



DIOCESE OF OAKLAND

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DEPARTMENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

May 15, 2020

Dear Catholic School Families,

I would like to begin this communication by extending my blessings for the Easter season to each of you. May the Risen Christ be a source of strength, hope, and love for your family as we look forward to the great feast of Pentecost. I pray your family is healthy and well during these unique circumstances.

I continue to be inspired by the strength and resilience of our home-school-partnership as evidenced throughout this crisis. I am in awe of our teachers and principals who transitioned into this new way of learning with diligence, compassion, and creativity immediately after our shelter-in-place was announced.

I am forever grateful to you, our dedicated parents. You have remained resilient in your efforts to manage this crisis as a family unit, approaching this new normal with perseverance, patience, and unconditional love for your child(ren).

As parents and educators, we recognize these last weeks of school are a time for our students to celebrate the culmination of the school year together, particularly for our graduates. Though the moment may not afford us the opportunity to physically come together in person, we are all committed to honoring each of them. Our teachers and principals are considering end of the year moments to celebrate our students' growth, achievements, and especially their perseverance during this extraordinary school year. Our schools are committed to completing the year in our Long-Term Dismissal Platform (LTD), with the same fidelity, love, and *grace* they have exemplified throughout this entire school year.

As we work together during these last weeks of school, we also join our efforts with various experts and organizations to plan for the 2020-2021 school year. Although we don't know what the public health conditions will be in August, our goal is to return to in-person instruction as soon as it is feasible, in alignment with our local and state health agency requirements. Therefore, we are preparing plans for the new year, examining scenarios for both in-person instruction and the use of our LTD for distance learning. In this way, we will be best prepared to meet the needs of our communities once our new school year begins.

We remain committed to providing the quality Catholic education we have all worked so diligently to preserve over these past months. Our diocesan and school leaders are in the process of developing planning considerations, recommendations, and requirements for reopening our school campuses. As we work through this intentional and strategic process, there are numerous variables to analyze at each school site. Implementation of these guidelines will include a variety of health and safety provisions as our priority. Social distancing requirements will necessitate a reimagining of the structure of our on-site school days. Finally, we will explore a variety of instructional practices to be implemented in order to meet the needs of our students in the upcoming school year.

We continue to be deeply grateful for the collaborative partnership between our teachers, parents, and students. At no other time has the greatest strength of our Catholic schools been more evident than through the commitment to this partnership. I want to express my gratitude for the resilient efforts made to support the mission of Catholic school education and love for family, our school family and the families we serve.

We remain rooted in our collective capacity and unwavering faith to continue to educate the whole person: spiritually, academically, and emotionally. Let us pray, particularly in this month of May, as we celebrate our Mother Mary. May we all be blessed with the courage, wisdom, fortitude, and hope to cherish our opportunity to grow stronger as communities of faith, knowledge, and service.

I look forward to communicating with you again in early June. Until then, may the blessings of our Mother Mary bring you comfort and peace.

“Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” -Joshua 1:9

Christ’s peace and joy surround you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen M. Radecke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathleen Radecke
Superintendent
Diocese of Oakland