

Return to Learn Update

August 4, 2020

To follow up with what Washington Community School District released regarding face coverings and our decision at St. James to do so as well, please note the following:

Face Covering Guidelines:

Facial Coverings, the policy of wearing protective face coverings (masks or face shields), will be required for the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. The district will provide face shields to every student, and all staff members will receive a face shield and a cloth masks. There may be exceptions to the face-covering requirement based on what is developmentally appropriate for certain ages of students. Additionally, no student or adult will be required to wear a face-covering if they have a documented medical reason as to why it would be unsafe to do so. Any medical documentation will be shared with the school nurse and superintendent before the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. The American Association of Pediatrics has shared that COVID-19 policies are intended to mitigate, not eliminate, risk. District protocols regarding the wearing of face coverings are designed as part of a larger mitigation strategy. The District will work from the premise of social distancing being defined as six feet apart when feasible, but that spacing of three feet while also wearing a face covering will be acceptable when maintaining six feet of distance is impossible. This is consistent with recent guidance from the American Association of Pediatrics.

Social Distancing and Close Contact Guidelines:

Additionally, guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control address social distancing and close contact from the perspective of the risk being increased when people are within six feet of one another for fifteen minutes or more. These guidelines are being factored in when developing the District's plan. The following guidance will be in place for the various grade spans:

1. Preschool:

- Adults in the program will wear face coverings and maintain appropriate physical distancing from one another as much as possible.
- The teachers and paraprofessionals will work with students and families on infectious disease control measures including the washing of hands on a regular basis.
- The teachers and paraprofessionals will work with the students on becoming comfortable with wearing a face covering by wearing a mask for brief periods of time, but wearing a face-covering throughout the entirety of the school day will not be require

2. Elementary:

- Adults in the K-5 classrooms will wear face coverings and maintain appropriate physical distancing from one another as much as possible.
- In grades K-2, students will be taught how to appropriately wear a face covering as part of instructional lessons focused on proper hygiene. Students at this age will not be required to wear a face-covering throughout the entire school day but will practice wearing them throughout the day. Students will be instructed to wear face coverings when transitioning throughout the building as well as when social distancing is not possible.
- In grades 3-5, students will be taught how to appropriately wear a face covering as part of instructional lessons focused on proper hygiene. They will also be expected to wear a face-covering throughout the school day, being provided periodic breaks of no more than ten minutes at a time. Students will be expected to wear face coverings when it is more difficult to social distance from one another.
- Student learning spaces will be placed with social distancing in mind in K-5 classrooms.
- Students will not be required to wear face coverings during physical education, outdoor recess, and lunch. Guidelines for appropriate physical distancing will be put into place during these times.