



DIOCESE OF LAS VEGAS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Outbreak Response Plan
Diocese of Las Vegas Elementary Schools
2021-2022

This plan incorporates policies and procedures directed by the Southern Nevada Health District and in collaboration with Nevada Department of Education.

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Introduction and Overview

This document is to assist in maintaining an open campus at Diocese of Las Vegas Elementary Schools for remainder of the 2021-2022 school year. We recognize the importance of returning students to school campuses for in-person instruction, as well as the overreaching need to protect the health and safety of our students, faculty, school staff and the broader community. The goal of this document is to help our school plan for and implement measures to reduce COVID-19 transmission in the school setting while meeting the spiritual and educational needs of all students.

The key to controlling infectious disease outbreaks in our school setting is to have a robust system of reporting and outbreak response that involves School Administration, Parents or Guardians, Students, Student Health Services Staff, School Facilities Staff, and Local Health Officials. The spread of illness is controlled by early detection, isolation, treatment, diagnosis, and sanitation. Detection of outbreaks is best accomplished by careful monitoring of reports of illness to determine if reported symptoms are above baseline or normal expectations. Parents or Guardians, Students, and Staff must be forthcoming with enough information initially to all Student Health Services and Local Health Officials to determine whether there is a potential outbreak. Follow-up with remedial measures is crucial once an outbreak is identified.

This document contains a series of public health requirements, recommendations, and considerations Diocese of Las Vegas Elementary Schools is currently using on campus for in-person instruction. These will be utilized in conjunction with all relevant local, State, and federal laws, as well as school COVID-19 guidance from the State and federal government.

Diocese of Las Vegas Elementary Schools will continue to review, revise, and disseminate this Outbreak Plan as changes occur and in accordance with Southern Nevada Health District.

Guiding Principles

Several principles informed the creation of this document:

- 1 **Evidence- and Practice-Based:** This document is based on a review of the scientific research and available Southern Nevada Health District epidemiologic data on COVID-19. Although there continues to be limited information available on COVID-19 transmission dynamics, the effectiveness of various public health interventions, and the clinical impact of COVID-19 on children and youth, we have utilized the best evidence available to create these recommendations. This included the evaluation of published scientific literature, the experiences of other communities, and recommendations of experts in the United States.
- 2 **Collaborative:** In the development of this document, we are grateful for the guidance and direction of the Southern Nevada Health District, Dr. Jeff Davidson BGHS Medical Director, State of Nevada Department of Education and the State Public Charter School Authority. The input we have received has been invaluable in helping us consider the educational and spiritual needs of our students, staff and our entire community.
- 3 **Open-ended:** Given the evolving nature of the COVID-19 epidemic and scientific information that we anticipate will develop in the coming months, we expect this document will be updated as practices change.
- 4 **Practical and Adaptable:** During this unprecedented pandemic, we realize that our school will face significant operational constraints, parents and teachers have a range of perspectives on the reopening of our campus, and students themselves have a variety of educational and developmental needs. This document was designed to provide clear direction while allowing appropriate flexibility based on current constraints and resources.

Prevention

Universal public health strategies to reduce the risk of disease transmission at Diocese of Las Vegas Elementary Schools include:

- 1 Minimizing the number of people who come in contact with each other,
- 2 Maximizing the physical distance between people,
- 3 Reducing the time that people spend in close proximity to others
- 4 Measures to minimize dispersion of droplets and aerosols
- 5 Consistent and correct mask use in the event of an outbreak or as recommended for the additional 5 days of masking after the 5 days of isolation or quarantine.
- 6 Vaccine confidence promotion amongst students, parents and staff. The Diocese of Las Vegas continues to strongly encourage vaccinations and boosters for anyone eligible.
- 7 Achieving high levels of COVID-19 vaccination among eligible students as well as teachers, staff, and household members is one of the most critical strategies to help schools safely maintain in-person operations.
- 8 Collaboration with our clinical partners University Medical Center, Southern Nevada Health District and Athlete Advantage for diagnostic and screening testing program for COVID-19

Physical Distancing

General Recommendations

- Train staff and students on protocols for physical distancing for both indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Post signage-reminding students on protocols for physical distancing in prominent locations throughout campus.
- Allow only necessary visitors on the campus and limit the number of students and staff who meet them.
- Maintain current classroom configuration of a minimum of 3 to 6 feet distance between each student work area.
- For laboratory classes, maintaining stable work group cohorts

