

July 16, 2020

Dear Canaan Parents, Students & Guardians,

We hope this letter finds all of you healthy and enjoying time together this summer!

With the announcement from the Vermont Secretary of Education to be able to reopen schools for in-person instruction in the fall, a steering committee was formed and has been diligently working through the Vermont Agency of Education and the Vermont Public Health Department safety and health guidance. This guidance was developed in conjunction with infectious disease experts, practitioners of pediatric medicine, public health experts and education professionals.

We are working through these documents, to ensure that we are prepared for a strong and healthy start for the reopening of school in the fall. We will continue to communicate any new protocols to families on how we will implement the requirements and recommendations. For your reference, the guidelines can be found on the following website.

<https://education.vermont.gov/news/covid-19-guidance-vermont-schools>

We would like to inform you of the following key findings.

- Students and staff will not be able to attend school if any one of the following symptoms are present, fever over 100.4, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell. Daily health checks will be required to be done prior to entrance at school or boarding a bus, to assess for any of the above symptoms. More details about these daily checks will be forthcoming in future communication.
- Students and staff that develop any of the above-mentioned symptoms during the daily health check and or during the school day, will be immediately isolated and required to go home. Due to this requirement, it will be imperative that we have several means of communication to reach you, as well as reliable emergency contacts. We also suggest that as a family, you make alternative plans in the event your child does not pass the daily health check, prior to boarding the bus, upon entrance at school and or during the school day. We have attached the contact information on file. Please take the time to review and complete this form and return it to us as soon as possible in preparation for the start of school.
- Wearing face coverings is a cultural change, however per the guidelines it will be a requirement for attendance by students, staff and any service providers. Discretion around the wearing of face coverings for children due to a medical and/or health conditions would require a discussion with a team including their primary care provider.
- Acceptable face coverings include either a face mask or a face shield. The attached document will give you more information regarding face masks. Face masks are preferred but face shields are approved for protection and meet the guideline requirements. Face

- shields should extend below the chin, to the ears on both sides, and there should be no exposed gap between the forehead and the shield's headpiece. They should be cleaned if condensation or droplets are visible on the inside of the shield. They should also be cleaned regularly and handled like face coverings when putting on or removing (e.g. wash hands after handling).
- If your children are not already practicing wearing masks in public, wearing them now and obtaining a mask that fits appropriately is strongly advised. If we work together, we can help children understand how to protect one another and make face coverings part of their daily routine so that play, learning, and other activities can be as safe as possible.

As a community we will come together to do what is best for our children. We are committed to prioritize the safety of children, staff, and families, while following the health and safety guidelines provided by the Vermont Agency of Education and Public Health Department. As we get closer to the opening of the school year, we will continue to communicate new procedures and protocols for a successful and healthy school year.

Please join us at our Informational Meeting scheduled for August 10th at 6:00PM at the Canaan Memorial High School Gymnasium (limited to state guidance on group capacity sizes) to answer questions related to the confirmation vote on the bond article and the return to school in the fall. Alternatively, you can connect remotely by calling the following number 646-558-8656 and enter Meeting ID: 802 266 8910.

Stay safe and healthy,

Karen E. Conroy
Superintendent

Deborah M. Lynch
Principal

Megan Prehemo, RN
Covid-19 Coordinator

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, children ages 2 and older should wear a face covering in settings where they cannot keep a distance of 6 feet away from others. We can help children understand how to protect one another and make face coverings part of our daily routine so that play, learning, and other activities can be as safe as possible.

Homemade or purchased face coverings are fine for most people to wear. For children, the right fit is important. Pleated face coverings with elastic ear loops are best for kids. Try to find the right size for your child's face and adjust it for a secure fit.

Who Should Wear a Face Covering?



- Children age 2 and older who can wear it properly

Face coverings are appropriate for a child's stage of development when they can properly put on, take off, and not touch or suck on the covering.

Who Should Not Wear a Face Covering?



- Children under age 2
- Children who have a medical or behavioral reason for not wearing a face covering **should not** be required to wear one.

Face coverings may not be appropriate if a child's stage of development would make wearing a face covering difficult.

Parents and any child care and school staff should discuss the needs of the individual child, and consult with a health care provider if necessary (for example, for children with conditions such as asthma) to determine if they can safely and consistently wear a face covering.

When Should Face Coverings Be Worn?

Face coverings should be worn in settings where children and adults cannot keep a distance of 6 feet between themselves and others. This includes childcare settings, summer camps and schools. Other examples include:

- Running errands, such as trips to the store
- In a health care setting for an appointment
- Visiting family members outside your household
- Riding public transportation or sharing a ride with people outside your household
- Walking on a busy or crowded street
- At home if someone in the household is sick

Safety

- Face coverings should NOT have any attachments (such as buttons, stickers, etc.) that may be a choking hazard.
- Face coverings with strings are not recommended for young children as they pose a risk of choking or strangulation.
- Remove face coverings while children are sleeping, eating, or swimming (or when they would get wet).

How Can I Help Children Wear a Face Covering?

Younger children may need help while wearing a face covering. Follow these guidelines when helping children to put on and remove a face covering:

- Wash hands before putting on a face covering and after removing it.
- Place the face covering over the nose and mouth.
- Teach children to avoid touching the face covering or their face while wearing a face covering.
- Face coverings are not to be shared with friends.
- Remove the face covering by touching only the straps.
- Place the used face covering in a clean paper bag until it needs to be put on again; the bag should be labeled if there are multiple children in the setting.
- Wash the face covering after daily use.

Tips to Help Children Adapt

Help children understand that wearing face coverings can prevent the spread of germs. You can use the following expert tips, books, and videos:

- For children over age 3, explain that germs are special to their body. Some germs are good and some are bad. The bad ones can make us sick. Since we cannot always tell which are good or bad, the face coverings help make sure you keep bad germs away from your body.
- If a child is afraid of wearing a face covering, try putting one on a favorite stuffed animal or doll, decorate it with drawings, practice wearing it at home, and show the child pictures of other children wearing them.
- Refer to online resources such as:
 - [COVID-19 Activity Book](#)
 - [PBS Kids video](#)
 - [Tips for talking to toddlers about face covering](#)