

UPDATE ON ORDER OF UNIVERSAL FACE COVERINGS FOR SCHOOLS

Dear CACS Families,

On Monday, August 17, 2020 the PA Dept. of Education updated their guidance on when students must wear face coverings (masks or face shields) during the school day. The updated guidance deleted permission for students to remove face coverings when seated at desk or assigned workspaces at least 6 feet apart(such as in the classroom) and is now requiring students to wear face coverings for the duration of the school day with permission to remove face coverings only under these three circumstances:

- Eating or drinking when spaced at least 6 ft. apart
- When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task
- At least 6 ft. apart during “ face-covering breaks” to last *no longer* than 10 minutes

This guidance applies to all students, staff, and visitors ages two and older in public K-12, brick and mortar and cyber charter school, private and parochial schools, career and technical centers and is attached to the July 1, 2020 state wide PA Dept. of Health order requiring universal face coverings.

For CACS, this means we are no longer able to give parents the option of deciding if their student will or will not wear a face covering when in a classroom and we must require each student to wear face coverings throughout the school day other than at lunch and at times designated for face covering breaks. We are very discouraged and disheartened that PDE has taken this step and understand and share in the frustration this causes for our families. However, as a private school we have no alternative and are still legally bound to uphold the guidance provided by PDE and the PA Dept. of Health in this area.

We are hopeful that the number of face covering breaks can be left to the discretion of the school and if so will do our best to provide many opportunities for these to occur throughout the course of the school day. Also, our goal is keep the guidance on face coverings out of the domain of disciplinary actions and avoid the need to establish any protocol for noncompliance demonstrated by a student. Gentle reminders when necessary should be sufficient. We are relying on everyone to uphold this as a personal responsibility.

Your continued patience and support is greatly appreciated as we navigate through the numerous changes continually unfolding during these unprecedented times. As always, please feel free to reach out to us with any question or concerns.

Prayers and Blessings,
CACS School Board