Arrival and Departure Recommendations

- Minimize close contact between students, staff, families and the broader community at arrival and departure through the following methods:
 - Staggered school release times to minimize congregation after school.
 - Designate routes for entry and exit, using as many entrances and exits as can be supervised appropriately to decrease crowding at entry and exit points.
 - Instruct drivers to remain in their vehicles, to the extent possible, when dropping off and picking up students. When in-person drop-off or pick-up is needed, only a single parent or caregiver should enter the facility to pick-up and drop-off the student.
 - Provide supervision to disperse student gatherings during school arrival and departure.

Classroom Settings Recommendations

- Elementary Schools
 - Ensure students and staff remain in stable classroom cohorts by keeping the same students and teachers or staff together for the entire school day.
 - Prioritize stability of stable classroom cohorts over physical distancing or face covering use. Given the social and educational needs of this age group, physical distancing and face coverings may be difficult to enforce for this age group. Therefore, strict maintenance of a stable classroom cohort, which minimizes the total number of contacts, is the primary mechanism of risk reduction.
- Middle Schools/Junior High Schools and High School
 - Reduce disease transmission risk by maximizing the space between student desks.
 - Space students at least three to six feet apart, if possible, in existing facilities.
 - Establish stable classroom cohorts for the school day, if feasible.

All Schools

- Maximize distance teacher and staff desks away from students to minimize adult-to-child disease transmission.
- Assign stable seating arrangements for students to ensure that close contacts within classrooms are minimized and easily identifiable with seating charts.
- Class sizes should be as small as practicable.
- Ensure adequate supplies to prevent sharing of high touch materials (art supplies, equipment, electronic devices, etc.) to the extent practicable, or limit the use of supplies, and equipment to one group of students at a time and clean and disinfect between uses.

- Keep student belongings separate so that students are not exposed to other students' belongings.
- Reduce the amount of furniture and equipment in the classroom to facilitate distancing and reduce high-touch surfaces.
- Increase ventilation by increasing outdoor air circulation (e.g. by opening windows) or using high-efficiency air filters and increasing ventilation rates.
- Use non-classroom space for instruction if doing so will allow for greater distancing between students.

Non-Classroom Settings Recommendations

- Restrooms: stagger restroom use by groups of students to the extent practicable, or assign groups of students to use specific restrooms.
- Libraries: Stagger group use of libraries.
- Cafeterias: Reduced table occupancy by a fourth and room occupancy by a third by adding an additional lunch period.
- Playgrounds and Recess: Limit used of shared playground equipment in favor of physical activities that require less contact with surfaces and allow for greater physical distancing.
- Physical Education: Conduct physical education classes' outdoors as much as possible, maintaining separation of classes and appropriate physical distancing between groups to the extent possible.
- Lockers: Minimize the use of lockers to avoid unnecessary mixing and congregation of students in the hallways.
- Hallways: Minimize congregate movement through hallways as much as practicable, For example establish more ways to enter and exit campus, stagger passing times when students cannot stay in one room, and establish designated one-way walking/passage areas,
- Staff Break Rooms: Encourage or require staff who can to eat meals outdoors or indoors in a ventilated area.
- Facilities: Increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, open windows and doors as able. Maximize central air filtration for HVAC systems (Ideally with a targeted filter rating of at least MERV 13).

Hygiene Measures

Face Coverings Recommendation

- Teachers and Staff
 - In general, do not need to wear masks when indoors. However, particularly during periods of high transmission, such as a school outbreak, those who are not fully vaccinated should wear a mask indoors or outside if the setting is crowded or during activities that involve sustained contact with other people who are unvaccinated.
- Students
 - In general, do not need to wear masks when indoors. However, particularly during periods of high transmission, such as a school outbreak, those who are not fully vaccinated should wear a mask indoors or outside if the setting is crowded or during activities that involve sustained contact with other people who are unvaccinated.

