



ICRS

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION REGIONAL SCHOOL

Immunization Policy

Every student enrolled in a Level 1 Catholic School in the Archdiocese of Seattle shall be immunized against vaccine-preventable diseases caused by infectious agents in accordance with the immunization schedule adopted by the Washington State Department of Health Services. The only exception to the foregoing requirements for students in our Catholic schools is a medical exemption signed by a licensed professional (M.D., N.D., D.O., ARNP, or PA) authorized to practice in the State of Washington, including the physician's license number. Failure to obtain required immunizations prior to admission or to maintain required immunizations during enrollment may result in a denial of attendance.

Students' immunizations must be kept up to date to comply with state health standards. In the spirit of Catholic Social Teaching's tenet of commitment to the common good, the Archdiocese and ICRS do not allow religious exemptions for immunizations. The school nurse reviews immunization records every fall and communicates with parents to help them ensure that their students are up to date.



February 19, 2020

To Pastors, Principals and our Catholic School Communities,

We have heard from many people about the new immunization policy for Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Seattle, including parents who thanked us for taking up this position to protect their children, especially those children who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons. We also heard from families who have an objection to vaccinating their children.

The decision to amend the immunization policy was not taken lightly. We considered many factors. In particular, we reviewed guidance from the Church on vaccines produced using cell lines from elective abortions. The Church recognizes the moral problem with their origin, yet teaches that such vaccines may be used when there is an urgent reason for doing so. Specifically, they may be used when vulnerable people or children are threatened by disease.

The Church also teaches that people should take proactive steps to respond to these vaccines. These steps include publicly objecting to past unjust actions, using alternative vaccines whenever possible, and advocating for replacement vaccines. Therefore, we respect the conscientious judgments of parents who may object to these vaccines and encourage them to continue their witness and advocacy. We will support these efforts.

Given the increasing number of infectious disease outbreaks, such as measles, and the low levels of immunization across the Archdiocese of Seattle, we made a prudential decision to focus on the common good and better protect the health and safety of our vulnerable brothers and sisters. We believe all children in our Catholic schools must be immunized in response to public health and safety issues and to protect all children and staff in our care. Therefore, all students enrolling in our Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Seattle are required to meet the vaccine requirements as set forth by Washington State Law RCW 28A.210.080.

In The Heart of Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul D. Etienne".

Most Reverend Paul D. Etienne, DD, STL
Archbishop of Seattle