



Superintendent Update - Fall Plans

1 message

Dear DCS Families, Students, and Staff,

We are so excited to see summer activities with our students around our campus, athletics and fall activities ramping up. We are looking forward to having your children in our buildings in person every day starting on Tuesday, September 7th.

Our staff has been working hard over the summer to prepare for the 2021-2022 school year. We are reviewing guidance and recommendations from health experts. In the past few weeks, we've received updated guidance from the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics; we received MDHHS guidance yesterday and met with the Washtenaw County Health Department today. It is important for us, as educators, to consult health professionals in order to keep our students, staff, and families safe while meeting **our goal of having our students in school, in-person, every day this school year**. We will provide a virtual option for those students requesting to work remotely, as we've done for nearly a decade using a combination of Lincoln Learning and Michigan Virtual. DCS teachers will be, for the most part, in buildings with in-person students and we will not be zooming into classrooms.

Masks will be required on all school buses per federal requirements. Further information regarding mask requirements is included below.

Spacing and physical distancing: Mitigation strategy recommendations from MDHHS, CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics, and the local health department have significantly changed from last school year. All mitigation strategies are related to "indoor" activities and no longer require 6' distancing in all areas. Last spring, we aimed for 3' distancing in our classrooms. As a result, we do not intend to plan for 6' spacing for all students at lunches this school year.

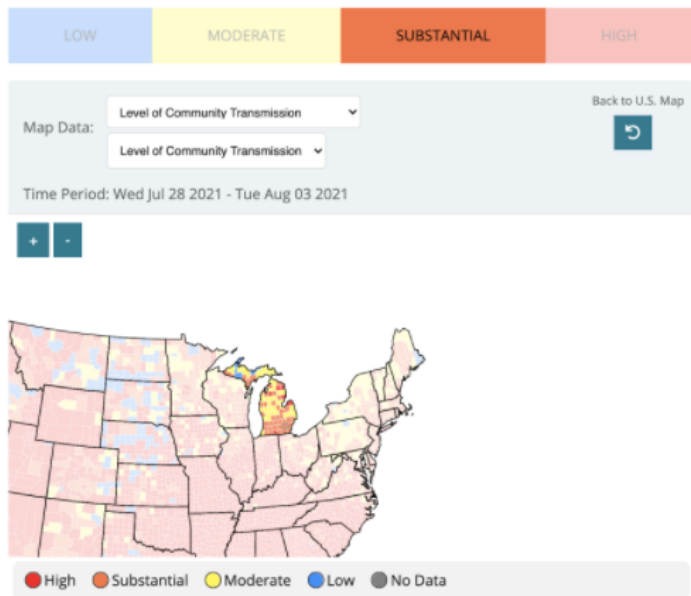
Quarantine Requirements for this Fall: After meeting with the Washtenaw County Health Department, we feel it is important to share this information pertaining to quarantines this school year. Please note that the Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD) has the authority to quarantine students and has been following this same system for outbreaks of other infectious diseases like pertussis or chickenpox. Today, the WCHD shared that with athletics and other student activities, the following quarantine practices will be applied:

- **For outdoor sports** - (masks for athletes are not and **will not** be required to participate). In the case of a "close contact" to a positive COVID-19 case, teammates and opposing teams will not be quarantined as they were last year. Only narrowly defined cases would be quarantined if the students are unvaccinated.
- **For indoor sports** - (masks for athletes are not and **will not** be required to participate). In the case of a "close contact" to a positive COVID-19 case, all unvaccinated teammates will be quarantined for 10 days. Vaccinated teammates will not be quarantined unless symptoms develop.
- ***In short - if our students who participate in athletics and other activities (band, drama, etc) are vaccinated, they will not be quarantined or miss parts of the season or activity. The only exception would be in a case where the vaccinated student tested positive for COVID-19 or was symptomatic.***
- Currently, somewhere between 70%-90% of all residents 16 and older in 48130 are [vaccinated](#).

DreadStrong Summer, Full Day and Extension Camp Dexter - students and staff will be strongly recommended to wear masks for all indoor activities starting on Monday, August 9th.

Plans Regarding Masks for School starting September 7th: Our team is still evaluating the different recommendations from health professionals and will be holding a community input session on **Monday, August 16th (in the evening with time TBD)** to share our plan options and to gain input from our families. The WCHD is sharing information with us that we are hoping will be finalized for the public sometime early next week that ties recommendations to the level of community spread. For example, The CDC has four levels of **community spread** (Low, Moderate, Substantial, and High/ Extensive). Recommendations for masking are being shared with us based on the level of community spread. Washtenaw County was recently at the Moderate level of Spread until yesterday where we moved to Substantial Spread.

Level of Community Transmission in Washtenaw County, Michigan



Our timeline for a final plan is as follows:

- **Monday, August 16th** – Community Input Session (evening; time to be announced next week). The session will be held via zoom so all families can participate.
- **Thursday, August 19th** – Final plans for the September 7th school year start will be shared. Parents may request a full virtual option after the mitigation strategy plans are released so they can make an informed decision.
- **Around August 23rd** – **Class lists, team placements (Mill Creek), and DHS schedules** will be sent via email. We will not be mailing these lists this year due to the tight timeline and delayed postal service.

Thank you for your continued patience and support. We are committed to open and honest communication with our families and thank you for your trust in DCS. Please plan to join us on the evening of Monday, August 16th via Zoom to hear the plan options and to provide input. The time and link to join will be posted on the **district calendar** as soon as plans are finalized.

Take care and Go Dreads!

Sincerely,

Christopher Timmis, EdD

Superintendent