

Parents,

It was great to see so many parents and students in attendance at our Meet the Teacher night on Monday. As a staff we are very excited to welcome our students back into the building, and we pray for a safe and healthy year ahead of us. As the principal, I understand we are dealing with unprecedented times, and I ask for everyone's patience and understanding as we navigate through the decision making process involving COVID protocols for the school. We know that these protocols have the potential to change, but we have aligned our policies with the schools/districts in our direct area.

I understand and respect that families have varying opinions (agreement/disagreement) on masking policies, and I want to clarify some points. At the end of our COVID protocols, I linked two separate documents that should be reviewed by each family. The first is a flow chart titled [Guidelines for Quarantine After Exposure in K-12 Classroom Settings](#). This chart will show what students will be forced to quarantine if they are exposed at school. Since not all classrooms provide the ability to sit students at least three feet apart and masks will be recommended but not required, we will only be using the left side of the flowchart. The second document is [Hamilton County School Guidance for COVID-19 2021](#). This document highlights how Hamilton County will handle an outbreak (1 case) in the school setting. It also details signs and symptoms that parents can look for in their students when conducting their morning well checks. This is the guidance we will be using throughout the school year, so while our policies have been communicated, they can change based on the information that we receive from the Hamilton County Public Health throughout the school year.

Some points we want to clarify include:

- The best way to keep your student from being quarantined due to a school outbreak is to have the student wear a mask at all times while at school. We do understand that there are areas of the school day that masks cannot be worn, such as lunch. Unfortunately, an exposure during this time period will require a quarantine even if the student is wearing a mask at all other times throughout the day.
- As a school we reserve the right to change our policies as we see fit. Our number one priority is to keep the students safe, and we will continue to follow the guidance of the Hamilton County Public Health Department to make decisions based on our COVID protocols.
- Collaboration among students is an important part of education. If a teacher requests that students wear masks while working in small groups and close proximity, please make sure your son/daughter has a mask available so they may participate in the activity. If they do not, they may be given an alternative assignment to complete.
- Hamilton County will require proof of vaccination if a student is exposed. If your child is vaccinated and you would like to have this record on file at St. John's, please email a picture of your child's vaccination card to mgreer@stjohnsdrschoo.org.
- Since the nurse will be seeing a variety of students throughout the day, we are asking that any student who enters the nurse's office please wear a mask.