



**Saint Mark
Lutheran School**

K Ā N E ' O H E , H A W A I ' I

**COVID-19 CAMPUS PLAN
POLICY and PROCEDURES
2022-2023**

*** Please note that this policy is subject to change at Saint Mark Lutheran School's sole discretion as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves and vaccination rates increase. Although it is our desire and intent to provide on-campus instruction for all students for the entire school year, circumstances may necessitate school operations to be conducted online periodically. ***

Revised: August 31, 2022

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INTRODUCTION

As Saint Mark Lutheran School opens for the 2022-2023 school year, the BA.5 Omicron subvariant is now the dominant COVID-19 variant in the United States. Early information indicates that this variant is highly transmissible regardless of vaccination status or prior infection. So while COVID has become much less of a health risk than during the pre-vaccine period of the pandemic, it remains a concern given its high degree of transmission and the fact that it results in: (1) a mandatory quarantine period (currently at least 5 days); and (2) often 1-3 days of flu-like symptoms.

Because of these continued concerns, the *COVID-19 Campus Plan 2022-2023* contains many of the preventative measures that have served us so well in the past including the use of what the CDC terms "layered prevention strategies" (e.g., using multiple prevention strategies together consistently). However, great care was taken to significantly update and reflex the plan to reflect the latest guidelines, vaccination rates, and community conditions.

It is important that we continue our practice of quickly adapting to what has proven to be an evolving landscape. As such, the policies, procedures, and overall strategies explained in this plan will be flexible and revised/adapted in accordance with the latest guidelines from government & health officials and as needed depending on the latest developments regarding vaccination rates, level of viral transmission (in the school and throughout the community), and severity of new viral variants.

Like the last two years, this plan prioritizes health & safety, educational excellence, practicality, and flexibility. Every COVID-19 decision that is made for our school will be one that is well-researched, well-thought-out, and continually puts the well-being of our students, faculty, staff, and families at the forefront. Saint Mark is committed to continuing our safe transition out of COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you for your Support!

Aloha and Mahalo,

Dr. David Gaudi
Head of School

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As Saint Mark Lutheran School heads back to school for the 2022-23 school year, it is doing so with the following guiding principles.

Health and Safety

Saint Mark's greatest priority is to the health and safety of its community. As such, Saint Mark will strive to align its policies and procedures with guidance from CDC, HDOH, and DHS while continuing to implement five overarching preventative strategies: (1) Daily Health Screening; (2) Personal Protective Equipment – Masking; (3) Hand Hygiene and Sanitation; (4) Ventilation; and (5) Cohorting, Quarantining & Testing.

Dedication to On-Campus Instruction & Educational Excellence

Saint Mark understands the importance of social interactions and in-person support that is delivered through an on-campus experience. To that end, an online learning option will no longer be offered, and all Saint Mark students are expected to attend school in-person, unless granted an exception pursuant to this policy due to a need to quarantine.

Communication

As was the case during the last two school years, open and clear communication will play an integral role in keeping families informed about the latest information as it relates to being on campus and protecting the safety and well-being of our community. Parents can expect to receive communications from the Head of School via email updating them on the latest news and developments. Key communications will also be posted on the [school's website](#).

Vaccinations

Saint Mark has no plans to require COVID vaccinations but does continue to strongly encourage all those eligible to get the COVID vaccine to please do so. We understand that while the current vaccines do not always prevent transmission of the viruses (especially the BA.5 variant), it does help prevent serious illness.

Data-Driven Decision Making

Saint Mark will continue to rigorously follow the science as a guide to safely operate on campus and will make decisions that are data-driven and in the best interest of the entire school `ohana.

Practicality/Feasibility

Saint Mark fully understands that while maintaining the health and safety of its community is the most important priority, all COVID-19 policies and procedures must also be practical and sensible if they are to be sustainable.

Flexibility/Nimble

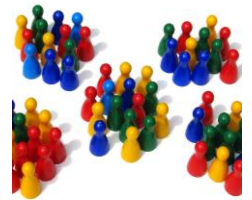
Saint Mark fully recognizes that any plan to safely operate on campus must be flexible and adaptable to the fluctuating community conditions that are beyond our control. Saint Mark has a data driven learning program that is designed to not only safely keep students on campus but to adapt to possible future COVID-19 infections. Saint Mark will remain nimble as we continually monitor the latest developments.

PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

Saint Mark is working to minimize the risk of COVID-19 spread with the following five strategies.

Five Main Preventative Strategies being Implemented

<p>Daily Health Screening (No more Daily Temperature Checks)</p>	<p>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - Face Covering (Optional)</p>	<p>Hand Hygiene & Sanitation</p>	<p>Ventilation</p>	<p>Cohorting, Testing & Quarantining</p>
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Daily Health Screening

Prior to Arrival - It's imperative that families monitor their children for any signs of illness and keep them home if they show and symptoms. Symptoms of illness include but are not limited to Cough, Runny or Stuffy Nose, Fatigue, Sore Throat, Body Aches, Headache, Shortness of Breath/Difficulty Breathing, Decreased Sense of Smell and/or Taste, Diarrhea, Nausea, Vomiting, and Chills/Sweats or Fever of 100.4° F (or higher) in the past 24 hours.

At School - Students will not be administered a temperature check upon arrival; however, if a student arrives to school with or develops any signs of illness during the school day, they will be removed from the classroom and immediately sent to the school office (health room) where their parents will be called to immediately pick them up from school. Students are to remain at home until the student is 24 hours symptom and fever free without the use of fever reducing medications.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - Face Coverings

All individuals including faculty, staff, students, and school visitors have the option to wear a mask while on campus (both inside and outside the classroom). Face shields are not required but are available should a student prefer to wear one.

When positive cases are found to have been present in certain classes/cohorts, Saint Mark will have those classes/cohorts (rather than the entire school) wear their masks while indoors for a few days to help mitigate any possible spread. This approach is a more measured and tactical strategy than simply requiring school-wide indoor masking and one that served Saint Mark very well in the spring of 2022.

Hand Hygiene & Sanitation

Hand Hygiene - All students, faculty and staff will follow a regular schedule of hand washing and use of hand sanitizer throughout the day. For example, students will be required to wash and /or sanitize their hands when they first arrive to school as well as before and after all outdoor activities or other activities where they are touching common use objects. Hand sanitizer will be available in every classroom that does not have a sink.

Sanitation - In addition to promoting healthy hand hygiene, Saint Mark will continue its daily cleaning/sanitation practices which include cleaning high touch surfaces (e.g., door handles, sink handles, light switches and drinking fountains) and the use of cleaning products that are both efficacious and safe. The use of shared objects (e.g., art supplies, toys, and games) will be permitted; however, they will also be cleaned/sanitized on a regular basis.

Ventilation

Saint Mark will continue to strongly encourage increased natural ventilation by opening windows and doors and using outdoor areas whenever possible and practical (weather permitting).

Cohorting, Quarantining & Testing

Cohorting - Students will continue to be kept together in smaller groups called cohorts throughout the school day. At Saint Mark the cohorts will typically consist of the individual classes. Keeping the students in cohorts and minimizing the mixing/interaction between classes will reduce the risk of widespread virus transmission and allow for easier contact tracing in the event of an infection. As was done in the 2021-22 school year, Saint Mark will on occasion be allowing some controlled mixing of cohorts. This practice of mixing cohorts will become more commonplace as conditions allow.

Quarantining - If a student or employee has a COVID-19 infection, school officials will support the Hawaii Department of Health's efforts in quarantining of those infected. Provisions will be made to support continuity of learning from home during quarantine periods.

Testing - In October 2021 Saint Mark began testing students using rapid antigen tests. This was done in an effort to provide an additional layer of protection in identifying COVID positive students. It proved to be efficacious process that lead to a more strategic and precise usage of student quarantining. Saint Mark will continue COVID testing students as deemed necessary.

ISOLATION and QUARANTINE

RULES FOR POSITIVE TEST and EXPOSURE

Rules for Positive COVID-19 Test

Students/staff who test positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, are to isolate for a period of at least 5 days.

