

Dear St. Patrick School Parents,

Spring is right around the corner and I know we all are anxiously awaiting its return! In response to the ever-changing dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic, I would like to share with you the new travel guidelines presented to me today from the Archdiocese's COVID Task Force Committee. In addition, I would also like to explain briefly our final decision on spring sports.

TRAVEL:

Notification of Travel

It is vitally important that a parent notify the school's main office of any travel whether it be a sport competition or our upcoming **SPRING BREAK**. Students continue to share their family's plans for spring break with their teachers, but we must hear it from you. Mrs. Gardner needs to know where you are going and what will be the date of your return in order to determine if a quarantine is necessary and if so, for how long. **If we know there will be a quarantine, we will send home a child's materials before they leave for spring break, so again, it is important to communicate with us.** Below are the new guidelines:

Updated travel-related quarantines

We are following the [Chicago Emergency Travel Order](#), which is updated every other Tuesday, for domestic travel regardless of whether the traveler resides in the city of Chicago, Cook County or Lake County. In light of new guidance from public health experts, and in consultation with our own medical advisors, the following travel-related quarantine guidelines replace all prior Archdiocesan guidelines. Anyone traveling over spring break should refer to the Chicago Emergency Travel Order Map as of March 9th.

Domestic travel (state-to-state)

Vaccinated individuals:

- No quarantine is necessary if the traveler is fully vaccinated, which is defined as 2 weeks after the second dose of a 2-dose COVID-19 vaccine or 2 weeks after receiving a single-dose COVID-19 vaccine.
- Proof of vaccination or negative test results will be required to avoid quarantines.
- Individual must not have symptoms and must maintain strict masking and physical distancing. If a fully vaccinated individual does have symptoms, he or she must quarantine and consult with a healthcare expert.

Non-vaccinated individuals:

- Domestic travel in states designated Orange on the [Chicago Emergency Travel Order map](#) requires:
 - 10-day quarantine upon return if there is no negative pre-arrival test or the traveler is not fully vaccinated (see above for definition of fully vaccinated) **OR**

- Pre-arrival negative test (within 72 hours prior to arrival back into IL) with strict masking, physical distancing and avoidance of in-person gatherings (separate from school attendance)
- Please note, if a student's test is negative but anyone in the family group is positive, the child will have to quarantine for 14 days.
- For domestic travel in states designated as Yellow on the [Chicago Emergency Travel Order map](#), no quarantine or pre-arrival test are required. However, travelers must maintain strict masking and physical distancing.

International travel

Regardless of vaccination status, international travelers must follow CDC guidelines:

- Traveler is to be *tested 3-5 days after their return to the U.S.* and must quarantine for a 7-day period even if the post-arrival test is negative.
- If traveler chooses not to take a test 3-5 days after their return to the U.S., he or she must quarantine for 10 days after arrival.

Close exposure

Quarantine guidelines for close exposure remain the same. Students must quarantine for 14 days.

SPRING SPORTS:

Once the State of IL opened up certain spring sports, the Archdiocese also took a close look to guide their schools as to what would be needed to safely hold a sport program this spring. I took the webinar and asked a couple of my coaches to do the same. Given restrictions such as mixing cohorts, sanitizing, wearing masks during physical activity, remaining 6 feet apart, and more, we all felt it would be extremely challenging to do so safely.

In addition, there are other considerations. I know I mentioned previously that my gym is not currently available due to the amount of furniture that is currently being stored there. Please know I have done my due diligence in regards to possibly moving furniture into storage containers. I looked into this in August and the number of needed units and the cost to rent them was beyond our means.

Lastly, it is important to note, that other schools in our conference came up with the same conclusion about spring sports, therefore there would be very few schools to compete against. I am sorry to say, this is just not the year for sports. I, too, see their value and I am sorry we are unable to have them, but our first priority has been and will continue to be...to safely provide for in-person instruction.

Please let me know if you have any questions and as always... thank you for your continued understanding and support, especially during this most challenging school year.

In peace and gratitude,

Mrs. Mary Vitulli
Principal