



August 20, 2021

Dear Comstock Park Families,

We are excited to welcome our students back as the final few days of summer come to an end! The past few days have been refreshing as we are reminded of why we do what we do as educators. Taking care of your children and building relationships with them is our primary goal this year and beyond. We again cannot begin to thank you enough for your patience, understanding, and support as we continue to navigate the challenges of COVID-19. As a district and as a community, I believe we all share the same desire to have all kids attend school in-person.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to cause disruptions to our goal of returning to “normal” as a school and community. This week, the Kent County Health Department (KCHD) issued their strongest warning about the increased cases of COVID-19 and the urgent need for more people to become vaccinated and wear masks. **Today, the KCHD has now mandated masks for all students and staff in grades RK-6.**

Within this document we have provided you with information regarding where we currently stand and what we are currently doing to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on our school. We ask for your continued support as we try to navigate this ever-changing environment.

Masking

Will masks be required in school buildings for the 2021-2022 school year?

- **Masking is required for all students and staff in grades RK-6 while indoors.**
- Masking for grades 7-12 is highly encouraged and strongly recommended and can substantially reduce the impact of contact tracing moving forward.
- Exemptions to this requirement are for medical reasons only (parents must contact their building principal).
- Masking is **required** for all students and staff on public transportations, school buses, field trips, etc.

Will masks be required on buses for the 2021-2022 school year?

At this time there is a current CDC order requiring all persons – regardless of vaccination status – to wear masks on public transportation, including school buses. Comstock Park Public School’s stance is that we will follow Federal, State, or County mandates or orders regarding COVID-19. Masking on buses will be required as long as the mandate is in place.

2021-2022 COVID-19 Response Plan

Comstock Park Public Schools is releasing this document to communicate COVID-19 protocols for the 2021-2022 school year. This document is subject to change with future orders or mandates from Federal, State or County institutions. The Board of Education remains committed to monitoring and responding to local data and making operational decisions in consultation with the Kent County Health Department. The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent, in consultation with the Board President, to make urgent decisions adjusting this plan in response to local COVID-19 data and KCHD recommendations specific to Comstock Park Public Schools.

Mitigation Strategies

What mitigation strategies are schools implementing?

- Bathroom visits will be limited as needed.
- Desks will be regularly sanitized with a safe disinfectant spray.
- Busses will be regularly sanitized.

- Classrooms will utilize distancing strategies to minimize contact tracing impacts.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided and students encouraged to regularly sanitize/wash hands.
- Lunchrooms will be sanitized between lunches, multiple spaces will be utilized in the secondary settings, and seating options will be strategically spaced to encourage social distancing.
- Directional arrows, spacing, and travel will be utilized in all K-5 buildings.
- Secondary locker use will be restricted to before school, and before and after lunch for grades 9-12 and lockers will not be used in grades 6-8.
- Seating charts will be maintained throughout all buildings to expedite contact tracing.
- Secondary hallway passes will be monitored through a sign in/out process to assure we are able to track usage and possible contact tracing.
- Secondary schools will release by grade level to reduce hallway congestion and the number of students in hallways at once.

What additional measures may be taken throughout the school year?

Additional strategies may be implemented throughout the school year based on our local data. These strategies would focus on increased social distancing and cohort strategies aimed at any and all large group settings such as; lunches, recess, class meetings, passing times, etc.

How will CPPS respond if/when future orders are issued?

CPPS will follow all orders and laws implemented by the Kent County Health Department, State, and Federal Government.

Distancing

Will any physical distancing requirements exist?

Comstock Park Public Schools will encourage students and staff to maintain social distance as much as possible to limit the need for quarantining due to exposure.

Vaccination

Will COVID-19 vaccination be required to attend school?

No, the COVID-19 vaccine is not on the list of required vaccines for Michigan students.

Quarantine and Close Contacts

Will quarantines still be required upon close contact with a positive case?

All quarantines, due to COVID-19, will continue to be issued through the Kent County Health Department. KCHD will continue to issue quarantines as they would for other communicable diseases based on the incubation/contagious period of the disease. Comstock Park Public Schools will assist with identifying students who were in close contact with a positive case per public health code. Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of the positive case for a combined 15 minutes over a 24-hour period. Students/Staff who are fully vaccinated will NOT be subject to quarantine as long as they remain symptom free based on current Kent County Health Department Guidance. Those within the 3-6 foot range may be eligible for a modified quarantine based on the circumstances.

