**School COVID-19 Guidance Family Letter – August 2022**

Dear Parents and Families,

I am writing to share new information from the State Department of Health about COVID-19 health and safety guidance for schools this fall.

Washington state updated its [COVID-19 school and child care guidance](https://doh.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-03/821-165-K12SchoolsChildCare.pdf) on August 5, 2022. Following these safety measures reduces the spread of COVID-19. This letter explains how the updated guidance impacts your family and the community.

**Health and Safety Requirements for this Fall:**

* Students and [staff who show symptoms of COVID-19 are required to stay home, and](https://doh.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-03/820-229-SymptomExposureFlowchartK12SchoolsChildCare.pdf) should get tested for COVID-19.
* Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 are required to isolate at home for **5 days**. If symptoms improve and they have had no fever for the past 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications, students and staff can come back to school and are encouraged to test before returning.
* Students and staff returning to school after isolation should wear a well-fitted mask from days 6 to 10. Individuals returning to school from isolation should also remain masked for sports and other extracurricular activities.
* Students and staff who test positive after 5 days of isolation must stay at home for the full 10-day isolation period.
* Schools must inform students, families, and staff when there are cases or outbreaks in school. Schools are no longer required to directly notify high risk students or staff. Our school will continue to notify high risk students and their families of exposure. We will communicate cases and outbreaks to families directly via phone or email.

These requirements are in place for all public and private K-12 schools and child care facilities in Washington state. Schools and child care facilities are required by state law to follow these guidelines.

To reduce the spread of COVID-19,free COVID-19 is available at Klickitat County Health Department. Additionally, our Klickitat school has the ability to offer free COVID-19 testing for staff and students at school. You can get more information or schedule access to these tests by calling the front office 509-369-4154.

Households are encouraged to test as needed at home. In Washington state, you can receive free self-tests from the [Say Yes! COVID Test program](https://sayyescovidhometest.org/). Most insurance covers the costs of up to 8 self-tests per individual per month.

[COVID-19 vaccinations](https://doh.wa.gov/emergencies/covid-19/vaccine-information) remain the best protection for everyone against hospitalization and severe disease from COVID-19. The COVID-19 vaccine is now [available for children 6 months and older](https://doh.wa.gov/emergencies/covid-19/vaccine-information/vaccinating-youth). Booster doses are also available for children 5 years and older. You are encouraged to vaccinate your children if they are eligible, in consultation with your health care provider.

Please contact the school office for help or more information. We look forward to creating safe and healthy spaces for our students when they return this fall.

Sincerely,

Kendrick Lester

Superintendent

Klickitat School District #402