Dear Parents,

I hope you are having a joyful Advent season as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have focused on strategies to keep our students and families safe and healthy. I am happy to report that our mitigation strategies are having the desired outcome and we have experienced very little community spread within our schools. While we will remain focused on following the advice of federal, state, and local health authorities, we now have the opportunity for many of our students to receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

The COVID-19 vaccination is not required to attend our schools, but we encourage families to speak to their pediatricians and decide if the COVID-19 immunization is suitable for their child. Additional information about vaccines for children can be found at these links: [American Academy of Pediatrics](https://www.aap.org/) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/).

As we continue to work with local, state, and federal authorities, we are providing an opportunity to upload your child's completed vaccination card (if you have one), to TADS, the student information system. The purpose of collecting this information is to allow your child's school and the Archdiocese of Washington to respond to incidents of exposure in the safest way possible. This allows us to make quarantine decisions more efficiently and effectively for students. **You will receive an email from TADS with a link within the next few days.** Please use the TADS link to upload the COVID vaccination record for your child(ren).

I ask that you stay vigilant in carrying out the COVID mitigation strategies, as you gather and celebrate with family over the holidays. Please follow any travel protocols, both locally and internationally, as we hope to avoid a spike in COVID-19 rates in our schools, upon returning from Christmas break. Our goal is to keep students in school! We look forward to continuing our partnership with you, amidst a rapidly changing environment related to COVID-19, and we appreciate your continued support and flexibility.

As we approach Christmas and reflect on the mystery of the Incarnation, Jesus, the Light of the World, coming into our midst, we ask Him to continue to illuminate our minds and our path as we navigate the ongoing challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic together. Thank you for all you have done to support our schools and I pray that you will have a safe and relaxing Christmas vacation and a new year filled with blessings.

Peace of Christ,

Kelly Branaman
Secretary for Catholic Schools
Superintendent of Schools