



Principals Page

March 17, 2021

Dear St. Celestine School Families,

Recently the Archdiocese Office of Catholic Schools (OCS) worked closely with the Archdiocesan COVID-19 Task Force and carefully studied guidance developed by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Illinois Elementary Sports Association (IESA), and the Illinois High School Sports Association (IHSA) in regards to safely potentially bringing back spring athletics. The athletic guidelines are in addition to the COVID-19 Framework that we have been following all year with wellness checks, masking, hand sanitizing, distancing, and keeping our students in their cohorts/homerooms at all times throughout the school day.

When reviewing the guidelines with leaders at our neighboring Catholic schools, the most important guideline in regards to safety reads, ***“Team assignments, practices and competitions should be designed to maintain grade level cohort structures at all times possible. Mixing of cohorts should be avoided.”*** This means that we would not be able to have students from different classes together on the field or court.

Based on this restriction and others, we will not be having spring sports, either competitive or intramural in the 2020-2021 school year. This is in line with what the League has decided, too.

The risk of mixing cohorts is too great and goes against our school reopening plan that we have been diligently following all year. While we are very disappointed to not be able to offer interleague and intramural sports this year, we know that it is in the best interest for the safety of our students and larger community.

Our St. Celestine School Athletic Director, Ms. McNulty, and I have been working on developing an after school Open Gym program where students of specific cohorts (homerooms) can stay after school and have gym time in lieu of a sports practice. We are planning on starting this after

Spring Break in order to put together safety guidelines that mirror the ones we use during the school day.

We are also working to position the school for activities in Fall, which we hope to launch in accordance with Archdiocesan directives and following safety protocols. The entire school community wishes for a return to the many things that make the SCS community strong, including athletics.

A crucial first step towards this activity is for the Athletic Board to be re-instituted, now that we can start planning and preparing again. There are a number of open Athletics Board positions that need to be filled. They are listed below:

- President (or Co-President)
- Vice President
- Secretary

Please contact Ms. McNulty at athleticdirector@stcelestineschool.org if you have any interest in joining the Athletics Board.

Lastly, as we prepare our students during Lent, students in Grades 3 through 8 will participate in Confessions on March 23 and 24. Students in Grades 5 through 8 will go to the church at 10am on Monday, March 22 for the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. In both faith activities, students will be spaced 3 to 6 feet apart and will wear masks. Rooms will be far apart from each other, sitting in different sections of the church. The practices we have been doing all year will be in place for these activities.

With Gratitude,

Sheila M. Klich

Principal