

Updated COVID-19 Protocols for the 2021-2022 School Year

Updated September 17, 2021

On Tuesday, August 17th, the Parnassus Board of Directors adopted a policy that the school will follow the Recommended COVID-19 Decision Tree for People in Schools, Youth, and Child Care Programs and related guidance issued by the Minnesota Department of Health, as the Decision Tree and related guidance may be amended from time to time. <https://parnassusprep.com/policies/> (#809)

For the 2021-2022, we will provide full in-person instruction five (5) days a week for all students. Students will have lunch in the Forum and Agora areas and will transition to classes based on their schedules (not in designated cohorts). While school is expected to function in a normal fashion, we have many mitigation strategies in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among our school community and to keep our students in the classrooms.

The following layered mitigation strategies will be in place:

- As of September 2021, masks are required for students, staff, and visitors while inside the school building.
- All students and adults must wear masks when riding school buses/transportation
- Ensure as much physical distancing between students and teachers as is feasible during the day
- Provide information and resources for COVID-19 testing
- Provide information and resources for COVID-19 vaccination opportunities
- HEPA air filters/purifiers in all classrooms, offices, and common areas
- Frequent and thorough cleaning and disinfecting
- Protocol for contact tracing and quarantine for students and staff

Below you will find the details for the school's COVID-19 protocols for the upcoming school year based on current information and guidance from the Minnesota Departments of Health and Education. This information is subject to change at any time as we continue to receive updated information and guidance.

Face Masks

- On September 17th, 2021, the Parnassus Board of Directors adopted Parnassus Policy 808: Face Covering Policy, requiring the use of masks or other appropriate face coverings while indoors at school.
- Face masks are *required* on school buses and all other public and school-provided transportation. This is a federal mandate in effect across the entire country.
- Wearing a properly fitting face mask while indoors is an easy and effective way for our students, staff, and families to help limit the spread of COVID-19, keep our school community safe, and help prevent quarantines that cause students to miss important social and instructional time. Disposable masks are always available for any student who needs or requests one.

COVID-19 Testing

- The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) have announced COVID-19 testing resources that will be available for schools this year. <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/testing.html>
- Testing is one important strategy to slow the spread of COVID-19. Based on current levels of community spread across Minnesota, the CDC and MDH recommend that all **unvaccinated** school-age children and school staff should get tested for COVID-19 at least weekly throughout the school year.

- **Unvaccinated** children involved in any extracurricular activities or sports should be tested more frequently.
- **Vaccinated** students and school staff should get tested if they are experiencing symptoms or were exposed to someone who has COVID-19. We will continue to share updates as plans come together over the next few weeks.

COVID-19 Vaccinations

- The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) strongly recommends vaccination for those ages 12 and older, in addition to the consistent use of layered mitigation strategies to help limit the spread of COVID-19, to support in-person learning, and to protect people who are not fully vaccinated, including children, students, teachers, staff, and members of their households. This recommendation is grounded in the knowledge that the benefits of being physically present in school are significant and creating conditions that help safeguard in-person instruction is a priority.
- We do not yet know when COVID-19 vaccinations will be approved for children aged 11 and under. As more information on vaccinations is available, we will be sure to share it with families.
- Vaccine information may be found at the following link: <https://mn.gov/covid19/vaccine/find-vaccine/index.jsp>.
- Proof of vaccination will not be required of students to attend school or of staff to attend work.

Safety Measures Inside the School Building

- Parnassus has high-quality ventilation throughout the building.
- The school has added air purifiers to all our classrooms, offices, and common areas to enhance air quality.
- The school building is frequently and thoroughly cleaned and disinfected with a disinfectant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's *List N: Disinfectants for Coronavirus (COVID-19)* on a regular basis to remove any remaining germs on surfaces, which further reduces any risk of spreading infection.
- Students and staff will be trained on best practices for handwashing and respiratory etiquette (covering coughs and sneezes) to keep from getting and spreading infectious illnesses, including COVID-19.
- Routines for hand hygiene will be built into the daily schedule. This includes teaching and reinforcing handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and the safe use of hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol by staff and older children.

Quarantine and Contact Tracing

- People who test positive for COVID-19 must quarantine at home until all three of these things are true:
 1. They feel better. Their cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms are better; and,
 2. It has been at least 10 days since they first felt sick or tested positive; and,
 3. They have had no fever for at least 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers fever.
- Just as we notify families when students have been in close contact with an individual with a highly contagious condition such as lice or chicken pox, Parnassus will notify families if their children have

been in close contact with an individual with a confirmed case of COVID-19. Students who are considered close contacts of a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 will need to remain in quarantine at home for a designated period.

- *What counts as close contact?* A close contact is ANY person who lives in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who has been within about six (6) feet of a person who has COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more over the course of a day.
- *How do we identify close contacts?* Classroom seating charts help us identify close contacts within classrooms. Comprehensive security camera coverage of hallways and public spaces allow us to easily and quickly identify individuals who have been in close contact with an infected individual.
- Students, teachers, and staff who have been **fully vaccinated do not need to stay home even if they have had recent close contact with a confirmed case so long as they do not have symptoms and do not test positive**. The school will follow MDH testing guidance for anyone exposed to a confirmed case.
- **IMPORTANT:** Consistent and proper use of face masks, combined with other safety measures, will help us avoid mandatory quarantine periods for close contacts of individuals with confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Following the most up-to-date guidance from MDH, in indoor classroom settings, unvaccinated students who come into contact with an individual with a confirmed case of COVID-19 will NOT be considered close contacts and will NOT need to quarantine if both of the following conditions are true:

- ★ Both students were correctly wearing well-fitting masks; and
- Other school prevention strategies are in place, including ventilation, cleaning and disinfecting, respiratory etiquette, and hand hygiene.
- This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.

Responding to Suspected and Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

- The school will continue to report suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 to MDH. Minnesota Rule 4605.7070 requires any person in charge of any institution, school, childcare facility, or camp to report cases of COVID-19 to MDH.
- If a student or staff member becomes ill with COVID-19-like symptoms while in attendance, they will immediately be sent home, *regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status or prior history of disease*. Symptomatic students or staff who are waiting to be picked up will be required put on a mask, if not already wearing one, and will be isolated in a designated space. Students will remain under the visual supervision of a staff member while in isolation on school property.
- Please be prepared to come to school and pick up your child if they are ill or displaying symptoms consistent with COVID-19. We are aware that this can be an inconvenience for families. Your patience and understanding are appreciated.

Staying Home When Sick

- Students, teachers, and staff must **stay home if they feel sick** and should contact a health care provider for testing and care. Staying home when sick is essential to keep infectious diseases, such

as influenza and COVID-19, out of the school setting. Please do not send your child to school if he or she has a runny nose, cough, fever, sore throat, or any other signs of illness.

- Students, teachers, and staff who have been **fully vaccinated do not need to stay home even if they have had recent close contact with a confirmed case so long as they do not have symptoms and do not test positive**. Follow MDH testing guidance for anyone exposed to a confirmed case.
- All staff and students with symptoms of any illness are to remain home until they present documentation of a “negative” COVID test or a statement from a health care provider stating that they may re-enter school.

Parnassus COVID-19 Guidance and Practices May Change at Any Time

- The above information is based on current information and guidance from MDE and MDH and is subject to change before the start of the school year as school leadership receives updated information. We will keep families posted of any changes in a timely manner.
- If you have any questions, please email us at contact@parnassusprep.com.