



Community Schools

January 1, 2022

Dear Gull Lake Families,

Gull Lake Community Schools (GLCS) has been carefully tracking the trend line of Covid cases since the start of the school year. Local case numbers continue to increase significantly, including breakthrough cases for those that have been fully vaccinated including a third booster dose.

- Positive cases at GLCS have nearly tripled from the first two months of school and our daily positive test percentage has gone from 10% to over 20% for the two months leading up to break. This trend line is projected to continue in the coming weeks.
- Our health care providers have reported that available spaces to treat children and adults are full to capacity and that this trend is expected to continue for several weeks.
- With additional breakthrough infections the availability of substitute and support staff has become more limited.
- Additional information from State Superintendent, Dr. Michael Rice ([December 30th Memo](#)).
- We have prioritized in-person learning for our students and want to protect our ability to continue to offer in-person learning consistently moving forward.

With these points in mind, the District is adapting to require indoor masking for the month of January during the regular school day for all students and staff Y5 -12th grade. This protocol will be reviewed at the end of January based on the factors listed above. We understand that this decision will be difficult news for many, and our goal is to return to a masks optional protocol at the earliest time possible given our factors and circumstances.

Another important update involves how the District will address close contacts and quarantine recommendations in the days ahead.

- The indoor masking will eliminate quarantines for students in the 3 to 6-foot distance from a positive case, with lunch period exception due to students being unmasked.
- Test to Stay option implemented prior to the Holidays will continue.

As always, students who are sick need to stay home and recuperate before returning to school. Our top priority is to continue to deliver safe in-person instruction on a daily basis in order to support all of our students, staff, families, and stakeholders.

Thank you for your patience and understanding,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Raphael Rittenhouse'.

Raphael Rittenhouse/Superintendent
Gull Lake Community Schools