



August 10, 2021

Dear Parents,

Thank you for your steady partnership as we navigate the challenges in preparation for the next school year. Your survey responses were read and we thank you for your feedback. Unfortunately, until further notice, masks will be required and not an option per local authorities for grades K-8th.

There is much confusion around PreK requirements, so at this time I will not state requirements.

Please know, it is always St. Francis Catholic School's priority to ensure, first and foremost, that students receive an education in an environment that is safe and healthy. To that end, when students arrive on September 7, 2021, we want to make sure that both parents and students are aware of the expectations regarding this coming school year.

At this time, St. Francis Catholic School is less than a month out from the start of the 2021-2022 school year, and we are so excited to welcome the students back. As we look ahead, Father and I met this afternoon to discuss the most recent *Ready Schools, Safe Learners Resiliency Framework* for the 2021-22 school year dated August 3, 2021. Per this framework, directed by Governor Kate Brown, Oregon Department of Education (ODE), and Oregon Health Authority (OHA), **face coverings will be required in all indoor school settings.**

The state agencies listed above expect schools to fully comply with the requirements in *OAR 333-019-1015 – Masking Requirements in Schools*. "If schools are unable to obtain compliance or indicate an intent to not comply with the masking requirements, the agencies and boards may consider the following tools to support compliance for the benefit of students and staff:

- Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OROSHA) have two pathways to enforcement of face covering requirements in schools:
 - OAR 333-019-1015 adopted by OHA, and the Oregon Safe Employment Act (temporary amendment to rule to be adopted by OROSHA).
 - OAR 333-019-1015 is complaint driven.
 - OROSHA will take the lead on responding to and investigating complaints.
 - OHA and ODE will refer complaints to OROSHA for investigation under the Oregon Safe Employment Act.
- OROSHA would enforce under the Oregon Safe Employment Act and penalty structure:
 - The process is complaint driven.

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- o Failure to enforce: Fine based on serious violations, including an assessment for size of the business in line with the Oregon Safe Employment Act; \$100 to \$2,600.
- o Willful negligence: Fine based on size of the business, and would likely be on the higher end because of the larger size of many school districts; \$8,900 to \$126,749.
- o Highest penalty: Would be for employers with a willful violation, and having more than 251 employees.
- o Daily penalty for continued noncompliance: Could result in a failure to abate the citation with a minimum \$100 and a maximum \$2,600.
- o Each separate school building that fails to comply may be considered a separate violation of OAR 333-019-1015 for the purposes of calculating civil penalties up to \$500 per day per school building.”

Licensed Educators who fail to obey this rule may face additional penalties. OAR 584-020-0035 is as follows:

The ethical educator, in fulfilling obligations to the profession, will:

- (a) Maintain the dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law, exemplifying personal integrity and honesty.
- (b) There would also be a possible violation of OAR 584-020- 0025 related to leadership skills and legal requirements.
- (c) Substantial deviation from these standards may subject the educator to discipline for gross neglect of duty, per OAR 584-020-0040
- (d) Sanctions could range from a letter of reprimand to suspension or revocation depending on severity, willfulness, or frequency of the violation or degree of harm.
- (e) Finally, the Commission would consider the actions of the educator within their scope of authority. If the administrator sufficiently educated staff and visitors on the rule, established and consistently followed a protocol for addressing violations, and adjusted procedures as warranted to ensure compliance, a single incidence of someone roaming around campus without a mask would not likely be conclusive of violation. The questions here would be how the educator dealt with the incident and what they did to prevent it from recurring.
- (f) A face shield may be worn, **supported by a doctor’s note**, instead of a mask if an individual cannot wear a mask for medical reasons.
- (g) Per the local authorities, face coverings are preferred over face shields, as they provide better containment of small respiratory droplets that can be produced while talking.
- (h) For more information regarding mandate:
https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/healthsafety/Documents/Schools%20and%20COVID-19%20FAQ.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

St. Francis Catholic School will NOT mandate students and staff to wear masks while outside or while students are not present in the building (this includes recess, PE, outdoor field trips, unless in a crowded situation- cannot maintain 3 feet, and all outdoor activities).

St. Francis staff will not police students during outside recess regarding masking, including PE, and outside activities. If you prefer your child/ren to always wear masks, that is a parent's decision and will not be enforced by staff, faculty, and/or administration.

- Staff will support physical distancing in all daily activities and instruction, maintaining at least 3 feet between students to the extent possible. When it is not possible to maintain physical distancing of at least 3 feet, prevention strategies will be used, such as indoor masking.
- St. Francis will continue to schedule handwashing and bathroom breaks for students.
- Students will remain in their classroom to eat lunch and playground rotation will continue as last year until further notice.
- 5th – 8th grade students will rotate to classrooms, teachers will not be rotating classrooms. Each area will be cleaned after each class session
- All students will attend art class in the art room, music in the music room, PE in the gym, and K-4 students will attend library.
- Entry checks for all students will be each morning at drop off. Drop off time for PreK -8th grade students is 8:00 – 8:15.
- PreK, 3rd and 4th graders will be dropped off in front of the school. Students in K, 1, 2, 5-8 will be dropped off in the back, the same as last year. 5th – 8th grade students will enter school via outside stairs.
- Dismissal will be at 3:10 on Mon, Tues, Thurs. and Fri. Wednesday's dismissal is at 2:10. Pick up will remain the same as last year. Parents may not park and pick up child/ren. All parents must go through the carline. A map will be sent in the next *Wolf Post*.
- There will be no in school volunteers at this time. If you would like to volunteer for lunch recess duty a sign-up sheet will be sent. All volunteers must have a background check and participate in Call to Protect. Details to follow in the *Wolf Post*.
- All that enter the school office, masks will be required.

An individual is not required to wear a mask if the individual is:

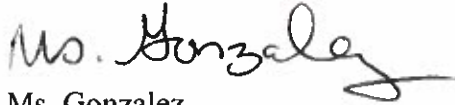
- Actively eating or drinking
- Sleeping
- Playing a musical instrument that requires using the mouth
- Engaged in a sport during physical education class such as swimming, other water sports, or a sport where wearing a mask could be a strangulation hazard such as gymnastics or wrestling
- Outside recess or play (unless student is instructed by a parent)
- Alone in a private office enclosed by walls on all sides with a door that is closed

It is important to remember, we are still in a pandemic and my goal is to keep the students and teachers in school learning for the entire year. I do recognize that many community members have varying opinions on the mask mandate; however, we must also recognize that these mandates are **well beyond the control of St. Francis Catholic School and the safety of our students and staff must come first!** Regular updates will be given as requirements change.

As we prepare for another great school year, let us remember our mission and philosophy statements. These statements ground our efforts as we prepare to teach our students in person, while also following the guidance provided for us from various authorities.

I think we can all agree to find gratitude in our incredible community. We will make this year another great year to remember.

Stay well and God bless,



Ms. Gonzalez
Principal

Fr. Amal
Pastor