Current Guidance from KCHD as of 8/20/21:

It is worth noting the Kent County Health Department (KCHD) has revised protocols for determining school-related quarantines for individuals identified as a close contact (defined as within 6 feet of a positive case for 15+ minutes) to a positive COVID-19 case.

These protocols for close contacts include the following key details:

- Unvaccinated students who are not wearing a mask will be issued a 10-day quarantine from the KCHD.
- Unvaccinated students in settings where masks are worn will not have to quarantine from school.
- Fully vaccinated students will not have to quarantine from school and can participate in sports and extracurricular activities, but must adhere to masking, social distancing, and avoidance of gatherings outside of school strictly for 10 days after last exposure.

Vaccinated students/staff who have symptoms will be required to stay home but can return when symptom free.

COVID positive individuals will need to isolate for 10 days from symptom onset or positive test date and be symptom free in order to return to school.

Will entire classes or schools be quarantined if there is an outbreak?

Schools will remain open unless ordered to close by the Kent County Health Department. While the health department values having students in school, it is possible that closures or full classroom quarantines could be issued depending on the size of an outbreak and the vaccination status of those affected. As with all communicable diseases, our school has a legal obligation to cooperate with public health investigations including assisting with identifying contacts of a positive case.

Will an entire athletic team be quarantined if there is a positive case on the team?

All quarantines, due to COVID-19, will continue to be issued through the Kent County Health Department. The number of quarantines that occur will be based on the case investigation.

Who will notify parents if their child has been identified as a close contact of a COVID positive case?

The school is responsible for assisting the Kent County Health Department with identifying and reporting any students and staff members that may have been exposed to any communicable disease. All quarantines are issued through the health department, but the school will continue to attempt to communicate to families if their child has been identified as a close contact. We want to make sure that parents receive this information as early as possible.

Testing

Will students need to be tested for COVID-19 to participate in sports or other activities?

No. At this time, there are no requirements to test students for COVID-19.

Daily Health Screening and Illness in School

Do I still need to health screen my student(s) before sending them to school?

Although the KCHD will not send a daily health screener, we ask that all parents screen their child for symptoms each day before going to school. Symptomatic students must be kept home. Keeping sick students home is our most powerful strategy to keep COVID-19 out of our school. At this time individual schools will not require screeners.

Cleaning

Will CPPS continue with the enhanced cleaning routine?

Comstock Park Public Schools will continue to clean high touch surfaces frequently. Buses will continue to be sanitized after each trip.

Ventilation

We will continue to increase ventilation within buildings as has been practiced throughout the pandemic.

Reporting and Public Notices

Will CPPS still issue notifications for positive COVID-19 cases in school?

Yes, we will continue to report when positive cases have been identified on campus. This information can be found on the CPPS website.

Capacity Limits

Will attendance at activities be restricted to limit the size of gatherings?

We have worked very hard to reduce class size limits for the 2021-2022 school year and beyond. Through the negotiation process we were able to reduce class size limits for all grades K-6. At this time, there are no capacity limits on gatherings or events.

Visitors

Are visitors allowed in the school?

Because the number of cases of COVID-19 are currently high in our community, we will not allow visitors beyond conducting business in the school offices. Any meetings must be pre-scheduled

through the specific building office. We will reassess allowing visitors into the building the third week of September.

We recognize that this decision will not satisfy everyone, but we are seeking to balance the education and safety needs of our children. Unfortunately, this issue is one that generates a great deal of division and there are those who feel very passionate on all sides. We continue to count on experts to make these decisions as we move forward. We are all frustrated that this is impacting another school year. However, if we take these small steps now and decrease the spread of COVID-19, we can celebrate a great school year and keep students safe and healthy. Thank you once again for your understanding and patience as we start the new school year. We appreciate you willing to allow us to focus on educating your children.

We are looking forward to having students in the building on Tuesday, August 24!

Sincerely,

David Washburn

Superintendent