



September 28, 2021

Hello MAPS School Community,

At the September 27, 2021 Menominee Area Public Schools Board Meeting, the board of education made the decision to adjust the district's COVID preventive strategies to include **universal masking for all students and staff, grades PreK-12**. This means that all students, staff and visitors during the school day will need to wear a mask when inside district buildings.

This is not a decision that was made easily, but the reality is that since the start of the school year, Menominee Schools have seen a high number of positive cases and close contacts that have resulted in 150 to 250 absences each day. Everyone at Menominee Area Public Schools wants students to attend everyday, and we feel the best way to do this right now is to mask up.

Universal masking allows us to shrink the zone for contact tracing down from within six feet to within three feet. This is going to dramatically decrease the number of students placed into quarantine and reduce the amount of students who are absent each day.

The following are some key points we want to make sure are communicated across the district:

- Masking for all students PreK-12 will begin on **Thursday, September 30, 2021**
- Students out on quarantine prior to Monday October 4th, must finish quarantine under the previous guidelines (*7 days, returning on day 8 with a negative test or stay home for 10 days*)
- Starting on Monday, October 4th, students who are considered a close contact (which is now three feet or less for over 15 non-consecutive minutes) can:
 - Stay in school and agree to test daily for 7 days
 - Stay home for 7 days, returning on day 8 with a negative test, or stay home for 10 days
 - Information for parents interested in testing so their students can remain in school will be shared out soon.
- Per health department guidelines:
 - Students may remove masks during lunch and recess
 - Students are not required to wear masks during athletic competitions or practices
 - Masking is not required, but is recommended, for school sponsored sporting or extracurricular activities at this time
- Masking remains a requirement when using district transportation.
- We will continue to monitor the number of cases and absences within the school and change back to optional masking when the numbers decrease.

We thank you for your continued support and understanding.

Steve Martin
Menominee Area Public Schools
Interim Superintendent