive to COVID-19, this documentation will aid us in contact tracing.

## COVID-19 Symptoms in School

If a staff or student would show COVID-19 symptoms, each school will continue to provide an isolation area until they depart for home. If positive, contact tracing will begin and isolation dates will be given in coordination with the Department of Health.

## Positive COVID-19 and Contact Tracing

Schools will report any new diagnoses of COVID-19 to local health departments and will notify teachers, staff and families of students who were close contacts as soon as possible. The CDC guidance provides that people who are fully vaccinated and do not have COVID-19 symptoms do not need to quarantine or get tested after an exposure to someone with COVID-19.

If exposed to a close contact, within 6 ft, unvaccinated and not masked individuals will be asked to quarantine. If appropriately masked, quarantine not necessary.

## Student Quarantine

Students who are required to quarantine, and will be out for more than three days and are healthy enough to participate in remote instruction must allow 48 hours for teachers to provide live remote instruction. It is encouraged that students check in with Google Classroom prior to the 48 hours as assignments may be posted.

Current quarantine protocol requires ten days, therefore specials are waived up to two weeks.





# Classroom Instruction

Our 2021-22 academic year will be fully in-person classroom instruction.

If a student is absent because of a medical reason for more than three days, accommodations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for continuing education remotely. The parent request must be in writing and accompanied by a medical professional's recommendation. This recommendation for remote education will be reviewed by the school principal and classroom teachers.

Teacher and parent will monitor student work for positive progress. If remote learning is required for more than one quarter, updated medical professional documentation will be required prior to the start of the new quarter.

Specials, including but not limited to Music, Gym and Art will be offered if the remote instruction extends beyond two weeks.

Please refer to the health and wellness section of the student handbook for illness and make up work policies.

\*Remote accommodations for Kindergarten - 8th grade





# Other changes for 2021-22 school year

## **School Mass**

Students will attend weekly masses in-person at Church. We will follow the parish and the Bishop of Erie's decree for mass attendance protocols.

## **School Assemblies**

Schools will resume school assemblies but will be grade(s) specific to ensure appropriate distancing.

## **Volunteers**

A limited number of volunteers may resume service to our schools. Please contact the school office for the current mask guidance and clearances.

## **Athletics/Extracurricular Activities**

Any changes being made to the 'Return to Play Plan' will be communicated through the Erie Catholic School System Office and school principals will share updates according. Due to medical reasons, as stated by the medical professional, remote students are not permitted to participate in athletics or extracurricular activities.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips will be reinstated and determined by school teachers and principals.





## When would ECSS require universal masking?

A school or classroom may elect to implement universal masking based on school transmission levels. ECSS would require universal masking for all schools if Erie County community or school transmission levels deem necessary for the safety of our students and staff.

## If a student tests positive are all household contacts required to quarantine?

If other household contacts are vaccinated, they need not quarantine from school, however encouraged to wear a mask to school. Any unvaccinated sibling would need to quarantine.

## Will schools have outdoor classrooms?

The 2020-21 school year taught us that the tents were not conducive for outdoor classrooms. Many schools do have outdoor spaces that they can utilize for instruction and teachers will be encouraged to use outdoor space. The vaccinated and unvaccinated are not required to mask outside.



## Would ECSS follow PA state mandates?

Yes. State mandates will be followed, however recommendations will always be reviewed as a system to keep safety as our first priority.

Quarantine, if necessary, is a mandatory public health disease mitigation effort that the schools will follow.

## Whom should I contact with questions?

If you have questions regarding this document please contact your school principal. The principals are the leaders of our schools. Questions pertaining to classroom rules or instruction should be directed to the classroom teacher.

# Key Points

1. During this continued global pandemic the safety of our students and staff is our first priority.
2. We want to provide in-person instruction for this year as we believe it is best for our students.

Our mitigation efforts explained in this document is a culmination of efforts that kept our schools open in 2020-21. In order to support the two motivations mentioned above, we needed to pivot for this school year. Again, this is a fluid document and any changes will be shared by principals via email.

Thank you for your support and please pray for our schools.