



The Tiger Plan: Protocols for a Safe Year

**COVID-19 Protocols and Responses for Holy Spirit Regional
Catholic School
July 19, 2021**



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Faculty, Staff, Parents and Students,

Every member of our community has been affected in some way by the spread and proliferation of the COVID-19 virus. As we prepare for the start of a new school year, we must remember that while conditions have improved in our city and state, COVID-19 is still with us and a part of our lives. If we remain vigilant throughout the school year, we will continue to mitigate the virus in our community.

Mrs. Margaret Dubose, Director of Catholic Schools released the document to our Catholic Schools entitled Guidelines for a Safe Year: COVID 19 Protocols and Responses(GSY). All Diocesan Catholic Schools were given specific direction to establish protocols that incorporated Diocesan guidelines as well as our own local directions. Guidelines for a Safe Year is continually reviewed and updated so all schools in the Diocese will have the latest information to make reflective, prayerful, and sound decisions at the local level.

I am pleased to share this document *The Tiger Plan: Protocols for a Safe School Year* with you today. It is definitely not an exhaustive list of protocols but an important launch point for our school community at Holy Spirit Regional Catholic School to engage in a healthy and safe school year. The continued health and safety of our school will rely on all of us doing things right at home, in our community on a daily basis, and in our school. Together with the aid of the great advocate, the Holy Spirit, we can continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic to help our children develop all the gifts that God has given them.

I pray that all of our students will have a safe, happy and fulfilling school year. On behalf of Fr. Michael Mac Mahon, Fr. Joshua Altongi, Associate Pastor of Holy Spirit Catholic Church Pastor of Holy Spirit Catholic Church, Fr. Timothy Pfander, Pastor of Good Shepherd Catholic Church, and the entire staff of Holy Spirit Regional Catholic School, welcome back to school!

God Bless you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vincent S. Aquila". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'V'.

Vincent Aquila
Principal

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Tiered System of Response-Protocols During In-Person Instruction

TIERED SYSTEM OF RESPONSE- PROTOCOLS DURING IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION

	<p>Level 1 will be utilized for in-person instruction for the 2021-22 school year as circumstances allow.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masks welcome but not required • 3-foot distance maintained when possible • Increased disinfection • Emphasis on hygiene and hand washing • Visitors welcome with protocols • Field trips and extracurriculars allowed with protocols
	<p>Additional protocols may be implemented for certain events, such as large-scale gatherings, or during certain times of day.</p> <p>These additional protocols may be requested even during Level 1 times, so that certain types of events can safely occur.</p>	<p>The following protocols may be utilized just for the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masks • 6-foot distance • Increased disinfection • Emphasis on hygiene and hand washing • Screening protocols, such as temperature checks or a questionnaire
	<p>During times of increased community transmission, more stringent protocols may be put in place temporarily to mitigate spread and protect in-person learning.</p>	<p>The following protocols may temporarily be required throughout the school day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masks • Screening protocols • Changes to certain procedures to reduce student movement • Reduced interaction between students of different classes or other schools, such as field trip or off-site events

Health/Hygiene Protocols

Each school will have a standard routine for all who enter the school, prevention measures to be utilized, enforced, and taught, and protocols for addressing health concerns throughout the school day. Names of positive cases may be disclosed to the local public health agency. (Diocesan GSY)

General

- HSRCS Parents and Employees are obligated to report symptoms of illness, known exposure to illness, and/or pending COVID-19 test results.
- Parents, students, and staff members are obligated to self-review the Daily Screening Questions to make sure they meet the established criteria to enter the school building.
- Visual cues will be used throughout the building to remind everyone to:
 - a) Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - b) Reminders to students in classrooms the schedule for cleaning hands
 - c) Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol when soap and water are not available
 - d) Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - e) Instructions to cover nose and mouth with tissue or with the inside of elbow when coughing or sneezing.
- Staff will be trained in plan to handle confidentiality regarding health.

