

Special Back to School Edition

School leaders have spent hours reviewing procedures and guidelines to determine how best to support our families while simultaneously maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for our students. It should be noted up front that MCA reserved the right to change these guidelines at any time should conditions change at school, in our community, or in the state. Furthermore, should there be a mandate to mask, MCA will abide by the law. This edition of *The Herald* summarizes some of the major issues and their current resolutions for the beginning of this school year.

Remote Learning

The best online instruction will always pale in comparison to the best face-to-face instruction. Therefore, MCA will not offer any remote education other than limited, asynchronous learning which will be provided for those out with COVID. As a result, there are no remote learning days in our calendar. Our teachers provided admirable instruction, both in-person and remote instruction during the previous school year; however, our educational product will be much more robust and uninterrupted with only one platform for instruction.

Masks and Social Distancing

All students will maintain a three-foot distance between themselves whenever possible. We ***strongly recommend and encourage all students to wear face coverings***. Nevertheless, parents may decide whether or not to mask their children, both in school and on the bus. Faculty and staff will maintain a six-foot distance from students when at all possible. All unvaccinated faculty and staff will wear face coverings.

Volunteers and Visitors

Again this school year, we will limit visitors inside the school. Parents dropping off or picking up children may call for them at the lower or upper school office door, and we will get the child to the door. Volunteers will be admitted on a limited basis and must be masked or provide proof of vaccination.

Cleaning

Faculty and staff will sanitize rooms at the end of each school day, and bus drivers will sanitize buses each afternoon. Should we have an active case in the school, we will sanitize any affected rooms.

Daily Screenings

We will not observe daily screenings. We urge parents to be especially vigilant in monitoring their children, and if a child exhibits any of the COVID symptoms listed below, to please keep the child at home. We realize that this may cause hardships with childcare, but for the sake of our students, families, school, and overall community, it is imperative that students who present any of these symptoms not be at school. The following symptoms are indicative of COVID and require a negative PCR/molecular test or a 14-day quarantine:

- fever greater than 100.4°F
- sore throat
- cough
- difficulty breathing
- new loss of taste of smell
- diarrhea or vomiting
- new onset of severe headache, especially with fever





Causes for Quarantine

Should a person be within six feet for at least 15 minutes within a 24-hour period of a person with COVID, he or she will have to quarantine for 14 days, unless the individual

- is fully vaccinated and does not have any symptom,
- has tested positive for COVID-19 within the past three months, recovered, and does not have any symptom, or
- has reached 10 days of quarantine with no symptoms, at which point the person may return to school wearing a mask and practicing physical distancing through the remainder of the 14 days after the date of last exposure.

Should a student be quarantined, his or her teacher will provide assignments and record pertinent instruction given in class and post it online by 6:00pm each day of the absence for the quarantined student. The student is responsible to complete assignments in a timely fashion (according to the handbook) with allowances made for those too sick to continue their studies. Students out for COVID, as a close contact or as a positive case, will be counted with an excused absence.

Open House / Welcome Back Days

Although we really wanted to have in-person open house events this year, these events make the building quite crowded, and considering the contagious nature of the virus, we have decided to host virtual events. Limiting the number of visitors to the school will help prevent starting the year in a quarantine situation. Kindergarten – fifth grade rosters will be published in our Jupiter online grading system on Thursday, August 12. Upper school rosters are currently available in Jupiter for students in grades six through twelve.

Kindergarten: Kindergarten families will join us outdoors for the meet-your-teacher and playdate. Children will start by sitting with their parents under the pavilion at 6:00pm, and then later, playing together on the playground. Also, in order to reduce congestion and give you time for photos, there is a staggered drop-off on the first day of school. The schedule is below. In case of rain, kindergarten will follow the 1st -5th grade plan below.

1st-5th: Teachers will call their families to let them know to which class their child is assigned, and they will email a Zoom link for their two, 45-minute, virtual, open house sessions. These two identical sessions provide an opportunity for those families to attend sessions for multiple grades.

6th-8th: Class rosters are already been published in Jupiter, so 6th-8th grade teachers will email a Zoom link for their two, 45-minute, virtual, open house sessions. These two identical sessions provide an opportunity for those families to attend sessions for multiple grades.

9th-12th: Class rosters are already been published in Jupiter, so each 9th-12th grade teacher will email individual Zoom links to their 1.5 hour, “drop-in” sessions. Families are welcome to join any ongoing session and to leave it when they are ready.

Policy Changes

To reiterate, should conditions change at school, in our community, or in the state, we will adjust accordingly. Furthermore, should there be a mandate to mask, MCA will abide by the law.

Supply Lists / Reading Lists

You may find our supply lists and summer reading list packets listed by grade level on our website. Here’s a link for your convenience: [2021-2022 Supply and Reading Lists](#).

Important Dates

Thursday, August 12	Kindergarten Welcome Day meet your teacher and kindergarten overview (under the pavilion), 6:00-6:45pm playdate (on the playground), 6:45-7:30pm
Monday, August 16	Welcome Back Day (1st-5th grades) virtual open house 6:30-7:15pm or 7:15-8:00pm Welcome Back Day (6th-8th) orientation for all sixth graders and new 6th-8th students 6:00-6:30pm virtual open house 6:30-7:15pm or 7:15-8:00pm Welcome Back Day (9th-12th) orientation for all ninth graders and new 9th-12th students 6:00-6:30pm virtual open house 6:30-8:00pm (various sessions by teachers)
Wednesday, August 18	First day of school for ALL Families, Grades 1-12, 8:00am Kindergarten families with last names A-E, drop off your children at 8:30 Kindergarten families with last names F-L, drop off your children at 8:45 Kindergarten families with last names M-Z, drop off your children at 9:00