



Aug. 1, 2020

Dear Parents,

We, like you, were disheartened at Montgomery County's decision to mandate that our schools cannot move forward with our reopening plans. The wellbeing of our students has and will continue to be at the forefront of all decisions made for our school.

The Catholic Schools Office Reopening Task Force and our St. Raphael planning team (our SRS/SRNS staff and school leaders) have worked diligently to develop reopening plans in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state safety guidelines. Parent input was critical to the development of reopening plans as we worked to meet the needs of our families and provide options for learning environments that you deem best for your child.

I can share with you that the Archdiocese of Washington leadership is currently reviewing the order that has been issued and will provide guidance to schools leaders in the coming days on any next steps. The interim superintendent for Catholic schools, Kelly Branaman, has created opportunities for pastors and principals to be updated and share our community's concerns and priorities early this week.

We are prepared as a community to pivot to a virtual model of learning should we be required to do so. I am confident in the professionalism, determination and fortitude our teachers have demonstrated over the last several months. We pray as a community that we will have other options, but if we are required to move to virtual learning, I know we will do so with the same excellence and commitment to our mission as we also demonstrate.

We encourage you to share your views with the county executive and your other elected representatives.

P.S. Although I was on the call earlier this week, Dr. Gayles seemed to offer no data or science to explain his reservations about opening schools. Instead he validated that our Montgomery County numbers were steady- actually good. I did not want to reach out to you about his comments or last night's Montgomery County announcement before I received an official ADW response. Besides passing this ADW message, personally, I want to thank you for your patience, understanding, and for realizing many, if not most of these decisions are outside our St. Raphael control. I am so proud of our staff and grateful for their dedicated, selfless service for our families, our children. Our SRS/SRNS teachers and staff have spent the summer planning, brainstorming, working to make learning plans for your children. Please join me as we pray for answers so we can move forward finalizing our SRS/SRNS plans to educate these precious little ones in the safest, most effective way open to us at the end of August. The clock is ticking.

God bless us all!

Teri Dwyer
Principal

