

Dear WSD3 Staff & Families,

El Paso County Public Health (EPCPH) has updated its school guidance to no longer require close contacts (masked or unmasked) to quarantine after exposure at school. A close contact is someone who has been within three feet for more than 15 minutes with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. This guidance aligns with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) guidance.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

1. **Effective December 18, 2021, WSD3 will no longer require close contacts (masked or unmasked) to quarantine after exposure at school so that our COVID-19 protocols aligns with CDPHE and EPCPH latest guidance.** There will continue to be quarantines for household contacts. Isolation is still required for anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 or develops symptoms after exposure.
2. In early September, WSD3 shifted to a mask mandate in order to reduce quarantines to keep students and staff in school. With the new guidance, **we will no longer require students, staff, and visitors to wear masks in schools and offices effective December 18, 2021.** This includes any indoor athletic events and extracurricular activities. The District will still provide masks at each building and encourages those who prefer to wear facial coverings/ masks to do so.
3. Masks will continue to be required on school buses per federal law.

VACCINES

Our goal is to provide a safe learning environment for our students and staff. We realize that the COVID-19 vaccine is one of the most effective strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and reduce quarantines. For a list of places to get the vaccine, please visit [El Paso County Public Health](#).

OTHER PREVENTION

Social distancing and hand washing remain important strategies in reducing the transmission of COVID-19. Operations staff will continue to conduct frequent cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces. In addition to the KN-95 masks, disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizers will continue to be provided to schools and departments.

STAY HOME IF SICK OR EXPOSED AT HOME

We cannot stress enough to students and staff who are sick to please stay home to avoid spreading illness to others. Please notify your school or building.

Thank you,

Kevin Duren
Superintendent

