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**Office of Catholic Schools**  
**MEMORANDUM**  
**Facial Coverings and Masks**

**May 12, 2021**

As we continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact it is having on our community, the Diocese of Palm Beach Office of Catholic Schools understands that our school families have many questions and opinions.

Recently, the Office of Catholic Schools has received questions regarding the status of mandatory facial coverings on school property, following the announcement by Governor Ron DeSantis regarding his new COVID-19 Executive Order.

When asked for clarification regarding the Governor's Executive Orders, the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) confirmed that the new guidance does not impact policies in place at the school level, including those requiring the mandatory wearing of facial coverings for students and staff.

The mandatory wearing of facial coverings in our Diocese of Palm Beach schools remains in effect through the end of the 2020-21 school year.

At this time, the Diocese of Palm Beach is planning to modify the facial covering policy for the 2021-2022 school year. This modification would be that facial coverings are highly recommended for students, employees, administrators and those who are on campus on a regular basis. In addition, parents have the option of their child not wearing a facial covering on campus. There may be times when all present on campus would be expected to wear a facial covering or mask, such as for Mass or large indoor assemblies at the discretion of the principal.

Visitors and volunteers will continue to be limited and must have the approval of the school's administration. Visitors and volunteers will still be required to wear masks.

As we all know, the pandemic has been somewhat unpredictable, and plans must remain fluid as we monitor for an increase in cases or other unforeseen circumstances that could require a review of these new guidelines.

The Diocese of Palm Beach will continue to work in close collaboration with public health officials and government agencies to address all concerns related to coronavirus, including promoting awareness and initiating additional responses if necessary.