



DIVINE MERCY COLLEGE

22 November 2021

Dear DMC Parents / Guardians,

Response to proposed Public Health Direction

Thank you for your expressions of support in the face of what has been an inaccurate and ignorant attack on our College, and on some of our leaders.

We apologise that we couldn't take all of your calls. The sheer volume of calls & thousands of emails simply overwhelmed our capacity to respond to them promptly.

We appreciate your patience and understanding while the College worked through the issues that the Premier's recent announcement has thrown up.

Firstly, let me confirm that the College is not closing, and that no decision had ever been taken to close it. Reports to the contrary were wrong.

Unfortunately, it appears that one or more staff members broke the confidence that attaches to meetings of that kind and, directly or indirectly, provided false information to one or more journalists. Contemporary standards of journalism being what they are, many decided to write a story without any real regard for its accuracy. It appears that the days of professional, responsible journalism are behind us.

Consequently, the College has been accused of being 'anti-vax' and of threatening our staff. The Minister of Education and Training went so far as announcing that she was seeking legal advice about whether my teacher registration could be removed. I was also accused of ignoring science and engaging in unconscionable threatening behaviour.

The College does not take a position on vaccines in general. It neither encourages nor discourages staff to accept a vaccine because that, like all medical interventions, should be a matter of choice for each individual, particularly when accepting a vaccine involves some level of risk. The College's view is that each individual should prayerfully consider that matter and be guided by the dictates of their conscience.

We see the COVID-19 vaccines, and an individual teacher's decision to accept one, in precisely that way.

In keeping with that view, the College abhors the Premier's decision to coerce teachers to accept a medical intervention by threatening them with the loss of their livelihoods, and their capacity to pursue their God-given vocation.



DIVINE MERCY COLLEGE

The College's view is it would rather close than compel a person to accept a COVID-19 vaccine against their will. That is still the position but, thankfully we're able to take a different course that will insulate our vaccine-hesitant staff from the Premier's heavy-handedness.

Our approach will be to financially support those teachers who chose not to be vaccinated so that they can return to us when the foreshadowed Public Health Direction ceases to operate.

If, to maintain our current educational offering, we are obliged to hire additional staff to replace those who won't be able to teach for all or part of next year, those people will be offered temporary contract only so that they do not displace our unvaccinated staff.

The summary of the College's position is this:

- the College is not closing;
- the College not 'anti-vax';
- the College will comply with any applicable Public Health Direction;
- the College strongly supports the proposition that a medical intervention by way of vaccination ought to be a matter of free and informed consent; and
- the College's actions are calculated to shield its students and staff from Premier's oppressive dictates.

If you have any question about any of the above, please speak to me on a **confidential** basis. I'd rather not read about our discussions in the media.

Please be patient with us. We're anticipating a great many queries and it may take us some time to respond to all of them.

Yours faithfully

Adam Zydek
Principal