Isolation protocols

- Students or Staff that develop symptoms during the school day will be isolated in the school clinic. The area will be isolated by clear vinyl covering.
- Symptoms currently include **fever** or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or **vomiting**, and **diarrhea**.
 - Since runny nose is common in young children and in those with seasonal allergies, current guidance says runny nose is of greater concern when it occurs with two other symptoms.
- Classrooms, common areas, and the isolation area will be closed off and disinfected after a 24 hour period from time symptoms were discovered.
- Student shall remain in the isolation section of the clinic until he/she can leave the school. Student(s) will remain visible to a school employee while in isolation at all times.

Positive Case of COVID at HSRCS-Student and Staff

In the event of a positive case within the household of a student or staff member, current health guidance requires the members of the household to be quarantined for 10 days.

- Students/staff members who are not considered fully vaccinated or who have not had a confirmed case of Covid-19 within the previous 90 days would not be able to come to school during that time.
- Students/staff members who are considered fully vaccinated do not have to quarantine following an exposure to Covid-19.

- Students/staff members who have had a confirmed case of Covid-19 within the previous 90 days do not have to quarantine following an exposure to Covid-19.
- Classmates/close contacts of a quarantined/exposed individual do not need to quarantine unless the quarantined/exposed individual tests positive for Covid-19 within 48 hours of the last time the individual was in close contact with others at school/school event.

In the event of a positive case of a student or staff member, the student or staff member may be able to return after being quarantined for 10 days since the onset of symptoms AND being fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medications AND with improvement to respiratory symptoms without the use of medications, or until released by the health department.

- HSRCS will notify the Madison County Health Department and **the Superintendent immediately** and submit positive or potential cases to the ADPH Report Card.
- HSRCS will work with the Madison County Health Department and the Diocese of Birmingham Catholic Schools Office to address who needs to be notified of potential exposure, disinfection protocols, and next steps for school or class closure depending on the circumstances involved.
- Confidentiality will be maintained when notifying HSRCS families and staff, of potential contact with an infected person in accordance with ADA policy.
- Positive cases of Covid-19 still must quarantine even if the infected individual has been fully vaccinated or had Covid-19 within 90 days of the current infection.

STUDENT ABSENCE PROTOCOLS

- Families will contact the School Nurse, the Principal, or the Assistant Principal by phone call or e-mail to report symptoms, duration of illness, etc.
- Students will be allowed to return following a confirmed case of Covid-19 provided:
 - 10 days from the onset of symptoms
AND
 - 24 hours fever free, without the aid of fever-reducing medications
AND
 - Significant improvement in symptoms, without the use of medications
 - This does not necessarily equate to 11 days because they all have to occur
- Students **who are not eligible to receive a Covid-19 vaccination** to accommodate need to stay home when sick or exposed to illness and remain out of school until return criteria can be met.
- Students who are eligible to receive a vaccination but have not will adhere to the school's regular policies for absences.

PERSONNEL PROTOCOLS

- Staff will contact the School Nurse, the Principal, or the Assistant Principal by phone call or e-mail to report symptoms, duration of illness, etc.
- Staff will be allowed to return following a confirmed case of Covid-19 provided:
 - 10 days from the onset of symptoms
AND
 - 24 hours fever free, without the aid of fever-reducing medications
AND
 - Significant improvement in symptoms, without the use of medications
 - This does not necessarily equate to 11 days because they all have to occur
- Staff who are eligible to receive a Covid-19 vaccination but have not will adhere to regular attendance and absence policies. Sick days and personal days will be counted and used.

VACCINATION PROTOCOLS

- Covid-19 vaccination is not required for eligible students or staff of Diocese of Birmingham Catholic Schools.
- Proof of vaccination may be requested from students and staff.
- Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine following a known exposure to Covid-19 unless symptoms develop.

Physical Distancing

How physical distancing can be achieved within each school varies according to the enrollment of the school or grade level, the personnel employed by the school, the age of the students, and the space(s) and furniture available within the school. (Diocesan GSY)

- Within the Classroom, HSRCS Teachers will:
 - Utilize outdoor spaces as much as weather permits
 - Remove non-essential items from classrooms to maximize space and distance.
 - Organize classroom seating to maintain distance 3-foot distance as much as possible.
 - Use physical barriers such as plexiglass dividers if feasible and deemed necessary.

