

COVID-19 Update August 30, 2021

We joyfully opened the 2021-22 school year two weeks ago. Our students are forming routines, friendships and new learning opportunities. We welcomed our new preschoolers last week and our athletics, robotics and other extracurricular activities are in full swing. Although we maintain a mask policy, there have been the following changes to adjust our school days back to our normal environment:

- Elimination of daily temperature screenings
- Ability of parents to come into the school for drop off and pick up
- Increased class numbers attending all school mass at the same time
- Lunchtime being moved back to the cafeteria
- More mingling of cohorts
- Utilizing outdoor time as much as possible without masks

We are approaching this school year with the same goal we held last year, which is ensuring that each day everyone in our school is as safe as possible and keeping MOQ open for in-person learning with minimal disruption.

Decision on Protocols and Mask Requirements

In June our hope and intent was to begin the school year with masks being optional. As we drew closer to the first day of school, COVID-19 positive cases were rising with the Delta variant, and the safety protocols were re-evaluated. The following occurred in making this decision:

- Data was reviewed and discussed at the August School Board meeting. Board members discussed the current data and provided input. A vote on requiring students and staff to wear masks in the school building was held. A decision to re-evaluate the protocol every three weeks was added.
- The guidelines of the CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics, the Douglas County Health Department, the Nebraska Department of Education, Children's Hospital, and UNMC were reviewed.
- Multiple meetings and calls with the Archdiocese, Westside School District and Douglas County Health Department were made.
- The vaccine is not available to our younger population, making them, and others who come into contact with them, especially vulnerable to serious illness.

Current Timeline

As of today, we are maintaining our current protocols. This includes continuing our mask protocol within the school building.

COVID-19 Resources

We have updated our COVID-19 website page located at <https://moqschool.org/covid-19/> to include the latest information on quarantine guidelines and how to manage exposures to COVID-19.

If there is a confirmed exposure or COVID-19 positive case in a classroom, parents in that classroom will be notified. The number of COVID-19 cases will continue to be reported weekly in the Mustang Memo.

Our school theme this year is Virtues in Practice: *Year of Faith*. My hope is that our love for our school and our common Catholic faith will allow us to work together and support each other as we navigate this year together. We pray that MOQ School may prosper and continue to bring God's gifts to the children and families we serve. Please do not hesitate to share questions or concerns. I will continue to keep an open line of communication. Our next COVID-19 update is scheduled for September 20, 2021.