

July 16, 2021

Good afternoon Mount Carmel Area Learning Community,

I wanted to take this opportunity to provide you with some important information concerning our plans for the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

Masking Order

The Acting Secretary of the Department of Health announced that the state face mask order will expire on June 28, 2021 or when 70 percent of Pennsylvania adults are fully vaccinated, whichever happens first. **Following those recommendations, starting on June 28, 2021, the Mount Carmel Area School District will no longer require masks for individuals in our buildings.** However, masking continues to be recommended by the CDC for unvaccinated individuals, and we will continue to have a supply of masks available for individuals who would like to wear them.

CDC guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Kindergarten (K)-12 Schools:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

Health and Safety Plan

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires school districts and other local education agencies (LEA) that receive funding under the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund to develop and make publicly available the Health and Safety Plan, no later than July 30, 2021. This plan will serve as our action plan for maintaining the health and safety of students and staff. Mount Carmel Area's Health and Safety Plan can be found on our main school district website: www.mca.k12.pa.us.

Looking Ahead to Next School Year

Here are listed details for the 2021-2022 school year.

- All schools will be open for in-person instruction **five (5) days a week**.
- Dress Code expectations will return for the 2021-2022 school year. More information can be found here:
<http://www.mca.k12.pa.us/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/dress-code-policy-revision-june-2021-.pdf>
- Staff and students **will not** be required to wear face masks while at school.*
- Individuals who wish to wear face masks as a mitigation measure **will be permitted to do so** – but that will be their personal choice.
- Parents and guardians will still be expected to complete daily morning screenings with their children before putting them on a bus or sending them to school. Students should

stay home if they are exhibiting symptoms or are sick. As always, you should refer your child to their healthcare provider for testing and care if they are exhibiting symptoms or sick.

- As per CDC guidance for COVID 19 Prevention in Kindergarten (K)-12 Schools (found above), passengers and drivers on school buses **must** wear a mask.
- All Chromebooks will be returned to students on the first day of school on August 23rd.
- Families that are interested in virtual education for their children for the 2021-2022 school year should reach out to their building's main office to request information on Tornado eLearning Academy (TELA.) ***Parents and Guardians are asked to contact their building PRIOR TO AUGUST 13, 2021 to schedule a meeting for enrollment in TELA.*** More information on TELA can be found here:
<http://www.mca.k12.pa.us/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/district-cyber-school-collaterals.pdf>

* As we are all aware, circumstances related to the pandemic can change rapidly. We have and will continue to follow any requirements we receive from PDE, DOH, and the CDC. In the event the guidance is changed to mandates or requirements, we will revise our practices to comply with those updated restrictions.

We are very much excited to return back to school and our hope is to have as normal of a school year as possible! We again appreciate your support and understanding as we all navigate hopefully to the conclusion of this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Pete Cheddar