



November 13, 2020

Dear Catholic School Leaders,

A week ago I wrote to you with mutual recommendations from the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness (LMDPHW) and the Archdiocese of Louisville regarding the upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons. Thank you for your review and adoption of these recommendations, including holiday “buffers” within your school communities!

I write to you today to let you know we are expanding our recommendation for holiday “buffers” based on the significant increase we have seen this week in the number of schools reporting positive COVID-19 cases and the resulting quarantines among faculty, staff, and students in our Catholic schools due to those cases. A few of our schools have had to move to remote learning ahead of the Thanksgiving holidays as they were unable to sustain in-person instruction due to reduced staffing levels.

Our data and collaboration with the health department has guided us. The health department is overwhelmed with cases. While our schools remain safe, we anticipate our challenges will continue to grow in the coming weeks, and our schools’ abilities to straddle both “in-person” and remote learning will become increasingly difficult.

Our expanded recommendation now includes 3 weeks of remote learning from Monday, November 30 through Friday, December 18, 2020.

#### **Thanksgiving and Christmas Holiday Buffers**

- Remote Learning or Days Off on Monday and Tuesday, November 23-24, 2020
- **Remote Learning Monday, November 30 through Friday, December 18, 2020**
- Remote Learning Monday through Friday, January 4-8, 2021

#### **Licensed PreK and Child Care Programs**

- Parishes and schools may make the decision whether their licensed PreK and child care programs remain open when K-12 schools apply the buffer and move to remote learning.

We have been able to deliver and sustain 14 weeks of in-person instruction since late August. By providing options to parents for students to attend both remotely and in-person, our teachers have continued to develop their expertise in both formats of instruction. Consequently, we believe our schools have proven they can provide robust remote learning experiences for our students as evidenced by the growth our students have shown on their assessments this fall.

Catholic schools should understand that a decision that serves only the local level and does not take into account the needs of other schools within the Archdiocese creates tension within the system. While we all have some degree of autonomy, the decision to apply the recommendations of the Health Department and the Office of Catholic Schools does have implications on the system as a whole. Please consider the “system” and other archdiocesan schools when considering your application of the recommended buffer.

It is appropriate for us to temporarily make this pivot as a mitigation measure that will allow us to return to “in-person” instruction in early January 2021. We thank you for your dedicated leadership and support during these challenging times! Please keep all in our families and communities who are dealing with COVID-19 in your prayers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leisa Schulz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Leisa Schulz  
Superintendent of Schools