

## COVID-19 POLICIES FOR MT. SOPHIA ACADEMY

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” Mark 12:30

Because we care about the well-being of our MSA community, our community will show love to one another through personal responsibility and commitment to the common good as we live with the presence of COVID-19 in our world. At this moment in time, as MSA returns to school in person, the board of directors of MSA has issued the following policies for MSA based on current knowledge about disease transmission given through the guidelines of the CDC and the Delaware Department of Public Health. As scientific knowledge and experience increases, these policies will be adjusted accordingly. However, as we begin the school year, these policies are in effect and are to be followed by all members of the MSA community. Specifically, we will show love to one another by adhering to the following policies:

- I. Masks\*
  - A. Are required to be worn in hallways, bathrooms, and when moving about the tank
  - B. Are required to be worn in *any* situation in which social distancing is less than 6 feet
  - C. May be removed in classrooms when students are seated with social distancing of 6 feet apart or more. Nonetheless, students, staff, teachers, volunteers and visitors are encouraged to wear masks at all times, even when social distancing of 6 feet or more is maintained.\*\*
  - D. Are required in a classroom whenever social distancing is less than 6 feet, even if students are seated.
  - E. Are not required outdoors if social distancing of 6 feet apart or more is maintained.
  - F. When worn, a mask must cover both the mouth AND nose. When not being worn, a mask must be stored in a bag and be kept within reach so that the mask can immediately be put back on as needed for the situation. Storage of a mask in a bag is required so that the contamination of surfaces is reduced.
  - G. Students with specific concerns about mask wearing or social distancing in a class should contact the teacher so that arrangements can be made to offer more protection, if possible.
  - H. A student who is medically vulnerable to COVID-19 (ie, at high risk of complications) may request that all students in a particular class wear a mask even if social distancing of 6 feet or more is being maintained. The vulnerable student should contact Mrs. Groop or Mrs. Varnell *well before* the start of the school year to make this request. If the request is medically indicated, then students in the class will be contacted and asked if they will commit to wearing a mask for the benefit of a vulnerable (unidentified) student, even though social distancing will be maintained. Note that classmates are not required to wear a mask. The amount of compliance will be made known to the class so that both the vulnerable student and the mask-adverse students can decide if they want to continue in the class.
  - I. Masks are meant to protect other people in case the mask wearer is unknowingly

infected but does not have symptoms. Mask wearing is a demonstration of love and concern for others.

\*Except for those unable to wear a mask without compromising their health. A medical reason is the only reason a mask may not be worn in mandatory situations. Those who do not wear a mask may not be harassed or pestered. The reason is private under HIPPA regulations.

\*\* See [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/CFC\\_Guide\\_for\\_School\\_Administrators.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/CFC_Guide_for_School_Administrators.pdf)

## II. Social Distancing

- A. Students living in the same household do not need to maintain 6 feet or more of social distancing between themselves.
- B. The goal is to always maintain a minimum of 6 feet of social distancing. Social distancing of less than 6 feet is permitted only when it's physically impossible to keep 6 feet (or more) apart. Social distancing of less than 6 feet requires the wearing of a mask.
- C. People should refrain from physical contact. Everyone should refrain from hugging, high fives, fist bumps, elbow bumps, handshaking, etc. Express greetings and caring in other creative, friendly ways. Students should also refrain from yelling since yelling spreads contaminants even further than talking.
- D. Teachers may assign specific seats to students.

## III. Hygiene

- A. EPA-approved cleaning supplies will be used.
- B. Tables will be wiped down between classes.
- C. Hand sanitizer will be available for students. Students will be encouraged to wash hands frequently. Students are encouraged to carry hand sanitizer.
- D. Classrooms, bathrooms, and the tank will be sanitized at the end of each school day.
- E. A space will be available, separate from regularly used classrooms, for any students who begin to feel ill during the school day to wait until parents can pick them up.

## IV. Prevention

- A. Staff, teachers, students, volunteers and visitors **MUST** self-check temperature and self-check for the following COVID-19 symptoms *before* coming to school **every** school day:
  - fever or chills
  - coughing
  - shortness of breath
  - difficulty breathing
  - muscle or body aches
  - new loss of taste or smell
  - vomiting
  - diarrhea
- B. Any staff, teacher, student, volunteer or visitor who has a fever (defined as a

temperature above 100.4 degrees), or answers “yes” to any of the symptoms listed above MUST stay home. Concern about possibly being sick with COVID-19 MUST be reported to the office.

- C. Any staff, teacher, student, volunteer or visitor who feels ill for any reason MUST stay home.
- D. If a student begins to feel ill during the school day, he or she MUST report to the office. Temperature will be taken, parent will be called, and student will be isolated until picked up.

