



Community Schools

Dear Gull Lake Families,

The Kalamazoo County Health and Community Services Department recently updated their guidelines regarding quarantines for COVID-19 close contacts. The Health Department recognizes that the Omicron variant, which represents 95% of our local cases, behaves differently from the Delta version and has updated their recommendations. Gull Lake Community Schools continues to observe their guidance while navigating the continually changing landscape around this issue.

Students or staff who have *tested positive* will still need to isolate for the recommended period of time. Additionally, any close contacts outside of school, particularly in the home will need to quarantine for the recommended time period. Gull Lake community schools will continue to follow the most up to date guidance on quarantine and isolation time periods.

Due to the continuing GLCS mask protocol we are able to contact trace in a way that significantly lowers the number of students that are required to quarantine. Additionally, GLCS has determined that very few close contacts from settings where both the positive and close contact is masked result in COVID-19 spread. With this information, GLCS will narrow the contact tracing to only settings where both the positive and close contacts are unmasked (lunch and snack).

If your student is not considered a lunch/snack close contact your student will not need to quarantine, however, Nurse Megan will be sending emails to parents and guardians of students who were in the same classroom of any positive cases, and which dates the positive would have been considered infectious. We ask that you use this information to take into consideration any symptoms that your student may have developed, no matter how minor, and consider having them tested. As always, students who are ill need to recuperate at home and be symptom free for 24 hours. Finally, due to the changes that we are seeing with the Omicron variant we will be updating our sick policy. Please see the attached Nurses Notes for information on this and further information on the above changes. ([See Nurse Notes](#))

GLCS operates a testing site, which until now has been predominantly used for those students who are close contacts in the school setting for the *Test to Stay* Program. To date, this program has accounted for thousands of additional in-person school days for students identified as close contacts. We acknowledge that there is a need for easily accessible testing and are now opening our testing center to any students or staff who wish to test, in addition to the *Test to Stay* Program.

Thank you for your participation and diligence as we exercise these updated health and safety protocols together.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Raphael Rittenhouse'.

Raphael Rittenhouse/Superintendent
Gull Lake Community Schools