



Dear School District of Washington

We are emailing our staff and families to provide an update regarding the School District's Safe Return to School Plan.

During a special meeting on Friday morning, December 10, the Board of Education voted in favor of modifying the District's existing close contact protocol to align with a court ruling which was determined on November 22 in Cole County, Missouri.

Additionally, Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt sent a letter to Missouri public school districts on December 7 regarding the court ruling, interpreting the court's judgment to mean that schools in Missouri should no longer institute mask mandates or quarantine COVID-19 close contacts.

The School District of Washington has received guidance from our legal counsel that indicates school boards retain the authority to institute COVID mitigation measures.

During the special meeting on December 10, the Board voted that the School District of Washington will no longer require exclusion from in-person learning for students and staff who are deemed a close contact to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. The following updated procedures will go into effect on Monday, December 13.

- A COVID-19 positive staff or student may return after 10 days since symptoms first appeared; *and* 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications *and* COVID symptoms are improving. (This is a current practice)
- The District will use an updated Nurses Algorithm for symptomatic individuals.
- Close contacts to a COVID-19 positive individual will not result in exclusion from in-person learning. (This is a new practice)
- Communication with parents and staff regarding close contacts to a COVID-19 positive individual will continue. (This is a current practice)

- The District will continue to provide testing for symptomatic staff and students with parental consent.

Students and staff who are COVID-19 close contacts may choose to voluntarily exclude themselves from in-person learning. There will be no penalty for those absences. E-Learning remains an option. Students and staff are welcome to wear masks, and the district will provide masks upon request.

Masking on district buses will continue to be required of students and drivers so long as the federal mandate remains in place.

The School District of Washington encourages our district families to monitor for symptoms for 14 days following an exposure to COVID-19. If your child begins to show symptoms of COVID-19, please do not send them to school and contact your healthcare provider immediately.

The School District of Washington's Board of Education and District administration will continue to review our Safe Return to School Plan monthly to ensure our mitigation protocols are effective at keeping staff members and students safe in accordance with our policies.

As always, it continues to be our goal to keep as many students learning in-person as possible. We appreciate your support and understanding, and we will communicate updated information when it becomes available.