



DIOCESE OF CAMDEN  
*Office of Catholic Schools*

June 16, 2020

Dear Catholic School Parents,

I am writing to share the planning process for the 2020-2021 school year in South Jersey Catholic Schools. First, I would like to offer my most sincere and heartfelt gratitude for your partnership with your school's principal and teachers during this school year in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our students' successes are a testament to what we can accomplish in Catholic schools, working together toward our shared mission.

As we await directives from the state of New Jersey for next school year, three teams are proactively following guidelines from the Center for Disease Control to establish policy and guidelines for schools to use in their planning. They are: The **Principals Task Force**, specifically convened for this purpose; the **Strategic Action Team**, a standing committee of diocesan leaders in education, communication, finance, development, and civil law; and the **Schools Oversight Committee**, which provides guidance on plans and policies that affect all Catholic schools in the diocese.

The work of these planning teams is guided by four principles that will be critical to our success in the coming months and next year as we balance state directives with local decision making:

1. Protect the health and safety of all members of our Catholic school communities;
2. Sustain the Catholic faith communities that distinguish our schools and drive their success;
3. Maximize student learning through best practices in classroom and, if necessary, remote learning instruction and assessment; and
4. Maintain flexibility to respond to changing guidance from state and public health leaders in response to the progression of COVID-19.

**Of equal importance to the work of the planning teams, we are asking each Catholic school to seek input from its stakeholders.** As part of that effort, we will be sending a survey to you so that you can share your family's needs, concerns, and hopes for the coming school year. Please take a few minutes to respond to the survey when you receive it. Our goal is to work with the leadership of each school to keep you informed about plans for the 2020-2021 school year as they develop.

As the father of five Catholic school students, ages 4 – 11, I know firsthand some of the turbulence that the last three months have brought. As Superintendent, I also know the incredible stories of resilience, perseverance, generosity, innovation, and hope that have sprung from the heart of our shared mission: Love for your children, our students, and a commitment to lead them to Christ through our communities. We look forward to continuing that mission together.

Sincerely in Christ,

Dr. William A. Watson  
Superintendent of Schools