



August 20, 2021

Dear ZCA Families,

One of the core beliefs at ZCA is that parents are the chief educators of their children and ZCA is a supplemental tool parents can choose to use in the education of their children. ZCA does not desire to diminish the integral role of parents in the school by dictating a position on the issues of face masks or vaccines.

Below are two paragraphs that pertain to ZCA's stance on these matters. The first is an excerpt from our Parent/Student Handbook that speaks to the principle of parental authority that our policies were derived. The second is a quote from our letter of intent from the ZCA Board of Directors to reopen and be fully operational for the 2020-21 school year. We clearly stated we would not mandate masks, unless mandated of us.

*"We aim to cultivate in our parents a sense of responsibility for the school; to see them well informed about the goals of our classical and Christ-centered approach. We desire them to grow with the school, involved in and excited about the journey. We aim to help them to follow Biblical principles in addressing concerns, to be inclined to hearing both sides of a story before rendering a verdict, and to embrace the Scripture's injunctions to encourage and stir up one another to love and good works." (Page 8 of the Parent-Student Handbook)*

*"As a private Christian school, we cherish the civil and religious liberties afforded to us. Therefore, we will not require our students to wear face masks unless legally mandated. However, we will welcome any students whose parents decide that face masks are the best course of action for them. We will also not limit the interactions between our students and teachers in a way that hinders us from providing a joyful learning atmosphere. We desire to deal with this virus very seriously. We will work hard to ensure that everyone is as safe as possible so that parents can send their children to ZCA with confidence and peace of mind." (Quote from our Letter to ZCA families dated June 17, 2020)*

In the event that Hastings adopts another city-wide mask mandate, it would not apply to us, as our school falls outside of the city limits. The Board of Directors, as well as the administration and staff, respect our families' decisions regarding the educational rights of their children. We have temporary distance learning opportunities available for those parents who are concerned about community spread or have unique family situations. We will gladly work with those families to the best of our ability. We will continue to follow the Nebraska State Administrative Codes and Statutes regarding

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immunizations, and will honor the rights of those who submit the necessary waivers for medical and religious exemptions.

Our policies are not born out of either the pros or cons of masks/vaccines, nor are they a political statement. We encourage thoughtfulness and prayerful consideration from parents on these issues. We respect and honor the conclusion at which each parent arrives. No child is made exactly like another, and who knows their child better than his/her parent?

Sincerely,

The ZCA Board of Directors