- Throughout the school building and campus, HSRCS Staff will:
 - Create visual supports, when necessary (distance lines, arrows for hallway traffic)
 - Reduce interactions between different classes of students, if necessary and when possible.
 - Implement routines to wash hands before going out to recess and after coming in from recess.
 - Consider alternatives to shared coffee, water, shared snack/food services.

- Additional considerations in social distancing:
 - Consider ways to avoid large groups of students changing clothes for physical education at once
 - Select physical education activities that allow for limited physical interaction or sharing of equipment, while indoors, such as kickball, badminton, calisthenics, etc. Utilize outdoor spaces as much as possible.
 - Emphasize music instruction in reading music, playing percussion instruments, composing music
 - Organize art supplies for use by individual students, as much as possible. Set aside time for hand washing/sanitizing before and after use of shared supplies.
 - Follow liturgical guidelines in place by the diocese for health precautions during school Masses.
 - When applicable, limit attendance at extracurricular and school community events in accordance with state and local health guidelines in place at the time. Provide virtual options for attendance of these events when possible to encourage involvement.
 - Adjust before and after school care services to involve the same routines/procedures as throughout the school day

- Athletics
 - 7th and 8th Grade students will be governed by the guidelines and directives in place by St. John Paul II Falcon Middle School Program and the Alabama High School Athletic Association.
 - The school will plan ways to maintain distancing for spectators and/or limit attendance according to current local health orders, if/when applicable.
 - Grades 2-6 participate in the Huntsville Independent School League and will follow safety guidelines as established by the league for participation and attendance if sports are offered.
 - The Principal, if the public health situation warrants, will suspend the athletic program at the school.

- Fine Arts, Choir, and Band
 - Hold band practices outdoors with a greater distance of 6 feet apart, when possible. Indoor band practice with wind instruments is not recommended. Percussion instruments may be held indoors with 3-foot distance.
 - Physical distancing of students will be incorporated into rehearsals, practices, or activities.
 - Plan ways to maintain distancing for spectators and/or limit attendance according to current local health orders, if/when applicable.

- Transportation and Travel
 - Transportation to/from School and/or School Events*
 - Stagger seating to maintain space between students, as much as possible.
 - Ensure ventilation and airflow on buses as much as possible.
 - Consider use of facial coverings for all on the bus, when populations of unvaccinated students will be on the bus for long periods of time.
 - Utilize same screening questions for driver and for students as used to enter the school building. Post questions in a visible spot upon entry to bus.
 - Clean and disinfect vehicles after each use.

 - Travel to Outside Events*
 - Encourage virtual events as much as possible:
 - Virtual field trip opportunities
 - Virtual professional development
 - Virtual retreats
 - Virtual conferences for staff and student organizations
 - Overnight events for students, including field trips, retreats, and conferences, are allowed with proper health protocols in place. Conditions may require suspension of overnight events at certain times during the school year.
 - Field trips are allowed with proper health protocols and conditions in place. Conditions may require suspension of field trips at certain times during the school year.

Classroom Cleaning Protocols

Schools need to develop additional cleaning protocols to ensure safe environments through regular disinfection. (Diocesan GSY)

General

- Maintenance staff from the Cleaning Company is properly trained to regularly disinfect the school throughout the day and after hours.
- HSRCS staff and students are encouraged to regularly wipe down classroom furniture, supplies, and equipment per the classroom cleaning protocol.

Classroom Procedures:

Before students arrive, teachers will:

- Wipe all essential surfaces including door knobs, light switches, bathrooms for small children, and any applicable items.

During the school day:

- Wipe down their desks including the seat, table top, plexi-glass shields and any other surfaces as needed.

Recess and breaks

- Teachers may consider a walk break for their students outside in a line, using social distancing, to give them fresh air time outside of recess during the school day.

