



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK



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MR. MICHAEL J. DEEGAN, SUPERINTENDENT

October 6, 2020

Dear Catholic Schools Families,

Over the past month, Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of New York and the Diocese of Brooklyn have been open and successfully conducting in-person Catholic education for our students. Our meticulously planned protocols, designed to keep students and teachers safe, and developed in conformity with city, state, and federal health guidelines, are working. Having heard from so many of you, we know you are grateful for all the hard work, time, and, yes, money – some \$18 million dollars -- that went into making sure our Catholic schools could open and operate safely, as they have been doing.

As you are likely aware, a number of areas in New York City and the surrounding counties are seeing an uptick in positive test results for COVID-19. Health experts have told us all along to anticipate such statistical trends as we entered autumn. In reaction to these expected numbers, Governor Cuomo and Mayor de Blasio are instituting drastic measures by shutting down *all* public and private schools within certain *ZIP codes*. Rather than judging each school on their individual merits and their fidelity to the protocols set forth by their own administrations, the governor and mayor are painting all institutions with a draconian broad brush.

The safety of our Catholic school communities is paramount. It was that very guiding principle that saw us close our Catholic schools well before the public schools felt it necessary to do so in the Spring of 2020. Should there be a situation that required a Catholic school to close, we would not need to wait for elected officials to tell us to do so.

Our Catholic schools are faithfully adhering to the guidelines we have established. Isolated cases of COVID-19 in our Catholic schools have triggered these protocols, and in person learning has safely continued. The New York City Department of Health has been inspecting our Catholic schools. All have passed.

If other schools cannot meet the standards needed to operate safely, they should indeed be closed until they demonstrate their ability to do so. In the meantime, it is absolutely unfair to be associated with the non-compliant schools merely because we share a ZIP code.

Our principals, teachers and staff have worked too hard, and you, our families have provided too much support, that we cannot allow government officials to derail the education of your children. If you agree, please let your elected officials know how you feel, by taking a moment to call and email Governor Cuomo, Mayor de Blasio, your city councilmember, state assembly member, and state senator and tell them to support schools that are working and not to institute these draconian measures.

This message is being delivered to all corners of both our diocese as we are brothers and sisters; part of the greater New York Catholic school community who may very well see these issues arise in your region. As such, we ask you utilize the links provided to reach as many elected officials as possible.

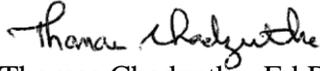
Please call Governor Cuomo directly 1-518-474-8390 and Mayor de Blasio at 212-788-3000.

In order to contact your state and local representatives, please utilize the following links:
All our families should visit [Find My Senator](#) as well as [Find My NY Assembly Member](#) while those who live within the five boroughs of New York City should also utilize [Find My City Council Member](#)

Regards,



Mr. Michael J. Deegan
Superintendent of Schools
Archdiocese of New York



Thomas Chadzutko, Ed.D
Superintendent – Catholic Schools Support Services
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