



Dear JP II Families and Students,

I am writing to share the school's current plans relative to COVID mitigation and the return to school of students and staff members. All of us can see the questions that have emerged in recent weeks.

The [July 30, 2021 guidance issued by DESE and DPH](#) allows schools and families to make decisions at a local level. Therefore, *as of this writing*, the following guidelines apply to St. John Paul II School staff members and students:

Masking

Massachusetts guidance treats masking as a decision made individually. JP II echoes the widely-held recommendation that unvaccinated staff members and students wear masks when indoors. However, masking for such students and staff members is not currently required, nor is proof of vaccinations status.

Vaccinated students and staff members will be permitted to wear masks but not required to do so.

Per state and federal mandates, all students and staff will be required to wear masks on school buses and in school health offices.

Distancing

JP II will follow the guidelines endorsed by DESE, DPH, and the CDC, which states that "because of the importance of in-person learning, schools should not exclude students from in-person learning to keep a minimum distance required." Therefore, while we will endeavor to create physical distance, there are no distancing requirements, and all students will return to in-person learning. Further, Grade 8 students will return to the Preparatory Division building.

Remote Learning

Due to the importance of in-person learning, JP II will not continue to offer a remote learning option. This determination has been made for all Diocese of Fall River Catholic schools.

Quite obviously, circumstances, recommendations, and requirements can change, and if so, we will adjust accordingly. I promise to keep in good contact with you should there be any changes to our school plan. Along these lines, note that administrators are offering Town Hall Meetings by grade groupings on August 19 (Grades 5-8) and August 23 (Grades 9-12). See your Blue & Gold Weekly emails for details.

We intend to hold a steady -- but not rigid -- course. Contact me should you have any questions or comments.

Best regards,

Christopher Keavy
President