



**DIOCESE OF
SAN JOSE**

**Department of Catholic Schools
Office of the Superintendent**

September 8, 2020

Dear Catholic School Families,

Welcome to the 2020-21 school year! Despite our physical distance, the beginning of our school year has been marked by energy, hope, and solidarity. Thank you for uniting as communities of faith and learning as we walk with one another through the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic.

I am writing to update you on our plans regarding the waiver process established by the State of California and the County of Santa Clara. This process would allow students in Grades TK-6 to return to campus for in-person instruction with strict health and safety protocols in place. I want to reassure families who wish to have their students learn from home. Regardless of what happens with the waiver, our schools will continue to offer distance learning this year for those who choose it.

Over the past three weeks, we have partnered with Santa Clara County officials and our school leaders to complete the necessary components of the waiver application. This includes the development of a site-specific Reopening Plan for each elementary school. Throughout this process, the schools have collaborated with their communities, a team of principals, and our office. They received multiple rounds of review and feedback to ensure the plans meet not only State and County requirements but also our moral and ethical obligations to the safety of our students, educators, and families.

Last Friday, we submitted the waiver application for our 26 elementary schools. The State and County Public Health Departments will review the application, and we anticipate an answer within the next few weeks.

If we receive approval, each school will begin in-person instruction on its own timeline, taking into account its unique family and staffing needs. To support this process, your principal will be sharing the details of your Reopening Plan and asking for your preference for either in-person or distance learning. Please know that schools may need to make schedule, class, and staff adjustments to meet the needs that arise. For those of you with children in Grades 7-8, these students will continue to be served through distance learning. Grades 7-8 will have an opportunity to return to campus once the County is off the State monitoring list (purple tier) for 14 days.

While much of this pandemic has been marked by uncertainty and isolation, we believe that faith and community are constants at the heart of our ministry. Whether in-person or remote, we are committed to embracing each child and family within this supportive community of faith. Thank you for your continued partnership. May God bless you and all the children we serve.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer A. Beltramo".

Jennifer Beltramo
Superintendent of Catholic Schools