

**Contact:**  
**Penny Wiegert**  
Director of Communication  
pwiegert@rockforddiocese.org  
Phone: (815) 399-4300  
Fax: (815)399-6225

555 Colman Center Drive  
P.O. Box 7044  
Rockford, IL 61125  
www.rockforddiocese.org



**DIOCESE OF  
ROCKFORD**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2020

# PRESS RELEASE

## Catholic Schools to Move to Remote Learning After Christmas, Will Not Participate in Basketball Season

ROCKFORD—The Diocese of Rockford Office of Catholic Education announced in a letter to families that all Catholic schools “will pivot to virtual learning for two full weeks beginning January 4. Schools will return to in-class instruction on Tuesday, January 19 (after the Martin Luther King Holiday).”

The Diocese of Rockford joins others, namely the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Diocese of Peoria, in this decision in response to the rising number of coronavirus cases in all areas of the State of Illinois.

The letter states that “While public officials discourage gatherings during the Advent and Christmas season, we anticipate that some may choose to travel and visit family and loved ones during the holiday season.

After careful consideration and discussions with members of the Diocesan Chancery and our school administrators, The Diocese Catholic Education Office has decided to shift our schools to remote learning to avoid multiple cohort quarantines due to holiday-infections.”

Parents were informed that all Rockford Diocesan schools will pivot to virtual learning for two full weeks beginning January 4. Schools will return to in-class instruction on Tuesday, January 19 (after the Martin Luther King Holiday). Remote learning will not begin until after the regularly scheduled Christmas break ends on January 4, 2021. **SEE FULL LETTER INCLUDED IN THIS EMAIL.**

### **BASKETBALL:**

In other action to help mitigate the spread of the virus and to prevent further increases in cases among students and faculty in Catholic schools, the Diocese announced that Catholic High Schools would postpone basketball participation in all six of its Catholic High Schools.

The letter from Superintendent of Catholic Schools Michael Kagan stated that “The recent decision by the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) to move forward with the 2020-21 high school Girls' and Boys' basketball seasons beginning on November 16th without the support and endorsement of the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), and which would be in violation of the Governor's order prohibiting basketball practice and games, leaves our Diocesan high schools in a difficult and vulnerable position.

“Our first and most important priority is the health and safety of all of our students, including our

**MORE**

student athletes.

“Entering into the high school basketball season at a time when the daily COVID positive percentages in Northern Illinois and, in particular, in our diocese, are at 10% and above would be irresponsible and unsafe,” the letter explained.

“Therefore, we are informing you today that our six Central Catholic High Schools (Aurora Central, St. Edward, Marian Central, Boylan, Aquin, and Sterling Newman) will not be participating in the IHSA basketball season, which is scheduled to begin on November 16, 2020.

Superintendent of Catholic Schools Michael Kagan can be contacted at [mkagan@rockforddiocese.org](mailto:mkagan@rockforddiocese.org)

Assistant Superintendent of Catholic Schools Vito DeFrisco can be contacted at [vdefrisco@rockforddiocese.org](mailto:vdefrisco@rockforddiocese.org)

--END--

**About Catholic Diocese of Rockford**

Established in 1908, the Diocese of Rockford is comprised of 105 parishes in Boone, Carroll, DeKalb, JoDaviess, Kane, Lee, McHenry, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside and Winnebago Counties in Northern Illinois serving a Catholic population of more than 300,000. For more about the Catholic Diocese of Rockford, visit [rockforddiocese.org](http://rockforddiocese.org)