



Great Falls Public Schools COVID-19 Updates

January 28, 2022

With the latest COVID-19 infections sweeping across our community and in our schools once again due to the Omicron Variant, the District has had to respond differently to the situation. From January 11 through January 17, 2022 GFPS schools were closed amidst soaring infection rates among staff and students. The closure was due to the District's inability to adequately staff classrooms, with so many staff members out ill. Since that time infection rates for staff have subsided some, and schools have remained open, despite higher infection rates among students and across the community. Our commitment is to work hard to keep schools open and students in classrooms with their teachers if at all possible. This reduces the pressure and stress on many stakeholders and it is what is best for students!

Due to the increased rise in COVID-19 positive cases, Students, Staff, Parents and Community members are reminded of a few health and safety practices in our schools:

- Handwashing frequently- "GEL In and GEL Out" of schools, classrooms, offices and restrooms.
- Monitor your personal health and wellbeing- School Nurses will monitor students who are feeling poorly at school, check their temperature and may administer a COVID-19 Rapid test, with parent permission.
- If you are feeling ill and exhibiting symptoms, stay home, get a rapid test and consult with health officials if symptoms persist.
- **All** school personnel are reminded to clean work surfaces regularly. Custodial teams will handle deep cleaning and sanitation/disinfecting as per COVID-19 cleaning protocols.
- Physical distancing of 3-6 feet is recommended where and whenever possible in the school/work setting.
- Wearing of face masks and or shields is highly recommended in all Great Falls Public School buildings, classrooms and offices.
- The Center for Disease Control and Cascade City-County Health Department are now requiring that a COVID-19 positive individual remain isolated at home for a minimum of 5 days. If the infected individual is feeling better by the 6th day they may return to work or school, **IF** they wear a mask/face covering for the remaining 5 days of their infection. If you choose not to wear a mask, you must remain out of school/work for the remaining 5 days of your illness. **Great Falls Public Schools is now requiring that practice as well.**

If you have any further questions about the District's current COVID-19 protocols, please refer to GFPS Board Policy 1905 listed below.