



**MCDONELL AREA
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

Est. 1882

Education for Life

Back to School: “Brick to Click”

Parent & Student Guide

MACS COVID-19 Pandemic Response 2020-21

“Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them,” says the Lord Jesus. (Mt. 19:14)

Guided by the Holy Spirit, MACS will continue to serve its students and mission throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Primary Sources: Diocese of La Crosse, Chippewa County Public Health Department, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), MACS Parent and Teacher Surveys

Primary preventive strategies: (1) Hand washing/sanitizing; (2) Facility cleaning/disinfection; (3) Screening at entry; (4) Class/cohort grouping; (5) Physical distancing; (6) Use of face coverings/masks; (7) Option for virtual learning for high risk students

“Brick to Click” means that we will begin school in person but will be prepared, if necessary, to transition seamlessly to virtual learning. **Our goal is not merely to start the year in school, but to stay in school.** We have balanced the need for reasonable precautions with the need for kids to be kids, through time with friends, staying active, praying, or just enjoying a meal together. Finally, one size does not fit all: all precautions are subject to what is feasible and developmentally appropriate to a given situation, person, or group. With hope, courage, and solidarity, our MACS family will emerge from these challenging times stronger than ever. “For God, all things are possible”. (Mt. 19:26)

<p>Back to School</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In-person instruction at all MACS schools Grades K-12 begins on August 31 ● Virtual learning opportunities available for at-risk students (please contact principal as soon as possible to indicate your request for virtual learning) ● Devices will be provided 1:1 for all students K-12 to be prepared in case virtual learning is required ● MACS will conduct a weekly review of the risk level and any positive cases specific to our school buildings, in collaboration with the Chippewa County Public Health Department.
<p>Hand Washing & Sanitizing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Model and practice these three simple steps: Wash your hands, cover your cough, and don't touch your face! ● Hand sanitizing stations will be located in every classroom, entrance, and commonly used area ● Signage posted showing how to stop the spread of germs, including proper hand washing/sanitizing
<p>Healthy Spaces: Cleaning and Disinfection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MACS community, led by our custodial staff, will ensure school buildings are clean and disinfected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Frequently touched surfaces in common areas at least twice per day (mid-morning and evening) ○ Frequently touched surfaces and shared items at least once per day ○ Entire school building deep cleaned once per week ○ Large playground equipment cleaned and disinfected once per week
<p>Healthy Students: Simple Screening</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Simple screening will be done when students enter a school building or school shuttle (estimated 5-10 seconds): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Does the student have symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19? ○ Check for fever of 100.4 F or higher (touchless infrared thermometer) ● Parents/guardians are encouraged to screen their children at home before sending them to school ● If a student is symptomatic or has been exposed to COVID-19, or develops potential COVID-19 symptoms during

	<p>the course of the school day, the school will contact the parent/guardian to pick them up. The student will not return to school until symptoms have subsided and with prior approval of the building principal/administrator.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In either case, parents/guardians are expected to contact a healthcare provider and/or county public health. The school may be required to inform public health if there is a known COVID-19 exposure. ● Isolation areas will be available in each building and will be cleaned/disinfected between uses
<p>Sticking Together: Class/Cohort Grouping</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PreK - Grade 5: Students and staff will spend most of their time together as a homeroom class (cohort group) as they move through their normal school day ● Middle/high school: When feasible, grade level cohorts will be grouped together and middle and high school students will be separated from one another (e.g. school Mass, lunch/cafeteria seating) ● Seating charts and assigned seats shall be used whenever possible ● Why? This means that one ill person will not necessarily expose the whole school to illness, stopping the spread of germs and limiting any potential impact to a smaller group of people (the cohort)
<p>Personal Space: Physical Distancing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Direct physical contact between persons should be very limited - “Please keep your hands to yourself” ● Classrooms and common areas will be arranged to allow for physical distancing a/k/a “social” distancing ● Current recommendation for physical distance is six (6) feet but this will not be feasible in all classrooms ● Plexiglass barriers will be used strategically for additional protection within classrooms ● Follow the “6/15 Rule”: try to avoid close contact with persons closer than 6 feet for more than 15 minutes (15 minute limitation is cumulative throughout a 24 hour period) ● Lunch periods, hallway/passing times, and school assemblies will be structured to limit close physical contact ● School libraries and media centers may be used, with hygiene and physical distancing in mind
<p>Face Covering/Masks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All MACS staff and students will be provided with washable, reusable face masks. If personal masks are worn, designs should be in the spirit of the MACS dress code (e.g. no offensive/distracting wording or graphics) ● Face coverings/masks should be properly used and cleaned. ● MACS is required to comply with legal requirements regarding face masks/coverings. Pursuant to State of Wisconsin Emergency Order #1, effective August 1 - September 28, 2020, as applicable to MACS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Face coverings are required for every person age five (5) and older when in any enclosed space on school grounds. ○ Exceptions include as follows (see the Order for full list of exceptions): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ While eating and drinking ■ When communicating with an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing ■ When a single individual (e.g. a teacher, priest, or musician), is giving a religious, educational, artistic, cultural, musical, or theatrical presentation, the face covering may be removed when actively speaking, provided physical distancing of at least six (6) feet is followed ● Face masks should <u>never</u> be worn by individuals two (2) years of age or younger or by anyone who is having

