Evergreen Catholic Separate School Division

Mask Protocol

As part of several new school safety measures to combat COVID-19, mask use for all Alberta Grade 4 to 12 students, and all school staff, will be mandatory across Alberta when school returns for the 2020-21 year. We are asking K–3 students who are physically, medically or developmentally able to wear a mask, to do so.

COVID-19 can be spread by infected individuals who have not yet, or who may never develop symptoms. Masks, including homemade cloth masks or non-medical face masks, are another way to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 and are recommended in areas where physical distancing may be challenging or not possible.

Mandatory Mask Use: Staff and Students (Grades 4 through 12) and highly encouraged for students in Kindergarten through Grade 3.

- Mask use will be required (Grades 4 through 12) whenever and wherever students are instructed to wear a mask.
- Acknowledging that maintaining 2 metres of distancing between individuals will be challenging in many situations, Evergreen Catholic Schools is recommending that masks be worn at all times.
- Masks are not required while students are seated in the classroom during instruction if additional measures are in place. (i.e.; if students are all facing in the same direction and working alone at their desks.)
- There may be situations within classrooms where masks may be needed based on the activity – as instructed by the teacher. (i.e.; group work, labs, close collaboration on projects)
- Masks are required:
  - in the classroom when close contact between students, or students and staff, is occurring. Masks should be used for the duration of this activity;
  - on the bus at all times and when in bus transfer sites outside;
  - in school areas where students or staff may be moving or crossing paths with other students or staff;
  - in hallways (including while at lockers) and entry points;
  - in washrooms;
  - in common gathering areas; and
  - in any areas that clearly indicate (by a sign) that masks are required.
- Masks may be removed for outside activities that involve considerable social distancing.
- The Principal of the school may determine other programming or activities that apply sufficient additional physical distancing measures to allow students to remove their masks for the duration of the activity.
• The Principal of the school may determine other programming or activities where masks are mandatory. (i.e.; drama productions, musical programming such as choir, foods options, etc.)

Additional Mask Protocols

• Alberta is providing each student with two reusable masks. Delivery of these masks to students is expected on their first day of school. Families are also welcome to supply their own masks, if preferred, providing that the mask is appropriate:
  o A bandana, scarf or neck gaiter may be used providing it can cover your mouth, nose and sides of the face while remaining securely in place;
  o For reference, see also - Alberta Government: Types of Masks and Eye Protection; and
  o For reference, see also - Health Canada: Sew and No-Sew Instructions.
• The mask needs to fully cover your face from the nose (above the nostrils) to the chin and be worn without gaps between the mask and face.
  o See also: Alberta Government: Guidance for Wearing Non-Medical Masks
• Masks that are visibly dirty, ripped, torn or damaged in any way shall be replaced with a temporary mask by the school during the day, and by the family for the next day;
  o Schools are supplied with disposable (temporary) masks to distribute to students.
• Before putting on a mask, hands should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or alcohol-based hand sanitizer with a minimum of 60% alcohol;
• It is recommended students carry a plastic, sealable bag (i.e.; Ziploc bag) to store the mask when not in use.
• While it is certainly okay to use or have creative fabrics or designs on masks, your mask must follow guidelines for appropriateness as provided for in the school’s dress code (i.e., no inappropriate messages or graphics).
• Individual student safety plans shall establish whether a student with complex needs may or may not wear a mask (based on circumstance and guidance from a Health Professional) and the reason shall be based on the individual's specific health profile. These specific cases shall be determined in consultation with the school principal who will ensure proper accommodations are in place as prudent to do so and within the school's ability to do so.

Parents can support their children by practicing mask wearing at home and by reinforcing that masks help us all stay safe and healthy. We truly appreciate our families, staff, students and community efforts to keep everyone in good health.