

Dear St. Denis Parish and School Community members,

We have been monitoring the news about the spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), particularly the cases identified in the Chicago area. The archdiocese has issued guidelines for worship services based on advice from public health authorities and we have joined with the Holy Father in praying for all affected by this epidemic.

We are writing today to share developments that may have an impact on some archdiocese facilities. The Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) has recently confirmed a case of COVID-19 involving a staff member at Vaughn Occupational High School, a Chicago Public school. The CDPH has stated that the immediate health risk to the general public from this case remains low. The CDPH recommended that anyone present at Vaughn School between February 25 and March 6 self-quarantine. The CDPH and CPS also advised that:

“People who were *not* at Vaughn between February 25 and March 6 do *not* have restrictions at this time, even if they have been in contact with someone at Vaughn. They can attend work and school, as long as they are not sick. This applies to:

- Family members, care providers or those who share a household with Vaughn students, staff, and service providers
- Students, faculty and staff at other schools or other members of the community who may have come into contact with members of the Vaughn community
- Students who shared the bus with Vaughn students”

Based on this guidance and our own contacts with CDPH and Illinois Department of Public Health we are not closing archdiocese schools where a student or staff member has a connection with Vaughn.

We will follow the same guidance for other cases of secondary family exposure. Students and staff with a family member who might have had contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case will be allowed to attend work and school, as long as they are not sick.

The health and safety of our Parish and School communities is our first priority. We ask that you join us in protecting our community by following the guidance of public health authorities and your medical provider. It is critically important that our community share only trusted sources of information.

For the most reliable information, please visit:

- Chicago Department of Public Health www.chicago.gov/coronavirus CDPH has developed an [FAQ](#) that will be updated regularly as the situation develops.
- The Illinois Department of Public Health www.dph.illinois.gov

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.

We will continue to follow the guidance of local, state, and federal health officials will update you as our situation changes or more information becomes available. Please email preparednessaoc@archchicago.org if you have concerns or questions of the archdiocese or the Office of Catholic Schools.

As a faith community, we must respond with compassion and prayer to everyone affected by the COVID-19 epidemic around the world, particularly those who do not have access to medical and community support. We will include these brothers and sisters in our prayers for the sick and those who have died. Please keep our community in your prayers and know that we are praying for you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Bishop Ron Hicks
Vicar General

Dr. Jim Rigg
Superintendent, Office of Catholic Schools