Dear Primary Families,

All children enrolled at the beginning of the school year are fully transitioned in and with almost a full complement of children in our school, we are delighted that things are going smoothly. The carefully crafted plans and protocols that we put in place to re-open have served us well. With a few tweaks here and there we have been able to be responsive to any new information, and we are so pleased and encouraged by our community's support.

Over the past weeks, at the request of the Governor's Office, several Connecticut entities including the Office for Early Childhood (OEC), the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), and the Department of Public Health (DPH) have been working in collaboration to issue updated guidance to protect the health and safety of adults and children in school settings. As a result of this collaboration, Memo #29, released this week, outlines clear guidance concerning the wearing of masks for children 3 years of age and older.

Here at MSGH, our Elementary and Adolescent Program students have been successfully wearing masks since the beginning of the school year. Many Primary-aged children are already choosing to wear masks, and our teachers have been gently encouraging tolerance during the school day. The children are being very receptive. In response to the aforementioned newly released guidance, we are asking that families provide masks for your children. We look forward to working in partnership with you as we support the children in acclimatizing to this new guidance. Below are some things to keep in mind:

- Involve your child in selecting some patterns/colors that your child connect with.
- Purchase several masks in the proper size (which might take some experimentation with different masks) that fit comfortably from the middle of the nose to over the chin.
- Support your children in bringing two masks to school each day (one to wear and one extra).
- Model putting on and taking off a mask and invite your child to practice in order to gain independence.
- Share positive feelings around mask wearing such as they are a good way to keep us all healthy.

Though this change is effective September 21, guidelines allow for a phase-in period extending to October 19 for schools and families to work together to support children in this transition. This developmentally appropriate approach is welcomed as we all adjust to this new normal. Children will not wear masks while they are eating, napping or for outdoor activities. Mask breaks will be provided throughout the day and, when taken indoors, a six feet distance will be maintained whenever possible.
Our children have already demonstrated their adaptability and resilience. They will certainly absorb our response and follow our lead on this. I sincerely thank you in advance for your support with this process. Please, do not hesitate to contact me with any questions and concerns.

Sincerely,
Mary