



Columbus Academy

August 12, 2022

Dear Columbus Academy Families,

Welcome to the 2022-23 school year! As we begin, we would like to inform you of the COVID-19 protocols on our campus that will remain in place for the fall. We will continue to consult with medical experts in our area as well as guidelines from the CDC and Franklin County Public Health.

Face Masks

- **We will continue to be mask-optional.** For those who are immunocompromised, close contacts of a person with COVID-19, experiencing other respiratory illnesses or living with individuals who are immunocompromised, masks are encouraged and recommended.
- **Face masks will be required for individuals who have tested positive for COVID in the last 10 days.**
- Continued advice from our medical experts is that medical-grade masks, particularly N95 and KN95, are the best face-coverings for individuals who seek to protect themselves from any airborne illness.
- We ask for everyone to respect each family's or individual's choice of whether to wear a mask or not. Many will need to wear masks or will choose to still wear masks – particularly those vulnerable for health reasons – and should be able to do so without judgment. Please be compassionate by refraining from discussing or assuming anyone's vaccination status or reasons for masking.

Illness Policy

- Keep your children home if they show any signs of illness consistent with COVID-19 or other communicable illnesses such as congestion, fever, coughing, headaches or general malaise.
- For any students who become symptomatic while on campus, parents and guardians will be contacted if we feel that testing is recommended. Without your consent for testing, we will ask you to pick up your children.

Testing for COVID

- It is encouraged to test for COVID if symptoms arise or your child has been identified as a close contact. Our nurses can recommend the need and timing of the appropriate COVID test. In many cases, more than one rapid antigen test – 24 hours apart – is needed to diagnose the presence of COVID.
- The school will no longer be able to provide rapid antigen tests to our community members. We will obtain parental phone consent to perform a rapid COVID test for symptomatic students on campus as long as our supplies last.
- Rapid antigen and PCR COVID tests can be purchased at most pharmacies and drug stores. These are reimbursable through most insurance companies.
- Free at-home COVID test kits are available for everyone in the U.S. through the federal government. To place an order, visit covid.gov/tests or call 1-800-232-0233.

Reporting Positive COVID Cases

- If your children test positive for COVID-19, continue to contact the school nurses at nurse@columbusacademy.org or 614-509-2234 for instructions on obtaining an excused absence as well as eventually returning to classes and extracurricular activities.
- It is encouraged that you notify all of the people you or your children have been in contact with for the 48 hours before either COVID symptoms appeared or before a positive test if there were no symptoms. There should be no stigma, unexcused absence or disciplinary action for any student or staff member who tests positive for COVID.

Isolation Guidelines

- If you or your children test positive for COVID-19, isolate for at least five days. Your five-day isolation period starts with your first day of symptoms as Day 0 or test date in the absence of symptoms. Day 1 is the first full day after your symptoms developed or positive test date. You can leave isolation after five full days. The school nurse will help you determine the isolation dates and return to daily activities.
- People with [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, including people who are awaiting test results, should isolate – even if they do not know if they have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 – until a negative test result.
- Upon returning to school or other activities, a well-fitting face mask is required while around other people for an additional five days or after two negative tests for COVID, initially on the sixth day and again on day 8. The school will make every effort to accommodate students and staff members with space to remove masks for eating or breaks.

We are looking forward to a safe, healthy and fantastic school year. Thank you for your partnership!

Sincerely,

COVID Response Team

Erich Hunker '81, Assistant Head of School for Development and External Relations

Beckie Hoagland, School Nurse

Janet Fireman, School Nurse

Teresa Bowman, School Nurse

Perry Doran, Director of Campus Safety and Security

Harland Young, Director of Buildings and Grounds