Handwashing and Other Hygiene Measures Recommendations

- Teach and reinforce proper handwashing techniques, avoiding contact with one's eyes, nose and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes.
- Post signage in high visibility areas to remind students and staff of proper techniques for handwashing and covering coughs and sneezes and other preventative measures.
- Ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, tissues, no-touch trashcans, face-coverings, and hand sanitizers (with at least 60 percent ethyl alcohol) for staff and students who can safely use hand sanitizer.
- Minimize staff's and students contact with high-touch surfaces (e.g. propping open room doors, particularly at arrival and discharge time)
- Model, practice and monitor handwashing, especially for lower grade levels.
- Develop routines to ensure students wash their hands or use hand sanitizer upon arrival to campus; after using the restroom; after being outside and returning to the classroom, before and after eating; after coughing or sneezing.
- Having students and staff wash hands at staggered intervals to minimize the congregation around handwashing and hand sanitizer stations.
- Proper handwashing is more effective at preventing transmission, but hand sanitizer is an acceptable alternative if handwashing is not practicable.
- Provide hand sanitizer in each classroom, in any other indoor used by students or staff, at building entrances/exits, and at locations designated for students or staff to eat.
 - Students under the age of nine should use hand sanitizer only under adult supervision.

Cleaning and Maintenance Recommendations

At least daily, and more frequently if feasible, clean and disinfect frequently touched hard surfaces (e.g., tables, desks, door handles, light switches, phones, bathroom surfaces (toilets, countertops, faucets), drinking fountains, and playground equipment and shared objects (toys, games art supplies, books) according to CDC guidance.

Consider the following points:

- When choosing cleaning products, use those approved for use against COVID-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – approved list “N” and follow product instructions. Choose asthma-safer ingredients (hydrogen peroxide, citric acid or lactic acid) whenever possible and avoid products that mix these ingredients with peroxyacetic (peracetic) acid, sodium hypochlorite (bleach) or quaternary ammonium compounds, which exacerbate asthma.
- Provide employees training on manufacturer's direction, on Nevada OSHA requirements for safe use, as applicable.
- Ensure proper ventilation during cleaning and disinfecting. Introduce fresh outdoor air as much as possible, for example, by opening windows where practicable. When cleaning, air out the space before students arrive, plan to do a thorough cleaning when students are not present. If

using air conditioning, use the setting that brings in fresh air. Replace and check air filters and filtration systems to ensure optimal air quality.

- Ensure that all water systems are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown to minimize the risk of Legionnaires' disease and other waterborne diseases.
- After an illness, limit access to areas used by the sick person (e.g., a student's desk or a staff member's office) until cleaned and disinfected.
- Limit the use of items that are difficult to clean and sanitize.
- Establish a cleaning and disinfecting schedule to avoid both under- and over-use of cleaning products.

Food Service Recommendations

- Refer to Distancing Section above for requirements regarding physical distancing in cafeterias and food service areas.
- Follow all requirements issued by the County's Department of Environmental Health to prevent transmission of COVID-19 in food facilities.

Electives, Extracurricular Activities, Athletics, and School Events

Recommendations

- All electives, extracurricular activities, athletics, and events may be allowed as mandated by the state educational and local health authority. The Diocese of Las Vegas remains committed to keeping students in classrooms and school related activities running as normally as possible.
- School Events:
 - For elementary schools:
 - Field trips, assemblies, and other gatherings will be permitted to the extent allowed under any applicable requirements for gathering in the community.
 - For middle schools/junior high schools and high schools:
 - Field trips, assemblies, and other gatherings will be permitted to the extent allowed under any applicable requirements for gathering in the community.
 - Events involving on-campus visitors interacting with the staff or students are limited.

Monitoring: Health Screening

Health Screenings refer to symptom screening, temperature screening, or a combination of both. For COVID-19 the CDC acknowledges that “fever and symptom screening have proven to be relatively ineffective in identifying all infected individuals.” This is because people with COVID-19 can infect others before they become ill (pre-symptomatic transmission); some people with COVID-19 never become sick but can still infect others (asymptomatic transmission). Fever may not be the first symptom to appear. For these reasons, temperature screening is not a requirement for schools.

Recommendations:

- Post signs at all entrances instructing students, staff, and visitors not to enter campus if they have any COVID-19 symptoms. COVID-19 symptoms include fatigue, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose,
- Students or staff with any identified COVID-19 symptoms will be sent home immediately until medical evaluation/testing has been conducted. A designated waiting area (well ventilated, isolated, etc.) for symptomatic students will continue to be utilized.
- Provide periodic reminders encouraging students and staff to stay home when sick throughout the school year.

