

# Notes from the Nurse

By Lara Beranek, BSN, RN

Hello Marathon families! It has been awhile since we have all been together, and I am very much looking forward to seeing your children back in the building starting in September. As you know, many changes have been made to the way school will operate. In order to bring everyone back together in a safer manner, we will all need to work together. Each of us has responsibilities to help make in-person school a success.

Each family will be asked to screen their children for symptoms each day prior to sending them to school. Remember, now more than ever, students who are sick must not attend school. If your child has a temperature of 100.0 or higher, chills, cough, muscle or body aches, shortness of breath, headache, loss of taste/smell, sore throat, congestion/runny nose, nausea/vomiting, and/or diarrhea, they need to stay home. I would like to add that if your student has a diagnosed, existing condition that causes those symptoms, then they would be okay to come to school. For example, a student with diagnosed asthma will likely have shortness of breath and cough at times, and a student with IBS may have diarrhea often. Please let the health office or your child's teacher know if your child is having symptoms on any given day.

As you likely know, wearing a face covering is one easy thing we can do to significantly reduce the spread of germs. With the current mandate in place, everyone over the age of 5 will be required to wear a face covering while in the school building. According to the mandate, here is what is an acceptable face covering and what is not.

*“Face covering” means a piece of cloth or other material that is worn to cover the nose and mouth completely. A “face covering” includes but is not limited to a bandana, a cloth face mask, a disposable or paper mask, a neck gaiter, or a religious face covering. A “face covering” **does not include** face shields, mesh masks, masks with holes or openings, or masks with vents.*

The CDC recommends a 2-layer fabric covering, so be sure if you are using a bandana that it is folded over. It should also be tied snugly, so there is not a gap

at the chin. Also, many neck gaiters are a very thin single layer of fabric, and are not ideal. If you choose to use a gaiter, make sure it's a thicker one, or fold it so the mouth and nose are covered with 2 layers.

The Wisconsin Department of Instruction (DPI) has created this helpful resource about wearing face coverings:

[https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sspw/pdf/What Families Need to Know-Cloth Facial Coverings in Schools.pdf](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sspw/pdf/What_Families_Need_to_Know-Cloth_Facial_Coverings_in_Schools.pdf)

As a parent myself, I would recommend that every student has an extra mask or two with them every day. That way they are all set should their face covering end up wet (or worse) from a sneeze or damaged in some way.

Finally, many have asked me what will happen if their child becomes ill or is a close contact with someone who becomes ill from COVID-19. I am including a resource from the DPI about different scenarios. The biggest piece of advice I would give is that you would need to follow the instruction you receive from your local health department and that of your doctor.

[https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sspw/pdf/Returning to School After COVID-19.pdf](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sspw/pdf/Returning_to_School_After_COVID-19.pdf)

This is not going to be a “normal” school year. We will all have to be flexible and willing to do what is needed if we want to make this a success. Let's work together to make that happen, and hope soon COVID-19 will be in the rearview mirror!