

Bulldog Families,

With students and staff returning to school, we wanted to update you on where we stand in the fight against the spread of COVID-19 and subsequent variants. We know many of you are concerned about vaccination and mask requirements as well as the quarantine procedures heading into the 2021-22 school year.

As a district, our number one priority remains the health and safety of our students and staff. We are looking to the CDC, Summit County Public Health, the Ohio Department of Education and other entities to provide guidance and statistical updates as the year progresses. At this moment, the only mandate we are required to follow is the federal requirement to wear a mask on all of our district school busses.

As of today, while we are **strongly encouraging masks**, we are **not mandating them** for students or staff in any of our buildings or classrooms. Mask wearing, however, is an effective layer of protection and can result in avoiding quarantine if close contact occurs with a positive person.

To provide the safest environment for learning, we are required to follow the Ohio Department of Health guidelines should a **medically diagnosed** case of COVID-19 occur in our school district. A **“medical diagnosis”** means that *a medical physician has diagnosed an individual with COVID-19 and/or the individual has tested positive for the virus.*

- If an individual is **medically diagnosed**, they are to follow the same quarantine guidelines as last school year and quarantine for 10 days from the date of symptom onset or 10 days from the date of a positive test if asymptomatic.
- If a student or staff member is **a close contact** with a medically diagnosed individual and the contact is **unvaccinated and NOT wearing a mask** they will also follow the quarantine guidelines
- If you are a close contact but **ARE vaccinated or wearing a mask** at all times, then you can remain active in school and extracurricular activities by taking certain precautions as listed in the attached flow chart provided by the Ohio Department of Health.

We want to stress the importance of staying home if you're not feeling well. With the new variants during this pandemic it's important to self-monitor and help keep our schools as safe as possible throughout the year.

Moving forward, we will continue to monitor the situation on a local, regional and national level. We are focused on staying ahead of the curve and avoiding measures that would erase all of the hard work so many of us have taken to get this far.

Families will only be contacted if their child is considered to have been in close contact with a medically diagnosed individual.

We will continue to maintain our extensive cleaning procedures and building-wide safety measures to keep your students in the safest learning environment possible.

We will continue to keep you updated as information becomes available. We thank you for your patience, understanding and continued resiliency! Go Bulldogs!

Superintendent Bratten