

July 17, 2020

Dear Catholic School Families, Educators and Pastors,

I pray this correspondence finds you and your family safe and well this summer. Today, Governor Gavin Newsom announced that all TK-12 schools in California will be held to new requirements for resuming in-person instruction. As a result, **the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles will open the 2020-21 school year with distance learning.**

All three counties served by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles are currently on the state's monitoring list and are likely to remain through August. The criteria for the return to in-person instruction is based on the state's local health jurisdiction (LHJ) monitoring list. If a county is placed on the state's monitoring list, the schools in that county will not be permitted to conduct instruction in-person. **Once the LHJ has been removed from the state's monitoring list for 14 consecutive days, in-person instruction will be allowed to resume – this is when we will return to campuses.** More information about the status of counties can be found at: <https://covid19.ca.gov/roadmap-counties/>

The decision by the governor is a sobering reflection of the state of public health in our region. Despite nearly five months of sacrifice, patience and prayer, the rate of COVID-19 transmission in our region has increased significantly since our return to campus announcement on June 15th. Though our return to our beloved campuses will be delayed for now, we will return. Until then, our schools will open at a distance and our community will once again rise to the occasion.

Our schools have been working extraordinarily hard to prepare to welcome back students this fall. We are so proud of their incredible efforts in planning for both in-person and distance, while simultaneously focusing on making campuses safe for students and staff. Though the circumstances may not afford us the opportunity to start the school year in-person, our preparation efforts will pay-off when we are able to safely return to campuses.

Our schools prove every day that a true education of the whole person cannot exist without the presence of God. We are being called to be hopeful, resilient and faithful people. As one Catholic community, God calls us to come together once again for our children during difficult times. We will band together as we did in the spring because our Catholic schools are a gift – it's where our students learn and love, and our families grow in faith and community.

On behalf of Archbishop José Gomez and our entire school ministry, thank you for your partnership, commitment, and solidarity.

Yours in Christ,



Paul M. Escala
Superintendent of Schools