



## Announcement

August 31, 2021

As we prepare to welcome students to our schools, we can't help but think back to last spring, when we were all very hopeful that school start-up in the fall would occur free of restrictions due to COVID-19. Unfortunately, this will not be our reality. While we may be completely finished with the pandemic, it seems that the pandemic is not yet finished with us.

Recently, Saskatchewan surpassed 2,000 active COVID-19 cases, the highest it has been since mid-May, and on Saturday, 369 new cases were announced – the highest count since January. Our province is facing the fourth wave of COVID, and our medical system is stressed.

These are not opinions; these are facts.

The Provincial Safe Schools Plan has given broad direction for the entire province. Each school division has been encouraged to consult with its local medical health officers to tailor the plan to local context and need. That is precisely what we have done. We have always relied on advice from medical professionals to make health-related decisions. We have worked closely with our local health team since the beginning of the pandemic, and we are thankful to have them. They have been very generous with their time.

We acknowledge that we all have our own personal views about what people should or should not be doing to remain safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, and that's fine. We should be able to respectfully agree to disagree. We have heard from people who are strongly opposed to our plan; we have also heard from those who are very thankful and strongly in favour of it. Thank you to parents and community members who have reached out to seek understanding and engage in healthy dialogue.

There is no plan that would have met everyone's approval. So, when it comes to developing a plan for a school division, we set aside personal opinions, seek information from those who are best suited to offer it, and do the best we can to ensure a safe return to school for students and staff. The duty of care we must provide when families entrust their children to us is far higher than that of a normal household. Since students younger than twelve are not yet able to be vaccinated, we are being especially cautious with this age group.

It has come to our attention that there are a few people who are encouraging students to defy the rules set out in our plan. We respectfully ask that you do not put children and school-based staff in this position.

The school division requirements regarding wearing masks are described in our Safe Schools Plan and must be observed by all elementary students, staff and visitors to the schools. If you do not wish for your child to follow the requirements, then you are welcome to register your child for homeschool or inquire about our virtual learning opportunities.

If your child attends school without wearing a mask when required, he or she cannot remain at school. You will be asked to come and pick him/her up immediately.



If you are not in favour of the masking requirements, we encourage you to address your concerns to the Government of Saskatchewan, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the Board of Education and not place your child in the difficult position of breaching school protocols.

We consider it a privilege to serve as Director of Education and Board Chair for Light of Christ Catholic Schools, and we look forward to your cooperation in the interest of your child's education.

Cory Rideout

A blue ink signature of Cory Rideout, consisting of stylized initials and a surname.

Director of Education  
Light of Christ Catholic Schools

Glen Gantefor

A blue ink signature of Glen Gantefor, featuring a prominent loop and a horizontal stroke.

Board Chair  
Light of Christ Catholic Schools