Before leaving school, students and teachers will

- Wipe down their desks including the seat, table top, plexi-glass shields and any other surfaces as needed.
- Deep clean all remaining surfaces in the classroom as well as their desk and chair.

Additional notes:

- Teachers and students will use hand sanitizer upon entering and exiting the classroom.
- Students will need to bring a reusable water bottle that can be filled during the day at the touchless water bottle dispensers in the school or with help from staff at current water fountains.
- Mask use is optional for the students and staff, especially the unvaccinated, Students and Staff may be required to wear a mask if the situation demands per direction of the Diocese of Birmingham Catholic Schools or the administration of HSRCS.

Entrance Protocols

Each school will create well-defined entrance protocols for students, teachers, and visitors. These protocols define the processes that determine where, how, and which criteria need to be met to enter the school building each day. Processes may continually be revised to maintain efficiency, to meet the needs of the school based on observation and/or feedback, and to account for changes to health guidance. (Diocesan GSY)

Prior to the Start of School

- Parents must sign a COVID-19 consent form that allows for HSRCS representative to take student temperatures if needed during the year.

Daily Screening Questions

In order to enter the school building, students, parents, teachers, staff, and visitors must meet certain criteria. An affirmative answer to Question 1 will result in non-entry to the school building. Question 2 and 3 depend on the individual's vaccination status or previous infection with Covid-19 within the past 90 days:

1. Have you (or the student) and/or anyone in your household experienced any of the following symptoms in the past 24 hours:
 - Fever of 100.4 degrees and/or chills
 - New cough that is not related to an existing condition
 - Difficulty breathing
 - New or unexplained muscle aches or body aches that is not related to a known activity or condition
 - Vomiting or diarrhea
 - New loss of taste or smell
2. Are you (or the student) and/or anyone in the household awaiting test results for COVID-19?
3. Have you (or the student) and/or anyone in the household tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 10 days?
4. Have you (or the student) and/or anyone in the household had a known exposure to someone diagnosed with COVID-19 within the past 14 days?

Morning Carline Drop-off

- HSRCS will facilitate morning drop-off at three entrances:
 - a) Entrance to the 1st Grade/Kindergarten Hallway-PreK-Grade 2
 - b) Entrance at the Gym -Grades 3-5
 - c) Entrance on Tiger Drive at the Cafeteria- Grades 6-8*Parents will multiple students will drop-off there students at the highest grade in the family.*
- Procedures and protocols will be updated per the recommendation of the CDC, the Alabama Department of Public Health, and the Diocese of Birmingham Catholic Schools.

Dismissal Protocols

Review and update arrival and dismissal procedures to reduce intermingling between student groups, maintain small congregations, and keep 6-foot distance between students. (Diocesan GRS)

- HSRCs will facilitate afternoon pickup at three locations:
 - a) Entrance to the 1st Grade/Kindergarten Hallway: **PreK-Grade 2**
Students will be grouped by family at each hallway with 3-6 feet of distance between family groups. As family car numbers are called, students will be directed to head to their respective exit.
 - b) Entrance at the Gym: **Grades 3-5**
Students will be grouped by family in the gym with 3-6 feet of distance between family groups. As family car numbers are called, students will be directed to head to their respective exit.
 - c) Entrance on Tiger Drive at the Cafeteria: **Grades 6-8**
Students will be grouped by family in the cafeteria and the hallways close to the cafeteria door with 3-6 feet of distance between family groups. As family car numbers are called, students will be directed to head to their respective exit.
- *Parents will multiple students will pick up their students at the highest grade in the family.*
- See map for Carpool Directions for Drop-off and Pick-up.

