

JESUP COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



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September 29, 2020

Dear Jesup Community School Staff, Parents, and Families,

As during this entire COVID-related situation dating back to March 17th, we have always indicated that we must be flexible and willing to pivot quickly as guidance changes often. It has also been a priority of the district to communicate to each of you often and to be as transparent as possible in our decision making. With that being said, we have received new guidance today from the Iowa Department of Public Health and the Iowa Department of Education in regard to face masks, close contacts, and quarantining.

The guidance states, "In collaboration with other State departments, they have decided that if both parties are wearing a "face covering" (this means something to cover the mouth & nose, such as a mask, gaiter, etc. **This DOES NOT include face shields**) will NOT be considered close contact and will NOT be subject to the 14-day quarantine." This is a significant finding and will help us tremendously in allowing as many students and staff as possible to remain in school and at work for in-person teaching and learning. We have had a number of individuals quarantine this school year so far, not because of a positive COVID diagnosis, but rather due to the close contact rule of within 6 feet for 15 or more consecutive minutes. This new guidance provides us an opportunity to minimize the number of individuals in quarantine while continuing to slow the spread of COVID, and in turn allowing us to maintain an in-person school experience for more students and staff.

Therefore **beginning on Wednesday, September 30th, we are asking that all students and staff districtwide begin wearing masks. Face shields alone will no longer be allowed.** Social distancing will continue to be required when possible and the continued operation of our pod system will remain in place. If your child has a specific health issue preventing the wearing of a mask, please contact your building principal, or the school nurse, Missy Walztoni, to discuss what accommodations can be made. We appreciate your assistance and support on this matter.

Thank you and take care,

Nathan