Reporting: Illness and Triage

Isolating and Sending Home Ill Students and Staff

It is essential to isolate any individual who is reported to have symptoms of illness if that individual is on site for any period. The sick person will be moved to the Health Services Isolation Room. Symptoms will be logged on the illness reports for the day and all pertinent information obtained. Appropriate personal protective equipment will be utilized by the Health staff to reduce the spread of illness to staff and students who may be in the proximity and interacting with the sick individual.

Reporting Illnesses to the Southern Nevada Health District

- When a COVID-19 outbreak is suspected or identified, either through a positive test result or contact tracing, School Administrators will notify the Southern Nevada Health District immediately by calling (702) 759-1303 and/or emailing schoolcovid@snhd.org
- The Health District will assess and collect the needed contact information to assign specific Contact Tracers and Environmental Health Specialists to the school. Assessment of the outbreak will involve any recommendations and guidance that will determine quarantine and closures.

Exclusion of Ill Students and Staff

Exclusion of ill individuals from school premises is necessary to ensure the safety and protect the wellness of the Students, Staff and Community during an outbreak. Period of exclusion will follow all CDC recommendations of a five-day isolation/quarantine period with a return to campus on day six.

Close Contact through Proximity and Duration of Exposure Contact Tracing

The purpose of basic contact tracing is to slow the transmission of an illness by the identification of additional individuals for testing, isolation, and quarantine. To provide prompt and efficient responses, individual schools may perform initial contact tracing in collaboration with the Health District. While being mindful of applicable state and federal labor and privacy laws, designated school staff can identify individuals who were exposed to the positive COVID-19 case. They may send those individuals home to quarantine or contact parents to exclude attendance. The following efforts should be considered:

- The responsibility will fall to Health Services and/or designee to conduct contact tracing within their school.
- To maximize the number of students in our school, this contact tracing has been strategic and intentional. Recommended actions will be provided for those in close contact with a positive case in the school;
- Close contact is within six (6) feet of a person, for more than a cumulative 15 minutes over a 24-hour period that has tested positive (laboratory confirmed or a clinically compatible illness).

COVID-19 Testing and Reporting Requirements

The Diocese of Las Vegas encourages individuals displaying symptoms or have a known exposure to a positive individual to test. The Diocese of Las Vegas has provided each school with testing kits for use by symptomatic or exposed students and staff. More information regarding COVID-19 testing can be found at the Southern Nevada Health District at covid.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/testing/.

We will continue to recommend students and staff to be tested as soon as possible after they develop one or more COVID-19 symptoms or if one of their household members or non-household close contacts tested positive for COVID-19. If they choose not to be tested, they will be treated as a positive case and quarantined for the five-day period.

Positive test results:

- Require that parents/guardians and staff notify school administration immediately if the student or staff tested positive for COVID-19 or if one of their household members or non-household close contacts test positive for COVID-19
- Upon receiving notification that staff or student has tested positive for COVID-19 or been in close contact with a COVID-19 case, take actions as required in Response to Suspected or Confirmed Cases below (School Administrators should notify the Southern Nevada Health District immediately by calling (702)-759-1303 or emailing schoolcovid@snhd.org)
- An individual with symptoms of COVID-19 or an individual who tests positive for SARS-CoV-2 is to isolate in the home, safely separated from others in the household, until the following criteria are met:
 - At least five (5) days have passed since symptoms first appeared; and,
 - Twenty-four (24) hours have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of:
 - Fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and,
 - Improvement of respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath).
 - For asymptomatic positive COVID-19 individuals, at least five (5) days must have passed from the day of the reported test. A negative test is not required as a follow-up.
 - If an asymptomatic positive COVID-19 individual develops symptoms after their test, they are to follow the symptomatic criteria above.

Negative test results:

- Symptomatic students or staff who test negative for COVID-19 should remain home until at least 24-hours after resolution of and improvement of symptoms.

Athlete/Student COVID-19 Testing:

The regular COVID-19 weekly testing program for athletes, students, coaches and advisors will expire effective 12:01am on February 27, 2022. Regular testing may be implemented again at the direction of the local health authority or as required by the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association based on close contact activities and local transmission rates.

Response to Suspected or Confirmed Cases and Close Contacts

Suspected COVID-19 Case(s):

- Identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms
- Any student or staff member exhibiting symptoms is immediately required to wait in the isolation area, wearing a cloth face covering until they can be transported home or to a healthcare facility, as soon as practicable. For serious illness, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Confirmed COVID-19 Case(s):

- School Administrators should notify the Southern Nevada Health District immediately by calling (702)759-1303 or emailing schoolcovid@snhd.org
- Ensure a safe and correct application of disinfectants using personal protective equipment and ventilation.
- Utilize classroom seating charts and consultation with teachers/staff to identify close contacts to the confirmed COVID-19 case in all classrooms and on-campus activities. Close contact is someone within six (6) feet of the case for a prolonged period (at least 15 minutes collectively within a twenty-four hour period).
- Close contacts should be instructed to self-monitor for symptoms and remain quarantined at home for five (5) days.
- Provide information regarding close contacts to the Southern Nevada Health District contact tracers.

Close Contacts to Confirmed COVID-19 Case(s):

- Close contacts (household or non-household) of confirmed COVID-19 cases, who are not up-to-date on their COVID vaccine, may be sent home for a five-day quarantine, and instructed to self-monitor for symptoms.
- No actions need to be taken for persons who have not had direct contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case and instead have had close contact with persons who were in direct contact.
- Those who test positive should not return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation. (minimum of five-days).
- Up to date vaccine is defined as follows: Individuals who have been boosted, OR completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last six months. OR completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last two months.

Closure of Rooms and Schools during Outbreaks

Closure of rooms and school are sometimes necessary to reduce the risk of spread of illness. Rooms are closed based on the need to sanitize and eliminate close contact exposures. If several rooms are affected in the building, the entire building may be closed. If there is substantial risk of spread of contagion or severe illness, the school may be closed. The requirement to close and extent and length closure of a room or school depends on the specific illness and measures that must be taken to control the spread of illness and ensure the safety of students, staff, their families and the community. The following applies:

1 Closure of Rooms

For any vomiting or fecal incidents in a classroom or other areas, the classroom or area shall be closed and sanitized prior to being reoccupied. During outbreaks, rooms may be closed by BGHS, or at the direction of the SNHD, if cases are linked to room occupancy or if the layout of the room does not allow for adherence to CDC guidelines to control spread. In all cases, rooms must be sanitized following protocol for specific illness.

2 Closure of School

For any infectious disease, the school may be closed as a necessary means to control the spread of illness throughout the school campus. Diocese of Las Vegas Elementary Schools shall be closed under the following criteria:

- a) Directives from the Governor of the State of Nevada, or the Diocese of Las Vegas or by the Diocese of Las Vegas pursuant to the direction of the Southern Nevada Health District; and/or,
- b) Indeterminate or high risk exposures to highly infectious diseases or diseases with a high risk of serious illness, such as COVID-19, Pertussis or Norovirus, school-wide; and/or

For outbreaks such as COVID-19, levels of school closure may depend on the ability to occupy the school campus at a limited occupancy to provide for control measures such as six foot (6') social distancing. Sanitizing protocols will be implemented in sections of the school that are open during an outbreak. As a supplemental measure to sanitizing affected rooms and areas, increase of airflow is recommended as can be accomplished by air handling systems and opening doors and windows.

The length of closure will be determined by potential exposures as indicated by case reports and contact tracing as well as updated information from the CDC on guidelines to reduce spread.

Communication with families and the community is crucial to ensure that they understand the reason for the closure and what is being done to address the outbreak.

When an outbreak is closed, Southern Nevada Health District will notify the school administrators. The Health District will keep data on the outbreak. For larger outbreaks, a summary may be provided. It is important to follow-up large or significant outbreaks to ensure that things were handled as effectively and efficiently as possible and to plan for future response to outbreaks. After outbreaks are closed, reports from the Health Districts may be necessary for some circumstances to provide information to evaluate and prepare for future events.

Cohort Exclusion and Quarantine due to COVID-19 Case(s):

Schools must report any outbreaks of COVID-19 to the Southern Nevada Health District. Having more than one (1) case within the school does not constitute an outbreak. An outbreak is defined as three or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases among students or faculty/staff with onsets within a five-day period who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household, and were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting during standard case investigation or contact tracing.

Similar to determining when to reopen school buildings, the decision to quarantine a cohort (classroom), close portion of the school, or close the school entirely will be made in close coordination with school authorities and the Health District. Bishop Gorman is prepared for distance learning and staffing when three or more close contact COVID-19 cases are identified within a classroom.