

Board of Directors

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Hello McCleary School District families,

Yesterday, the state Department of Health published updated guidance outlining COVID-19 protocols in public schools. Below we have listed several key topics and the updated state guidance **that goes into effect on Saturday, March 12:**

Face Coverings

- Face coverings will be **optional** in the school and support buildings, and on school buses, with some exceptions.
- Face coverings are **required in school health and isolation rooms**. This requirement is for anyone who enters these school health care settings, regardless of the reason for entering.
- McCleary School will continue to have face masks available at no cost to all students, staff and visitors at the building entrance.
- While face coverings are no longer required universally in schools, the guidance states there may be situations when staff, students and visitors may be temporarily required by state or local health officials to wear masks. This may occur, for example, during a COVID-19 outbreak in a classroom or with a group of students (sports team). If this occurs, the district will communicate directly to families and students required to comply with any additional mitigation practices.
- The guidance specifically addresses the need for everyone — staff, students and visitors — to respect whatever choice others make regarding masking. “Some may need to wear a mask because they or a member of their household is high risk for severe COVID-19 disease,” it states. The guidance goes on to say, “Assumptions regarding someone’s beliefs or health status should neither be made nor commented about. Schools and programs should not tolerate harassment or bullying of any kind.”

COVID-19 Vaccinations

- All employees, contractors and volunteers continue to be **required** to be fully vaccinated.
- At this time, students statewide are not required to be vaccinated for COVID-19.

COVID-19 Testing

- The McCleary School District will continue to provide access to diagnostic testing.

- Note: COVID-19 screening testing of students in high-risk activities (e.g., athletics, performing arts, other extra-curricular activities) is no longer required in the updated state guidance.

COVID-19 Notification of Potential Exposure

- The McCleary School District will continue notifications to staff/students and families.
- There may be instances when local health officials require schools to do contact tracing (e.g., during a COVID-19 outbreak).

What if You Have Symptoms or Test Positive for COVID-19?

- Students, staff and volunteers who have COVID-19 symptoms are **required** to stay home and should get tested and/or see a health care provider. Individuals should follow the return to work/school protocol accordingly.
- Students, staff and volunteers who test positive for COVID-19 are **required** to isolate, regardless of vaccination status. The individual may return to school after 5 full days of isolation if:
 - Their symptoms have improved or they are asymptomatic, AND
 - They are without a fever for the past 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.
 - If returning to school after day 5, the individual must either wear a well-fitted face covering during days 6-10, OR test negative with an antigen or at-home test any day after day 5. If the individual is not able to wear a well-fitted face covering, AND does not test negative, they should continue isolating at home through day 10.

In closing, we will keep you updated on any updates to the protocols and please remember to stay home from school when sick, wash hands frequently, and keep vaccinations up-to-date.

Thank you,



Shannon Ramsey