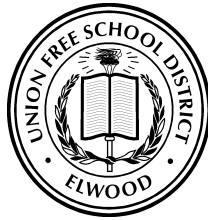


Elwood Union Free School District
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Kenneth R. Bossert, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

August 23, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians/Community Members,

As has been widely reported within the media, all public schools in New York State received guidance documents from the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) yesterday regarding COVID-19 management for the 2022-23 school year. The guidance document and the associated FAQ have been placed on the district website under the COVID-19 tab for your convenience.

With very few exceptions, I am extremely pleased to report that all Elwood School District buildings will be returning to pre-pandemic policies, practices and expectations. After experiencing three school years disrupted by COVID-19, I want to thank you on behalf of the entire administration and Board of Education for your continued support, patience, understanding and flexibility as we made the numerous accommodations to comply with state requirements in order to keep everyone safe.

The 2022-23 school year will demonstrate a shift back to pre-pandemic expectations for all students, faculty and staff. While we will remain conscientious in our cleaning protocols, there will be no distancing, masking, or other COVID-19 modifications to our program. We ask all families to stay diligent in keeping symptomatic (formerly known as “sick”) students at home until they are asymptomatic (formerly known as “healthy”). There is no COVID-19 vaccine requirement. There is no “test to stay” or any testing requirement. Home testing kits are still available in every building’s health office for those who would like to pick one up.

Faculty and staff members will work with our families, as in the past, to assist students in staying connected with what is happening in the classroom and to make up assignments that are missed during absences. As in pre-pandemic years, home instruction will only be made available for extended absences with medical documentation. Hybrid instruction will not continue during the 2022-23 school year. No longer will there be a live-streaming option within the classroom as we place our focus on maximizing the effectiveness of in-person learning.

Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 should continue to isolate for five days. The NYS DOH continues to recommend masking upon return to school for an additional five day period (after symptoms subside.) There is no recommendation for quarantine after exposure, contact tracing or case reporting. Due to this modification, there will be no reporting portal, COVID-19 dashboard or any COVID-19 data shared with New York State (as we have been obligated to report during the prior two school years.) As in the past, please continue to share absences and illnesses, of all kinds, with your building’s health (and attendance as appropriate) offices. The attendance policy will be implemented as written during the 2022-23 school year.

Rest assured that we join you in understanding that COVID-19 continues to be a threat and a sharp rise in the infection rate may bring changes to protocols and practices. We hope that will not be the case and that all members of our school community will stay healthy and safe. Should you have any questions or unique concerns about your child, please do not hesitate to contact your school nurse, your child's teacher, the building principal, or a member of the district office team.

We look forward to a safe, healthy, productive and outstanding 2022-23 school year for all.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "K.R. Bossert, Ed.D.".

Kenneth R. Bossert, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools