



# DIOCESE OF MARQUETTE

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October 7, 2020

Dear Catholic School Parents, Guardians, and Staffs,

Everyone involved with our Catholic schools has sacrificed and made personal adjustments so that our students are able to learn in person on our campuses this fall. I have just visited seven of our eight schools and I can share with you very positive news: your sacrifices are making a difference. All pastors and principals I have spoken with are truly grateful for their staffs and families and the positive community spirit being built during these trying times. *Thank you.*

As you know, due to an increase in confirmed Covid-19 cases in the Upper Peninsula, the U.P. has been moved from Phase 5 to Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan. This means that each of our schools will now move to its Phase Four Plan that was written locally by each school last summer.

One of the more controversial areas these plans address is the wearing of face masks.

Already this fall, students in some of our schools have tested positive for Covid-19 resulting in five classes among various schools being quarantined for a period of time. This week, many of our principals decided to begin requiring their students to wear face masks.

At this time, considering the overall increase in Covid cases in the Upper Peninsula, current direction from the Michigan State Health Department that U.P. students in all schools wear face coverings, and after consulting our principals and Bishop John, I am directing that **all of our schools begin requiring that students in kindergarten through eighth grade wear masks within the building with the exception of lunch period, and that all staff members wear masks throughout the day, to begin no later than Monday, October 12.**

While it is difficult to put a length on the time this decision will be in place, together with our principals and local health departments I will monitor the situation and appropriately relax the requirement to wear masks when it improves.

In summary, we are being asked to make further personal sacrifices for the common good of all our students and families. Thank you in advance for your understanding and support.

All of you are in my daily prayers and together with Our Lord, we will get through this.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Salisbury".

Mark Salisbury  
Superintendent of Catholic Schools