Fall 2020 Mask Policy

Dear Families,

County and local ordinances have mandated that all persons two years and older be masked while in a public space where social distancing of six feet is not possible. Therefore, face coverings will be required on campus.

This is the policy while the health ordinances are in effect. This policy is subject to change if ordinances change or if an overriding state directive is issued.

We recognize that this face covering requirement will create burdens for students. Where one can bear those burdens, we ask that students bear them. However, we understand that students, especially our youngest students, cannot be expected to wear a mask without breaks and under fear of punishment for 7 hours a day.

Therefore, we have developed a policy that complies with the directives of the State, County and local municipalities while affording students safe and reasonable space to be mask free. Students and staff will be provided guidance on how to properly put on and take off masks and how to handle used masks.

We also recognize that there are certain learning activities that are rendered impossible when a teacher is masked. The teaching of languages is the most obvious. We also understand that we have a number of students for whom lip reading is an essential tool in their understanding of speech.

Therefore, we will allow teachers to be in clear masks or behind face-shields, when necessary, while teaching.

One thing must be made clear at the outset: We are not asking faculty and staff to over-police this policy. Faculty and staff will help lovingly and patiently guide and support students in adherence to the policy's expectations. These expectations are a part of our layered approach to safety. Still, wearing a mask cannot be turned into a panacea. We must protect against a culture of hypervigilance and overbearing scrutiny where any moment without a mask is rendered unforgivable. We must protect against a culture of fear.

I'm reminded of that wonderful line from Chesterton: "Rigidity, yielding a little, like justice swayed by mercy, is the whole beauty of the earth." Adherence coupled with loving, trusting, and reasonable accommodations is the balance we must seek hourly in the classrooms, hallways, lunchrooms and the like.

We will lean on one another as we work to execute this policy with wisdom.

As always, thanks for your patience with us during this time. It is greatly appreciated.

Best,
Erik

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Great Hearts AZ Mask Policy

The policy is as follows with individual needs to be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Should your child(ren) need accommodations, please make those requests directly to your headmaster.

All masks/face shields should be free of pop culture, without written statements of any kind, and not distracting.

Kindergarten through Fifth Grade

Drop Off – Masks required. Face shields, upon request.
Hallways – Masks required. Face shields, upon request.
Classroom – Masks encouraged. Face shields, upon request. Masks may be taken off if needed while seated at desk. Desk Shields installed for extra safety.
Lunch – No mask requirement while seated and eating. Mask required when walking to the lunchroom, within the lunchroom, and to the playground. Face shields, upon request. Each academy will work to utilize classroom and lunchroom space, as needed, to mitigate overcrowding.
Playground – Hand washing or sanitizer before and after playground. No mask requirement. Playground equipment may be used.
Pick Up – Masks required. Face shields, upon request.

Middle School through High School

Drop Off – Masks required. Face shields, upon request.
Hallways – Masks required. Face shields, upon request.
Classroom – Masks required. Face shields, upon request. May be taken off for short periods while at desk or nose exposed as needed for air or other reasons.
Lunch – No mask requirement while seated and eating. Mask required when walking to the lunchroom and within the lunchroom. Face shields, upon request. Available social distancing will be implemented.
Pick Up – Masks required. Face shields, upon request.

Teachers and Staff

Drop Off – Masks required. Face shields, if necessary.
Hallways – Masks required. Face shields, if necessary.
Classroom – Mask required. Face shields, if necessary.
Faculty Room & Lounge – No requirement if seated and eating.
Lunch Duty – Mask required. Face shields, if necessary.
Pick Up – Masks required. Face shields, if necessary.