

I hope you have all enjoyed the first week of school. I know it can be challenging to return to early mornings and schedules, but it has been great to have staff and students back on campus and we are excited about the year ahead.

I wanted to reach out and share an update in regards to our compliance with the current required mask mandates in light of a few things, observations of our students after the first week of school and two recent OSHA complaints.

As a result of reviewing State Law OHA Rule 333-019-1025 and OHA requirements, and after discussions with legal counsel and other Christian school leaders, the DCS School Board would like to clarify their stance on the mask requirement as it applies to the operation of our school.

Students are **required** to wear masks at DCS in all settings except for participating in athletics, recess, PE, outside activities or while eating or drinking. As stated in the requirements, DCS will continue to “center on grace and patience and reteach the expectation”. We **expect** parents to support and reinforce DCS policies as stated and agreed upon by parents when they sign their enrollment paperwork.

Failure to follow these requirements place our staff, our school board and our entire school in jeopardy of liability. Policing students who are not compiling with the guidelines or responding to OSHA complaints because students and/or spectators at our sporting events takes valuable time away from our primary role of providing a Christian education to your children. I would like to pragmatically outline why it is necessary that you comply in these efforts.

1. Students who are not in compliance by wearing their masks will have to be quarantined in the event of an exposure, which will result in more students missing class.
2. Non-compliance at athletic events may result in our school being forced to forfeit competitions or having to eliminate spectators all together.
3. Non-compliance puts the school at risk. Teachers, office staff and board members are liable. Staff with state certification also risk the loss of their teaching credentials.

In the case that a student or family chooses not to wear a face covering for reasons other than medical need or disability, our school will follow a process to seek a resolution. According to state mandates **“Schools cannot serve a student in-person if they or their family choose not to wear a face covering”**. If a family or student will not adhere to these requirements, they may need to seek an alternative educational option.

Our commitment to follow these mandates is not a statement of support or approval of them, but a necessity for us to continue to offer a Christian education in our community. I fully acknowledge that this has been a very difficult time, but please partner with us, so we can fully focus on using academics as a vehicle for discipleship.