



MATER DEI

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

2018 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON
SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

Health and Safety Plan Update

Dear Mater Dei Parents,

Good afternoon! Today, we are forwarding to you the Task Force findings on face coverings. The Medical Committee thoroughly researched this topic before outlining this policy for the *Mater Dei Health and Safety Plan*.

As we have stated before, the administration, faculty, and staff will do all in our power to make the reopening of Mater Dei a very positive experience for our children. We will work with families to implement these new procedures in a way that will make the children feel as loved and comfortable as possible. We are designing age-appropriate lessons, activities, and videos to introduce new safety policies to the children in an entertaining way to ensure a relaxed and secure school environment. We are committed to helping our beautiful children to see this as a "new normal" that all of us will be participating in as a school family.

The following information outlines the CDC Guidelines:

*Teach and reinforce the use of **cloth face coverings**. Face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger) to wear in all-day settings such as school. Face coverings should be worn by staff and students (particularly older) as feasible, and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. Individuals should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to **wash their hands** frequently. Information should be provided to staff, students, and students' families on **proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings**.*

*Note: Cloth face coverings should **not** be placed on:*

- Children younger than two years old
- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face-covering without assistance

Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms.

The Medical Committee of the Task Force outlined the following policy for our school:

- All students over two years old must wear a mask when entering and leaving the building.
- Face shields will be provided for all faculty, staff, and students. If parents prefer their child to wear a mask under the face shield, it is perfectly acceptable.
- Pre-K and Kindergarten are not required to wear face coverings during rest time.
- Masks that are not being worn should be stored in a sealed bag with the child's name on it.
- Face shields will be cleaned per CDC guidelines at the end of each school day and as needed. (Use of dilute bleach solution, peroxide, sani-wipes, or alcohol.)
- Teachers will mark the child's name on each face shield and have a labeled hook for hook storage.
- School will seek volunteers to make cloth face masks for students who may not have one. Parents will be required to ensure masks are kept clean.
- Appropriate signage to remind students not to touch face covering and to wash their hands frequently or use hand sanitizer.
- There is no option to "Opt-Out" at this time.
- Other considerations: Committee reserves option to recommend policy revision(s) prior to school opening based on updated recommendations from CDC/PDE.

The Medical Committee has a plethora of research regarding this topic. We would be happy to share that information with any parent who wishes more in-depth material. If any parent, grandparent, or relative is making cloth face coverings and would be interested in donating some to Mater Dei for children needing them, we would greatly appreciate your contribution.

As promised, we will be sending you the completed *Mater Dei Health and Safety Plan* on Monday, July 27th. You will have an opportunity to review the document and submit your questions before the scheduled Zoom meetings beginning in August.

- August 5th, 10th, and 11th, 6:30 PM - Parents of Pre-K and Kindergarten

- August 12th and 17th, 6:30 PM - Parents of 1st through 3rd Grade
- August 18th, 6:30 PM - Parents of 4th and 5th Grade
- August 19th, 6:30 PM - Parents of 6th through 8th Grade
- August 20th, 6:30 PM - Parents of CARES students

Since this is such a ***fluid situation***, The Task Force, including the school administration continues to monitor all the information coming from the CDC and the PA Department of Education to be sure we have the most updated recommendations. We are most grateful to this committee of 25 parents, teachers, Board members, and members of the Administration Team for their diligence and thoroughness in planning for the safe return of our most precious gifts...the children of Mater Dei.

Parents, this is the third communication regarding the work of the Task Force in preparation of the *Mater Dei Health and Safety Plan* for the 2020-2021 school year. If you missed any information prior to this Constant Contact, you can access our July 1st and July 10th communication on the [Mater Dei Website under Task Force - Summer 2020 | About Us](#). The information is also located on the homepage for your convenience.

May God bless you all as you continue summer vacation. We look so forward to being with our school community again!

Most sincerely,

Miss Diane E. McCaughan
President

Miss Elizabeth A. Waltrich
Principal