Food Service Protocols

Food service can be safely continued on campus with provisions in place to ensure safe practices. These considerations are dependent upon the school's food service facilities. (Diocesan GSY)

Considerations for food service include:

- Ensure that glass or plastic partitions in food service lines allow students and staff to see and select the food but not breathe on, touch, or self-serve
- Ensure that all students wash hands before and after eating meals and snacks
- Develop system for food service employees to be checked daily for symptoms and wear facial covering and gloves when serving and preparing food
- Decide whether alternative lunchroom schedules or use of alternative spaces for eating are necessary, depending on cafeteria space and size of student population.
 - Allow for alternative spaces to be designated for supervised class lunch use if more space is needed
 - Consider whether plexiglass dividers would allow for safe socialization to continue

Suspend use of drinking fountains, water dispensers, and other such high-touch methods.

Daily Questionnaire

The questionnaire should be posted in a visible location for students, staff, or visitors to see prior to entering the school building.

An affirmative answer to question 1 results in non-entry to the school building. Question 2 and 3 depend on the individual's vaccination status or previous infection with COVID-19 within the past 90 days (GSY).

1. Have you (or the student) and/or anyone in your household experienced any of the following symptoms in the past 24 hours:
 - Fever of 100.4 and/or chills
 - New cough that is not related to an existing condition.
 - Difficulty breathing
 - New or unexplained muscle aches or body aches that is not related to a known activity or condition
 - Vomiting or diarrhea
 - New loss of taste or smell
2. Are you (or the student) and/or anyone in the household awaiting test results for COVID-19?
3. Have you (or the student) and/or anyone in the household tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 10 days?
4. Have you (or the student) and/or anyone in the household been notified of being a close contact of someone testing positive for COVID-19 within the past 10 days?

ADPH COVID-19 Report Card

<https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/covid19/schools.html>



Catholic Schools Office Diocese of Birmingham

COVID-19 ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND LIABILITY WAIVER

Introduction:

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is extremely contagious. The school intends to follow federal, state and local standards of conduct and has put in place reasonable preventative measures to reduce the spread of the virus. However, even though such standards will be followed, and reasonable measures put into place, we cannot guarantee that you or your child will not become infected with COVID-19. Further, attending school and participating in activities associated with the school could increase your risk of you or your child contracting the disease.

Acknowledgment:

By permitting your child's attendance at school and/or participating in school activities you acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and that your child may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19 and that such exposure or infection may result in injury, illness, disability, or death. You acknowledge too that the risk of becoming exposed to or infected by COVID-19 at school may result from the actions, omissions, or negligence of yourself or others, including, but not limited to, school employees and volunteers.

Further, in an effort to reduce the risk to your child, you agree that you will take your child's temperature daily and will not take him or her to school should the temperature exceed 100.4 degrees. You agree that you will instruct and continue to instruct your child about the hazards of the virus, social distancing protocols and proper virus prevention hygiene practices.¹ You agree that you will continue to monitor your child's health and wellbeing, and will have him or her tested whenever it appears that he or she may have become infected with COVID-19. Should that happen you agree that you will quarantine your child and notify the school officials. You understand and agree that delivering your child to school is confirmation that you have followed federal, state and local directives, instructions provided herein above and that you have answered the daily screening questionnaire(s) truthfully.

Waiver:

With an understanding of the risks involved, I further agree on behalf of myself, my child(ren), my spouse, our heirs, successors, and assigns, to release, indemnify, hold harmless, and defend the school, Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama, their teachers, staff, administration, employees, agents and representatives ("indemnitees") associated with the school arising from or in connection with any negligent act or omission of the indemnitees' in relation to prevention of the spread of the COVID-19 virus only.

I SPECIFICALLY UNDERSTAND AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I AM AGREEING TO DEFEND, INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS THE INDEMNITEES' FROM THEIR OWN NEGLIGENCE IN REGARD TO THE INDEMNITEES' NEGLIGENT ACTION AND/OR INACTION IN REGARD TO PROTECTION AGAINST THE COVID-19 VIRUS.

Student(s) Name(s) _____ Signature _____
Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

¹ Proper virus prevention hygiene includes regular and thorough washing of hands with anti-bacterial soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds; regular use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer after touching surfaces within the school and in situations where handwashing is not available; and refraining from touching the face area.

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