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**HEALTH AND SAFETY REMINDER AS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN BROOKLYN AND QUEENS HEAD BACK TO SCHOOL WEDNESDAY**

Dr. Thomas Chadzutko, Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Brooklyn, which includes 70 schools and academies throughout Brooklyn and Queens, today issued a reminder to ensure a safe return to school in advance of tomorrow's first day of school.

In accordance with the New York State Department of Health mandate announced on August 27, 2021, all students, faculty, and staff members in Catholic Academies and Parish Schools in Brooklyn and Queens will be required to wear masks inside school buildings.

“As the new school year is set to begin tomorrow, it is important that we recommit to working together for the health and well-being of all, as we did so well last year. We want a return to normalcy in our classrooms as soon as reasonably possible, but as the Coronavirus and the Delta variant continue to persist among our population, our first priority is to keep our students, faculty, and staff safe,” **said Superintendent Dr. Thomas Chadzutko.**

“The Office of the Superintendent ~ Catholic Schools Support Services maintains our partnership and consistent communication with the NYC and NYS DOHMH. This collaboration with the city and state health agencies continues to ensure the health and safety of our school communities,” **said Deputy Superintendent Joan McMaster.**

School officials will continue to encourage vaccinations, while maintaining social distancing, hand washing and hand hygiene, and the rigorous daily cleaning and sanitizing of facilities as well as enhanced ventilation.

Parents will be reminded to keep their child home from school if they are sick, and their child will be required to receive medical clearance from a healthcare provider that they can safely return to in person instruction. The Catholic Academies and Parish Schools will also continue to follow city and state guidelines regarding contact tracing, quarantine and isolation protocols.

Catholic schools in Brooklyn and Queens, in adherence to strict guidelines, opened on time for the 2020-2021 school year, and were able to offer five day a week instruction.

Enrollment increased in nearly 40% of the schools last year in grades K-8. To learn more about Catholic Schools in Brooklyn and Queens, visit [catholicschoolsbq.org](http://catholicschoolsbq.org).

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