	<p>trouble breathing, is unconscious, or incapacitated. Persons with medical conditions preventing use of face masks will be exempt from this requirement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If and when Emergency Order #1 is lifted, MACS anticipates issuing updated guidance modifying the requirement for face coverings to permit additional exceptions.
<p>Physical Activity: P.E. and Recess</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical activity, play, and recess are essential to the wellbeing of our students ● Recess/Playgrounds/P.E. Team Competitions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students' hands and all equipment should be sanitized before and after team play ○ Team games that involve a lot of personal physical contact should be limited or avoided ● Individual skill development is encouraged ● P.E. instructors will communicate physical distancing and hygiene expectations for locker rooms ● Playground supervisors will monitor sharing of equipment, which will be disinfected daily
<p>Our Source of Hope: Catholic Identity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continued participation in weekly Mass and other ministry activities following physical distancing guidelines ● Daily use of our Catholic Christian faith as the framework for hope and strength during the COVID-19 crisis
<p>Nutrition Matters: Lunch, Snacks, and Water Bottles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students and staff should wash or sanitize hands before and after meals and snacks (washing preferred) ● Physical distancing in lunch line and “zig-zag” or “every other” seating in cafeteria ● Middle and high school: one additional lunch period will be added for each school ● No self-service of meals and snacks, no shared beverages, condiments, etc. ● Vending machines turned off, no sharing of snacks or drinks ● Students encouraged to bring a water bottle: bottle filling stations will be on but drinking fountains turned off
<p>Transportation Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Protocols in place on public school busses will be determined by the public school district and bus company ● MACS busses, shuttle vans, and shuttle bus will be cleaned and disinfected daily, students/passengers will be screened for symptoms before boarding the vehicle, and riders will need to wear a face mask while riding due to close proximity to the other passengers for an extended time period ● MACS highly encourages private transportation, walking, or biking when feasible to avoid potential exposure on public school bussing
<p>Fun: Field Trips & Extracurricular Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Field trips will be determined at the discretion of the principals, taking into account current public health recommendations. Outdoor field trips are encouraged. ● Guidance from WIAA and the Chippewa County Public Health Department will be followed for all extracurricular activities such as athletics and school-sponsored clubs and organizations. MACS' Athletic and Activities Director will provide more specific guidance to coaches and families periodically throughout the year.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Screening, face mask, and cleaning guidelines apply if bus travel is used for a field trip or extracurricular activity.
Visitors to School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nonessential visitors to our school buildings will be limited ● Incidental visitors or delivery persons will not be allowed past the main entrance/ lobby/ school office ● In order for a visitor or volunteer to enter the building past the entrance/lobby/school office: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Visitor will be screened for symptoms/exposure to COVID-19 ○ Visitor must sign in with name and contact information and receive a visitor badge ○ Visitors are encouraged to bring their own face mask but will be provided a disposable mask if needed ● For all students who need to leave the building (have an appointment, are ill, need to leave early, etc.) parents/guardians should call the school office upon arrival to the building and the student will meet the parent at the school entrance. If a parent/guardian needs to enter the building, a face mask must be worn.
What If: COVID-19 Positive Case and Exposure Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In the event of a positive COVID-19 case or close contact exposure (e.g., diagnosis of a student's family member) in one or more of our MACS schools, we will consult with the Chippewa County Public Health Department regarding next steps, contact tracing, and appropriate mitigating measures ● We ask that our families and staff fully cooperate with the Chippewa County Public Health Department in the event of a diagnosed case, as we rely on their expertise to determine risk level and conduct contact tracing ● Because we are implementing precautionary measures, we may limit or eliminate the need for school shutdowns in response to a diagnosed case ● If a student or employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, documented permission of a medical professional or public health official is needed to return to school. Remote learning options will be available to students who are in quarantine.
Large Gatherings and Facility usage by outside organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School assemblies will be planned with class/cohort grouping, physical distancing, and hygiene measures ● MACS will work with its stakeholders to determine whether parish or school-related large gatherings need to be limited, modified, or cancelled due to public health conditions and recommendations ● Facility usage by non-parish/school organizations will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be limited according to public health recommendations
Leisure Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Non-school leisure travel is discouraged due to heightened risk of disease transmission ● If a student travels outside Wisconsin, MACS may ask for destination information and more information about precautionary measures being taken ● In some cases, a student may have a period of up to two weeks before returning to school following travel, depending on the risk level at the destination and the precautions taken by the student's family