

Good afternoon Horace Mann Families!

In an effort to keep you updated on the start of the school year, here are some brief notes about our "Ready to Start School" conferences, the WSD mask policy implemented by the Wausau School Board on Monday, a note about when classes begin, and also a clarification about fall sports at HMMS. Two of the announcements were sent to you a week ago - those in red are new items for your attention. All this information and last week's information is available on the HMMS website at <http://horacemann.wausauschools.org/>

As always, if you have any questions, please call the Horace Mann office at 715-261-0725.

### **1. Schedule Pick-Up and Chromebook Distribution - September 1-4**

The week of September 1- 4 will be used to schedule an orientation conference at Horace Mann with a focus on picking up your child's schedule, Chromebook, gathering textbooks and other supplies, and setting up expectations for your child within a virtual learning environment. Please note that we have rescheduled pictures with Lifetouch Photography for later in the school year, so no ID/Yearbook photos will be taken at this orientation.

If you haven't done so already, you can sign up for a time slot at the following web address:

[https://ptcfast.com/schools/Horace\\_Mann\\_Middle\\_School](https://ptcfast.com/schools/Horace_Mann_Middle_School) or please call us at 715-261-0725.

Please Note: While you are asked to sign up for a 5 minute time slot, this is only so that we can maintain some social distancing for those entering the building. Please plan on being in the building for roughly a span of 30-40 minutes to meet with teachers, gather supplies, etc.

### **2. Beginning of School Year - Academic Schedule starts Tuesday, September 8**

Classes are scheduled to begin virtually on **September 8**, which will be a B day. Teachers will be using the itsLearning Planner to communicate assignments and course expectations.

The Wausau School District is preparing to begin the school year in a virtual setting with the goal of minimizing risk and maximizing the delivery of virtual educational content for your child. Teachers are preparing schedules and the structure within this format to provide live and recorded instructional delivery and collaboration with their students. In general, your child will be expected to follow their daily schedule from Monday through Thursday. We will certainly work with students who find it difficult to be online during scheduled times, but we are hoping that by providing this structure for students and staff we can help create some normalcy for everyone. Teachers will be working on Fridays as well, will be available throughout these days for communication, and may provide additional educational opportunities. However, we will not have a class schedule to follow on Friday.

Here is an example schedule for [6th grade](#), [7th grade](#), and [8th grade](#).

### **3. Wausau School District Mask Requirement (effective immediately)**

All staff, students aged 5 and older, and visitors will be required to wear a face covering that covers the nose and mouth at all times while in Wausau School District buildings except during the following activities:

- Face coverings can be removed outside as long as 6 feet of distance is maintained.
- Face coverings may be temporarily removed to eat or drink, but care should be taken to maintain as much space as possible between people, recognizing it is not always feasible to maintain 6 feet of distance from others.
- People who are entering the school building during the day may be required by school staff to briefly remove their face covering for the purposes of checking identification.
- Staff working alone in their offices, classrooms, vehicles, or other job locations who do not have any person-to-person interaction.
- When communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing or has a disability, medical condition, or mental health condition that makes communication with a face covering difficult, provided that social distancing is maintained to the extent possible.

A letter on letterhead will be required from a Physician or Licensed Mental Health Practitioner in order for any staff, student aged 5 and older or visitor to be exempt from wearing a face covering.

The masking requirement will be evaluated each month at the board meeting by the Wausau School Board.

#### **4. Fall Sports Clarification**

While the Wausau School Board did vote to allow high school sports to participate in their scheduled seasons, the Wisconsin Valley Conference made the decision last month to cancel all fall sports at the middle school level. No determination has been made regarding other sports scheduled to be played later in the year at this time. However, it is our intent to offer some after-school virtual activities. If/when students are allowed to return to school during the Fall sports season, we may have some opportunities for intramural programs or in-person training. More information to come.

Thank You,

Dr. Rob Phelps

Principal, Horace Mann Middle School