If a Saint Mark student tests positive for COVID-19 or is suspected of having COVID-19, parents must immediately notify the Saint Mark School office to determine the symptom/test date(s), and the student is prohibited from the Saint Mark campus until he/she is authorized by the School to return to campus.

After having tested positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, symptom free students are permitted to return to campus after ALL of the following have been met:

- 5 full days have passed since symptoms first began or, if asymptomatic, 5 full days have passed since the positive test was collected
- Must wear a well-fitting mask while indoors at school from day 6 to 10 after completing the home isolation (*)
- Receive clearance from the school office

(*) Individuals unable or unwilling to wear a mask and have tested positive must remain in isolation for 10 days.

Rules for Positive COVID-19 Exposure

Students/staff who have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 at school or outside of school are NOT required to quarantine regardless of vaccination status.

This policy is consistent with [HDOH recommendations](#) (Revised: August 15, 2022) and means that all individuals, regardless of vaccination status, who are exposed to COVID-19 may remain in school if they are asymptomatic and wear a mask while indoors for 5 days (10 days recommended). (*)

Following an exposure, students/staff are to monitor for symptoms:

- If symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and get tested (stay home until results are known)
- If the test result is positive, follow the *Rules for Positive COVID-19 Test*

Following an exposure, students/staff (even if asymptomatic) are to test on Day 6: (**)

- If the test result is positive, follow the *Rules for Positive COVID-19 Test*

(*) Individuals unable or unwilling to wear a mask while indoors after an exposure must remain in isolation for 5 days.

(**) PCR, NAAT or Rapid Antigen Home Tests are permissible and/or Saint Mark will test the students.

Active clusters or large outbreaks may necessitate a temporary return to targeted case investigation, close contact identification, wide-spread testing, and quarantine of in-school exposures to prevent ongoing transmission.

When students must remain off campus due to quarantine requirements, the school will work with the student and his/her parents to determine and coordinate online instruction based on the circumstances and to the degree possible.

HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

PARENT COOPERATION IS NEEDED

All members of the Saint Mark School community have a shared responsibility to prevent the spread of illness when they are aware or suspect that they have contracted a communicable disease. It is imperative that all members of our school community remain committed to the safety policies and procedures listed in this and future communications to help keep students, faculty and staff safe. By enrolling your child at Saint Mark School, parents agree to the following requirements:

Follow School, Federal, State, and Local Orders

Families are expected to adhere to all school rules as well as the directives of applicable federal, state, and local government health departments, including the CDC and HDOH, regarding isolation/quarantining, wearing masks, and other measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Complete Daily Health Screening & Stay Home if Sick

Families are expected to continually monitor their child(ren) for signs of illness and keep their children home if they show any symptoms. Symptoms of illness include but are not limited to Chills/Sweats or Fever of 100.4° F (or higher) in the past 24 hours, Cough, Shortness of Breath/Difficulty Breathing, Fatigue, Sore Throat, Body Aches, Headache, Decreased Sense of Smell and/or Taste, Diarrhea, Nausea, and Vomiting. Upon returning to school following an illness, Saint Mark reserves the right to make the final determination of eligibility to readmit a student to school and may require a doctor's clearance including a negative COVID-19 test.

Face Covering

All individuals including faculty, staff, students, and school visitors have the option to wear a mask while on campus (both inside and outside the classroom). Face shields are not required but are available should a student want to wear one during lunch or snack time. When positive cases are found to have been present in certain classes/cohorts, Saint Mark will have those classes/cohorts (rather than the entire school) wear their masks while indoors for a few days to help mitigate any possible spread.

Hygiene

Parents are asked to practice and reinforce good personal hygiene practices at home. In particular, the importance of frequent handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (especially after visiting public areas, blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing) and the practice of coughing and sneezing into elbows should be emphasized.

Students' Personal Items

Parents are to limit the items their child(ren) bring(s) onto campus each day. Sharing of food between students is prohibited.

Medical Forms & Emergency Contact

Parents must complete and submit all required student medical forms including their child(ren)'s up-to-date emergency contact information prior to the first day of school.

