

TO: Parents/Guardians/Students/Staff

RE: Required Changes to Operations

FROM: Tracy Lorey, Ph.D.  
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DATE: September 3, 2021

At the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, all Dubois County Schools formulated a data-based approach to school operations that would afford students an in-person learning experience in an environment that provided multiple strategies to mitigate Covid-19 and sought to provide a sense of normalcy to learning and activities. Our plan stemmed from a July 1, 2021 Executive Order from the Governor that afforded local school boards control over school opening plans and mitigation strategies. However, the most recent Executive Order <https://www.in.gov/gov/files/Executive-Order-21-24-Health-Based-Provisions-Continued.pdf> forces districts to comply with the legal authority of the Indiana Department of Health (IC 16-41-2-1) and their control measures <https://www.in.gov/health/erc/files/COVID-19-Control-Measures-under-410-IAC-1.pdf>.

After consultation with legal counsel, we have been advised that we are required to comply. Our failure to do so creates concern for student safety, legal liability and reduced funding. Any of these issues place our school districts in a concerning predicament.

Therefore, beginning Tuesday, September 7, 2021 the following changes will be implemented:

- All students, staff and visitors *in classroom settings and on the bus* will be **required to wear a face covering**. This does not apply to lunch, choir, band or extra-curricular activities.
  - **Individuals who are contact traced WILL NOT quarantine but self-monitor for symptoms when both parties are wearing a mask. THIS WILL KEEP OUR STUDENTS IN SCHOOL AND PREVENT VIRTUAL LEARNING.**
- Exposures in *outdoor settings* during the day do not need to be contact traced or quarantined, i.e. recess, physical education, outdoor learning labs, etc.
- Exposures during *indoor activities where masks cannot be worn*, such as lunch, choir and band will require contact tracing within 6 feet for 15 minutes and quarantine.
- Students exposed to Covid-19 outside of our schools will still be required to comply with quarantine time periods and may return:
  - On day 11 – no testing
  - On day 8 – with a negative Covid test given on day 5, 6, or 7.
  - *Students may continue to learn virtually during this time.*
- Exceptions to quarantine include:
  - a. Proof of vaccination
  - b. Proof of Covid within the last 90 days

We recognize that these changes will result in a wide array of opinion. The current Executive Order is set to expire at 11:59 p.m. on September 30, 2021. It is our hope that at that time, local control will be reinstated and we will be afforded the opportunity to use our internal data to drive our decisions. Ultimately, our priority is the safety of our students, as well as a legal obligation to comply with Indiana statute and the Executive Orders of the Governor.