



Charleston Day School

Dear Charleston Day School Families,

It's hard to believe that summer is coming to an end. We are excited to welcome the students back to campus, and I can't wait to see your children and hear about their summers. I've always loved the beginning of school as there is a level of excitement and promise that fills the air. And the fresh packages of crayons always bring a smile to my face.

As we prepare for the 2021-22 school year, we have planned for several positive changes relative to the 2020-21 school year that allow our students to resume active movement on campus throughout the school day:

- Students will return to homeroom classrooms
- Students will return to changing classes
- Students will resume using lockers
- Students will eat lunch in the Commons and/or newly created outdoor venues

As we move forward with our planning for the 2021-22 school year, it is important to celebrate the success that our school community enjoyed in remaining open for in-person learning for the entire 2020-21 school year. That success was the result of utilizing a layered approach to keeping our school safe and open and required our entire community to work together. All of us are grateful for the support and partnership that our families provided over the past year.

For the 2021-22 school year, we will continue to focus on utilizing a layered approach to school safety. The personal hygiene and sanitation plans that were put into effect last year were effective and will remain in place, with students washing and/or sanitizing their hands frequently, including upon arrival at school, daily in-school sanitation, nightly deep cleaning, and regular all-campus treatment with the [Microsonic NovaRover](#). In addition, the iWave Air Purifiers that the school invested in last year for our HVAC units continue to provide improved air quality across the school.

As we review opening plans, we continue to closely monitor the guidance from health agencies such as SCDHEC, the CDC, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and MUSC. In addition, we consider conditions in the Charleston area, and our school community, and we have been in conversation with the Heads of School and Nurses at local area independent schools as all of us assess the changing landscape. We are fortunate to have several CDS parents who are physicians with specialties in infectious diseases and pediatric emergency medicine on our Board COVID Advisory Committee.

At the beginning of the summer, we were cautiously optimistic about what the 2021-22 school year would bring. However, we have seen dramatic changes in the Charleston area COVID picture over the past several weeks. On July 19, the American Academy of Pediatrics released guidelines that recommended universal masking for students age two and older. On July 27, 2021, the CDC released [guidelines](#) that recommend that face coverings be worn indoors by all people regardless of vaccination status in [areas of substantial or high transmission](#) due to a rise in COVID-19 cases and growing concerns about the Delta variant.

DHEC released its [guidelines](#) on July 29, 2021, which align with the AAP and CDC guidelines. Additionally, while we have a high rate of vaccination in our faculty and staff, most of our school population (everyone 12 and under) is currently not eligible to receive the vaccine.

As we move forward, we plan to put in place a flexible and balanced approach to COVID-19 protocols and will continue to monitor medical guidance and local conditions regularly with an eye towards adjusting protocols accordingly. At present, we will implement the following mitigation strategies:

Face Coverings

- CDS will require all students, faculty, and staff to bring a cloth face covering to campus daily. Students are encouraged to bring multiple face coverings to have on hand.
- Face coverings will be required when indoors, regardless of vaccination status.
- Face coverings will be *optional* while outside.
- CDS will not accept waivers.
- *CDS will re-evaluate this policy at frequent intervals to reassess if masks are still an essential mitigation strategy.*

Quarantine

- Vaccinated faculty and students who are asymptomatic are not required to quarantine as a close contact.
- **Students in masks and 3 feet apart from the infected child are not considered close contacts and not required to quarantine.** Please note this new guidance. We anticipate this will allow us to keep more students in school this year.
- Students in quarantine because they have tested positive or are waiting on test results will have access to remote online learning. Online learning is only an option when an absence is due to a COVID-related incident.
- Close contacts have a 10-day shortened quarantine option available with a PCR test on or after day 7 per quarantine guidelines.
- We will follow SCDHEC quarantine guidelines when a child or faculty member tests positive.

Student and Parent Expectations

- Students should not come to school if ill or if they have been directly exposed to COVID.
- Any student, faculty, or staff member who feels unwell or has exhibited any symptoms of any illness should stay home.
- Students and parents/guardians are expected to report [symptoms of COVID-19](#), exposure to COVID-19, or other illnesses to our Nurse.

Visitors to Campus

- All visitors will be required to wear a face-covering while on campus.
- Visitors must check-in at the front desk and complete a COVID-19 health screening.
- Visitors who pass the screening will be allowed access to campus. Visitors who do not pass the screening will not be permitted to enter campus.

Vaccination

- We encourage all eligible students, faculty, and staff to get vaccinated against COVID-19.
- In order to facilitate contact tracing and appropriate quarantine measures, the Nurse will collect copies of student vaccination cards.

COVID-19 Testing

- Students that develop COVID-like symptoms at school will be sent to the Nurse immediately. We are working with MUSC to determine if we will be able to provide PCR testing for symptomatic persons at CDS. More information on how CDS will perform PCR testing will be forthcoming.
- If parents do not want the Nurse to perform PCR testing, or testing is not available on campus, they will need to obtain a PCR test from another provider and email the Nurse the results before returning to campus.

Distancing/Other Mitigation Efforts

- Following revised CDC guidelines, students will be seated 3 feet apart. In certain circumstances, this may not be possible, and teachers will note student positioning during situations such as project work to accurately contact trace if there is a positive case.
- Our HVAC system still maintains the iWave Air Purifiers that we added last year and is checked regularly by HVAC professionals.
- We will wipe down surfaces frequently.
- Classrooms will be sanitized nightly.
- Buildings will be treated with the NovaRover regularly.
- We will prioritize hand sanitizer and hand washing.

Lunch

- Students will eat lunch in the Commons or an outdoor venue daily.
- Students will eat lunch with their grade level, and visitors will not be permitted.
- The school has purchased two large outdoor tents and furniture to accommodate one grade level eating outside.
- Students will maintain social distancing while at lunch.

PikMyKid Check-in and Dismissal

- The school will continue to use PikMyKid for dismissal purposes. For more information regarding PikMyKid, please refer to the [recent parent email](#).
- At present, we will no longer require a morning health check-in via PikMyKid.

Field Trips

- Local field trips will be permitted with students in masks.
- Overnight trips are currently scheduled in the Spring.

After-care

- After-care will proceed as last year with registration for specific days.

- Every After-care student will be masked due to the higher potential of cross-grade interaction.
- For more information regarding After-care, please refer to the [recent parent email](#).

Athletics

- We are currently planning for athletic teams and reviewing appropriate protocols for league play.

Community Events

- We are currently reviewing and working on ways to hold community events safely.

It is such a pleasure to be part of a school community that is so kind, thoughtful, and places so much trust in the school. I know that all of us are focused on the same goal - for students to learn on campus all year safely and joyfully! Each day we will consider how CDS can adhere to best practices in health and safety while providing a more typical school experience, and all of us are confident in our ability to provide an exceptional year for your students.

Enjoy the last days of summer vacation. As always, I am grateful for your support and partnership.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Judith".