

October 15, 2021

Good Afternoon West Salem Families:

Since we last communicated on mitigation measures on September 22, the District saw cases of COVID-19 initially increase but have since seen a decline in the number of COVID cases throughout our district. This has been wonderful to see, and we appreciate how cooperative our students have been.

We would again like to remind our families that the primary goal of the School District of West Salem is to keep our students in school and all of our programs running successfully, and thus far we have accomplished that. At the same time, we all want to continue to conduct our days in the least restrictive environment when possible. With this, we will be making a couple of adjustments:

- Middle and high school students and staff will be moving to optional masking effective at the end of the day on October 15th. Our team will continue to carefully monitor positive cases and transmission within our buildings. If we need to return to masking, we will do so to keep our students and staff in our buildings for face-to-face learning and to keep our programs up and running. We would like to remind our families that the choice to wear or not to wear a mask is based upon current conditions and personal discretion. Harassment of any type toward mask wearers or non-mask wearers will not be tolerated. As a district, we will honor the choices of our students, staff, and families.
- Masking will continue to be required for elementary students, staff, and visitors. We will closely monitor the elementary school over the weekend and into next week. If we see the case numbers continue to decrease, a message will be sent to elementary families on Thursday, October 21st with an update.

It is still important to remember that due to federal orders, masks continued to be required on all school buses. With masking required on buses for transportation, including field trips and co-curricular activities, please continue to send your child to school each day with a mask. We will also continue to have these available for students, staff, and visitors to our buildings. They may also be useful in close contact or group situations as an extra layer of protection for themselves, their peers, and staff.

We want to thank you for keeping your child(ren) home when they are not feeling well. This has been a tremendous help! Please continue keeping your child(ren) home if they are sick or have symptoms of COVID-19. If they have symptoms of COVID-19, please seek out testing. Your child must stay home until test results are confirmed ([Please see quarantine guidelines and definitions here](#)). This is the best mitigation measure that we all can agree upon. Also, the district is looking into having an optional testing location on-site for the convenience of our families.

Thank you for your help, support, and cooperation!

Ryan G. Rieber
Superintendent

Dr. Nicole Hennessy
District Doctor

Kate Brohmer
District Nurse