V. Specific Areas

A. Classrooms:

- 1. Windows will be open when possible.
- 2. Tables will be wiped down between classes. Students coming in for a new class should wait to be seated (socially distanced 6 ft or more) until the tables are finished being cleaned.
- 3. Space will be sanitized at the end of the day.
- 4. Classes will meet outside when possible. Students are encouraged to bring a beach towel to sit on.
- 5. Labs will be individually performed or demonstrated until COVID-19 restrictions are lifted; only siblings or members of the same household are allowed to work in teams.

B. Tank:

- 1. Tables will be periodically wiped down during the day.
- 2. Windows will be opened when possible.
- 3. Students are encouraged to eat outdoors (with social distancing of 6 feet) when the weather permits.
- 4. No microwave ovens will be provided. Students who stay for lunch should bring food that does not require reheating. No means of heating food will be provided. (People who grew up in the 1960s, 70s and 80s survived lunch without a microwave. So will we.)
- 5. Anyone moving around in the tank must wear a mask.

C. Hallways:

- 1. A one-way traffic pattern should be followed when possible.
- 2. Walk single file, with social distancing between people.
- 3. If a hallway doesn't have one way traffic, keep to the right.
- 4. Masks must be worn.

D. Sign-in/Sign-out:

- 1. Sign in will be in the usual spot. Students must wait outside the glass doors with social distancing of 6 feet until the sign-in table is unoccupied. Mask must be put on before entering the building and must be worn in the

hallways.

2. Sign-out will be from the tank.
3. Student must provide and use his or her own writing implement for signing in and signing out. No pens or pencils will be provided. Students are not to share writing implements.

VI. Miscellaneous:

- A. Students who only have morning classes should not stay for lunch.
- B. Students who only have afternoon classes should not arrive in time for lunch.
- C. Students should be dropped off right before their first class (allowing extra time for signing in) and picked up as soon as possible after their last class.

VII. Specific Activities:

- A. Choir – Choir will not be held in fall semester. Due to the high rate of aerosol emissions during singing, no MSA-sponsored choral activities will be held or conducted in the fall semester; no fees and no payment for any form of choral activities, whether in person or remote, will be permitted for the fall semester. This policy will be re-evaluated for the spring semester according to DPH guidelines for singing.
- B. Rhetoric – can meet according to class guidelines. Interested students must commit to participating; drop-ins are not allowed. The goal is to safely offer rhetoric to as many committed students as possible. Therefore if more students are committed to participating than are allowed by social distancing guidelines, other sessions will most likely be offered.
- C. Science Olympiad, Math League, Math Olympiad – can meet according to class guidelines.
- D. Athletics – must follow DIAA guidelines as the guidelines are developed and announced

VIII. Suspected Exposure to COVID-19 or Confirmed Case of COVID-19

- A. According to contact tracing guidelines, an individual is considered exposed if the individual is in the same household as an infected person OR if the individual has been closer than 6 feet for 15 minutes or more with an infected person (regardless of whether a mask was worn).
- B. Any person who suspects exposure to COVID-19 or who is confirmed as having COVID-19 should notify the office at Mt. Sophia so that steps may be taken to protect our community.
- C. Anyone who has been exposed to a known, positive, or confirmed case of COVID-19 must stay home. Return to school will follow current guidelines. Currently, as long as the exposed individual shows no symptoms, the individual may return to school after self-quarantining for 14 days after the last exposure OR after having

tested negative for COVID-19 following the amount of self-quarantining dictated by the individual's doctor and/or the DE Department of Health.

- D. Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 may return to school based on the CDC guidelines found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>
- E. Any teacher who has a known or suspected exposure to COVID-19 will stay home and teach remotely (asynchronously). Teachers will err on the side of caution.
- F. Each teacher will determine how school work is to be made up during the absence.
- G. Mt. Sophia would like to be able to offer recorded videos of class instruction to students who must quarantine. We are working to figure out a way to do this. MSA does not have the staff to coordinate or offer this service currently. Suggestions and help would be appreciated.

IX.

#### Remote Learning

- A. In the event that the school must close, all of Mt. Sophia's classes will switch to remote learning (as we did in March 2019).
- B. If interested in remote learning for a particular class, contact the appropriate teacher to see if something can be worked out.
- C. At this point, while in-person teaching is going on, Mt. Sophia cannot offer remote learning. Individual teachers MAY be willing to work something out for those students who have a documented medical condition which prevents them, even with the wearing of an N95 mask, from coming in to classes. The hurdles are many (including inadequate internet bandwidth and a lack of videographers). We do not have the resources or the staff to implement this. Help would be appreciated and required if this were to be an option. If a remote learning option were available by working with a teacher, there would be a fee in addition to the class fee in order to cover paying a student videographer for time spent recording and paying a teacher for the extra time needed for online grading.