



FENTON CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

December 28, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We hope you are all enjoying your well-deserved winter break.

We want to provide you with an update on the return to school in January amidst the rise of the Omicron COVID-19 variant. Fenton leadership attended a telephone briefing from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LADPH) led by Dr. Barbara Ferrer this afternoon. Currently, there are no plans to close schools in Los Angeles. In addition, Governor Newsom pledged on Wednesday, December 22, 2021, to keep California schools open. This commitment to keep schools open is held by influential charter and public school leaders, across the state. **Fenton has no plans to transition to distance learning when school resumes in January.**

Yesterday, the CDC recommended shortening the isolation and quarantine period for the general population. Isolation is for individuals that test positive and need to "isolate" from others. Quarantine is for individuals that are close contacts (a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period with an individual with COVID-19). Typically, most Fenton students qualify to be on a modified quarantine. Students on a modified quarantine are close contacts who are asymptomatic and remain at school as long as they are masked and tested twice per week. We are pleased to share that we have not experienced community spread across the Fenton schools.

A couple of things to be aware of in terms of in terms of the CDC announcement. First, this update is for the general population and currently does not apply to the school settings. Second, schools in Los Angeles follow guidelines from LADPH. LADPH can be more restrictive than the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), but cannot be less restrictive.

Based on our telebriefing today from Dr. Ferrer (LADPH), we expect to see a renewed focus in the following three (3) areas as schools reopen in January: **Vaccinations; Testing; Masks**

1. Vaccinations: As of yet, the Fenton Board of Directors has not approved the implementation of the LAUSD vaccine mandate for juveniles as we want to make sure it does not violate a child's education rights. Our legal team is reviewing the LAUSD vaccine mandate. Fenton will continue to follow all legal public health guidelines and laws to ensure the safety of our students and staff. We encourage all of our students to receive the COVID-19 Vaccine. Fenton held Vaccination Clinics at Fenton Primary Center and the Fenton Academies during the month of December. The Fenton Academies will host another Vaccination Clinic on Wednesday, January 5, 2022. Fenton Primary Center will hold another Vaccination on Saturday, January 8, 2022.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends everyone ages 5 years and older receive a COVID-19 vaccine to help protect against COVID-19. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for emergency use of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine for the prevention of COVID-19 for children ages 5-11.

If your child has not received the COVID-19 vaccination, we encourage you to have them receive the COVID-19 vaccine over the Winter Break. As of December 8, 2021, 4.9 million US children ages 5-11 have safely received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Booster shots appear to be the best defense against the Omicron variant of COVID-19. All adults 18 years and over should receive the COVID-19 vaccine and receive the booster shot. You are eligible to receive the Booster at least 6 months after being fully vaccinated. Some people may prefer the vaccine type that they originally received, and others may prefer to get a different booster. CDC's recommendations now allow for this type of mix and match dosing for booster shots.

2. Testing Regularly: You will see a great deal of emphasis on COVID-19 testing from the federal, state, and local level. The Fenton schools are fortunate to have a strong regiment for weekly COVID-19 testing. With testing taking place twice a week, Fenton will test anyone that is considered to be a close contact regardless of their vaccination status as soon as their status has been identified. Please Note: Individuals that recently tested positive are not required to test within 90 days as the results may still show up as positive in their system.

3. Masks (Medical Grade): All staff and students should wear a surgical/medical grade mask. You will likely see LADPH change their stance on cloth masks. Cloth masks should only be worn over a surgical/medical mask. The blue, black, and lavender masks Fenton has provided are acceptable. You may also wear N95 masks as well. One sign that a mask is not a real surgical mask is if you put a drop of water on the front of the mask and it soaks into the mask instead of forming beads on the surface. Cloth masks and non-surgical masks will absorb the water. See the link from LADPH on appropriate masks. LADPH will likely require the use of masks outdoors as well as indoors at all schools.

We know many of you may be alarmed by the increase in COVID-19 cases locally and across the globe. We want you to know that transmission of COVID-19 schools is actually very low. Schools tend to have much better ventilation and safety protocols compared to places where people live and/or congregate with others. Please see the Science Release from CDC on December 17, 2021. Although outbreaks in schools can occur, multiple studies have shown that transmission within school settings is typically lower than – or at least similar to – levels of community transmission, when prevention strategies are in place in schools. As of the date of this letter, the Fenton schools have not experienced community spread of COVID-19 at any of our schools. Please visit our website with more information about our COVID-19 safety protocols.

We look forward to seeing you all again in January and wish you a restful remainder of your winter break. Happy New Year!

Sincerely,



David Riddick, Ed.D.
Chief Executive Officer



Jason Gonzalez
Chief Operating Officer