



8/20/21

Dear MHNS Families,

While we wistfully watch the approach of summer's end, we look to the start of a new school year with excitement and anticipation. My staff and I are eager to welcome new and returning families to campus very soon. To that end, I would like to answer a few questions that are likely on everyone's minds. We feel confident and prepared to start the new school year, even as the ongoing COVID-19 public health crisis continues to create unique challenges for the Mt. Hebron Nursery School (MHNS) community. The health and safety of our students, staff, and families remains our topmost priority. With you as our partners in this effort, we will approach this year with the same commitment and determination that drove our success last year. In addition, we now benefit from our experience of last year and the protection that comes with a fully vaccinated MHNS staff.

Our MHNS COVID-19 Response Team has continued to meet and work throughout the summer. We closely watched the information and data from the Maryland State Department of Education, Howard County Health Department, and the CDC. Rising metrics in our area and the surge of the Delta variant mean that some of the existing COVID-19 protocols from last year will remain in place for as long as we feel they are necessary to keep our community safe.

Here's what you can expect:

- Masking mandate for all students, staff, parents, and caregivers regardless of vaccination status.
- Daily screening questions for all students/staff.
- Onsite temperature checks for all students/staff. (Student temperatures will be taken at the door by classroom teacher with MHNS thermometer.)
- Zero-tolerance sick policy.
- Student drop-off/pick-up at external classroom doors. (No parents/caregivers allowed inside building.)
- No parent classroom volunteers for September/October. (We will re-evaluate in October.)

We're happy to report classroom capacity has returned to pre-COVID-19 limits. We are also delighted to report the return of many of the cherished elements of our MHNS program, including:

- Specials (Music, Art, and PE),
- Enrichment Classes,
- Discovery Clubs,
- Book Bears Family Reading Program,
- Parent/Child Orientations,
- Outdoor Events (New Family Play Date, MHNS Parent Group Welcome Events, Field Trips, Outdoor Family Movie Night, Halloween Parades).



We will provide more information and specifics about the COVID-19 protocols and the start of school coming to you soon in a variety of ways:

- Parent Orientation (9/9/21),
 - **MOVED OUTDOORS** for safety of all attendees. Masks required.
 - **TIME CHANGE to 6:30PM** to allow for more daylight.
 - If weather doesn't permit, we will move to Zoom platform.
- Parent/Child Orientations (first week of school),
 - Limit one adult per child.
 - No siblings please.
- Emails from classroom teachers,
- Family Handbook with COVID-19 Addendum.

Please be in touch with any questions or concerns. We're looking forward to seeing you and your children soon!

Warmly,
Amy C. Schroeder