

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

As we make our way back to the classroom following the holiday break, I would like to share important information with you about COVID Safety protocols and expectations as we face the realities of the spread of the Omicron variant.

If you are sick, STAY HOME! Please, no matter how mild the symptoms may be (a headache, cough, runny nose, stomach ache, mild fever, fatigue, etc), stay home!!! These are symptoms that in the past we would push through and go to school. Students who present any symptoms will be sent home immediately.

Absences due to illness, COVID, or the need to quarantine should be communicated to attendance as such and do not count toward the overall number of absences considered to maintain credit for classes. Absences not related to illness or quarantine do count toward attendance numbers and are considered for credit.

Students should communicate with their teachers and communicate with their counselor to get the support they need to facilitate missed work, especially if they will be out more than a couple of days based on symptoms.

If a student is positive for COVID we are still following the 10 day quarantine from the positive test date. Please do not return to school until you have confirmed your return date with the school based on your positive test result. If you have tested positive please [fill out the form at this link](#), which can also be found on the website.

Vaccines and Boosters:

Vaccinations and boosters are the most powerful tool available to stop the spread of COVID-19. We strongly recommend that all students and their families receive the COVID-19 vaccine and get their booster as soon as they are eligible and able.

Masking:

Wear your mask and wear it properly! I know that most of us are over having to wear masks and cannot wait for things to feel “normal.” However, masking is the easiest way for us to ensure our safety and the safety of others next to vaccinations. We need to be especially vigilant about masking because of the importance of wearing masks over the mouth and nose as a gesture of caring for others, and following not only CC rules, but state mandates. All faculty and staff will be enforcing masking and we will be sending students home if they continue to refuse to keep their noses properly covered during the school day.

We strongly encourage increasing the quality of masks being worn to ensure they fit properly and provide maximum protection. If a student is wearing a mask that does not fit properly, they will be asked to wear a school-provided mask.

Here is a link to a great article on why the quality of the mask matters, especially in the face of the Omicron Variant.

Surveillance Antigen Testing:

Central Catholic will continue to conduct surveillance testing throughout the remainder of the school year. We will test 100% of our population on Wednesday, January 5th. Anyone not able to be at school on that day for testing must present a negative test to return to school.

We will require antigen testing for 50% of the school population every week for the next 4 weeks following the holiday break and will return to the 25% testing rate thereafter.

All students participating in co-curricular activities such as winter sports, drama, constitution team, etc., will be required to test weekly.

Antigen testing is provided at no cost to our families and takes place during the school day. Students may not opt out of antigen testing.

Quarantine and Testing Requirement for Unvaccinated students:

In consultation with LPHAs, a student and staff who is exposed in any setting outside of school (e.g., home, gym, community class, extracurricular, etc.) Observe a 7-day quarantine period, and be tested between days 5 and 7. Students and staff with a negative test at this time who remain symptom-free may return to school on day 8.

In alignment with recommendations from the CDC, the following exception from quarantine

is effective in the case of positive exposure from the classroom setting: Observe a modified 7-day “test to stay” quarantine period, during which the student or staff may continue to attend school as long as they remain symptom-free and test negative using a school-administered BinaxNOW test upon exposure and between 5- 7-days following exposure.

Quarantine and Testing Requirements for Fully Vaccinated Students and Staff:

OHA and the CDC have updated their recommendation for fully vaccinated people who have a known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are not required to quarantine, but need to be tested 5-7 days after exposure, regardless of whether they have symptoms.

Important Note:

All on-campus, school-provided testing is dependent upon the availability of tests. Students may be required to secure an antigen test through their own resources. If the school is not able to provide the testing and the family is unable to get testing the student will be required to fully quarantine for the full 14 days from the positive case exposure if they are unvaccinated. The school will have antigen testing available every Wednesday.

Ventilation and Eating:

We continue to run our ventilation systems for maximum ventilation and are changing filters at a rate that exceeds recommendations. Teachers will maximize open windows.

Eating is strictly prohibited in classroom spaces and should only take place in designated areas where social distancing can be maintained.

More Detailed COVID Protocols:

We continue to vigilantly follow the guidelines and practices that have been established by Central Catholic as we have navigated this pandemic. For more detailed information, please visit our website: <https://www.centralcatholichigh.org/parents/covid-protocols.html>

Digital Learning:

We continue to plan for alternative modes of delivering education in the case of a major outbreak or if we have too many teachers out to be able to cover classes. We will continue to actively respond to the current realities and ensure that learning is not interrupted.

Students who are out of school for illness or quarantine should plan to use Canvas to communicate with teachers and to maintain their learning. This learning will be asynchronous unless we do a school-wide pause, at which time we would plan for synchronous learning through zoom with accountability for attendance.

Counselors are ready to support students in communication with teachers about extended absences and to ensure their needs are being met.

I absolutely believe in our ability to navigate this next phase of COVID-19 together and to stay vigilant as we support each other in keeping our community safe.

If you and your family engaged in large group gatherings and have increased your risk of exposure, please make choices to observe a period of quarantine to ensure the safety of others. We want to do everything we can to keep our students in school and all of our activities going. It will take all of us being safe and accountable to make that happen! Thank you for thinking of others and doing your part for the community.

“Do your little bit of good where you are; it’s those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.” (Desmund Tutu)

God’s love and light,
Danyelle Ramsey
Principal