OTHER ON-CAMPUS POLICES

No Campus Visitors without Appointment

All visitors to campus, including parents, are not permitted to go beyond the school office without a scheduled appointment. This means that parents must drop off their children at the designated drop-off area and are not permitted to park and walk their children onto campus. Exceptions to this rule are allowed for parents attending scheduled events like an afterschool basketball game. Only Before & Aftercare parents are permitted to walk on campus without an appointment. All visitors have the option to wear a mask.

Excursions

With prior approval from the Head of School, Saint Mark will continue (and expand) off-campus learning opportunities for the students.

Chapel & Large Gatherings

Full chapels and other large group gatherings will continue to be held virtually (or in a hybrid fashion) until further notice. Classes will have selected opportunities to attend chapel in person.

Birthdays / Other Celebrations

No food or other snacks are permitted to be shared on campus for birthdays or any other occasion unless the food or snack items are approved by the teacher ahead of time.

Recess

The importance of play remains a constant and will continue to be part of Saint Mark's daily routine. Recess schedules will be similar to years past with cohorts playing in designated areas.

DISCLAIMERS

DISCLAIMER REGARDING FACE SHIELDS

Please note that use of face shields issued by Saint Mark School is at a student's own risk. Face shields are being provided free of charge. Face shields are provided without any representations, warranties, or guarantees of any kind whatsoever, either express or implied, including, but not limited to, warranty of merchantability, warranty of fitness for a particular purpose, or anything related to its safety, effectiveness, or performance. Further, face shields are not scientifically proven to prevent infection from Coronavirus Disease and/or SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) or other viruses or bacteria. **EXCEPT WHERE SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED BY LAW, NO WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND ARE OFFERED FOR THE DESIGN OR USE OF THE FACE SHIELDS PRODUCED OR ISSUED BY SAINT MARK SCHOOL.** By accepting and allowing your student to use such face shields, you and your student acknowledge and accept this disclaimer and agree that use of such face shield is at your student's own risk

DISCLAIMER REGARDING CHANGES TO POLICY AND PROCEDURES

These policies and procedures supersede those contained in any other Saint Mark handbooks and can be modified at any time without warning. School policies must be flexible and nimble in responding to new information, and Saint Mark Lutheran School's administrators will adapt and refine approaches when specific policies are not working.

COVID-19 WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

While Saint Mark Lutheran School will enforce policies to prevent persons having COVID-19 symptoms from being on its campus, there is a risk that there may be people on the Saint Mark School's campus that could be infected with COVID-19 who have symptoms or who are asymptomatic.

Further, while Saint Mark School will implement safety precautions and strategies designed to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission to the extent reasonably feasible, Saint Mark School cannot anticipate every situation that may arise and cannot ensure that students will not be exposed and/or infected by COVID-19.

By sending your student to school on-campus, as the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), you understand, agree, and hereby assume the risk that your student's attendance on campus could expose your student to persons infected with COVID-19.

By sending your student to school on-campus, you further understand, agree, and hereby assume the risk that your student may be infected by COVID-19 while attending school in person on campus.

ACCORDINGLY, AS THE STUDENT'S PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S), YOU HEREBY WAIVE, DISCHARGE, COVENANT NOT TO SUE, RELEASE, INDEMNIFY, AND HOLD HARMLESS SAINT MARK SCHOOL, ITS OFFICERS, VOLUNTEERS, EMPLOYEES, BOARD MEMBERS, AGENTS, AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITY TO YOUR STUDENT AND/OR HIS/HER REPRESENTATIVES, ASSIGNS, HEIRS AND NEXT OF KIN, FOR ANY LOSS OR DAMAGE, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO BODILY INJURY OR DEATH, CAUSED BY OR RELATED TO COVID-19 EXPOSURE OR INFECTION. The sole exception to this waiver and release is for any loss or damage due to gross negligence or willful or wanton conduct by Saint Mark School.

By sending your student to school, you understand, acknowledge, and consent to all the above provisions and agree to be bound by their terms. If you have any objections to any of the above provisions, you must notify Saint Mark School in writing and may not matriculate your student.