



(sent 12/17/21)

LPS Families,

As we come down the final stretch of the first semester in LPS, I want to again thank you for the patience, grace, and flexibility you have continued to show throughout the pandemic. In recent weeks, we have shared that we are committed to providing an update as we prepare for the second semester, which resumes for our students on Thursday, January 6, 2022. Today, I want to share several important pieces of information regarding the planned changes to our *Return to Learn Plan*.

In recent months, we have been committed to following the Kansas City, Missouri, mask requirement in place for schools since several of our schools reside in Kansas City, MO. Based on the most recent information we have received, this Ordinance is expected to expire on January 1, 2022. **In anticipation of the changes to the KCMO Ordinance, LPS is making preparations to revise our protocols such that masks will be recommended beginning January 3, 2022, when a portion of our staff returns from the holiday break.** *Due to the federal mandate that remains in place, masks will continue to be required on our school buses until further notice.* In addition, Clay County Public Health Center (CCPHC) has recently revised its school guidance language pertaining to contact tracing (such that it will no longer be mandatory for districts to self-quarantine potentially exposed staff and students) but will retain language recommending masks be worn in schools. In light of this change in guidance, the District will conclude conducting in-district contact tracing beginning January 6, 2022, and will therefore cease identifying or requiring any close contacts to self-quarantine (provided they are not COVID-19 positive or exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms). These changes will be presented to the Board of Education next week for formal consideration as an addendum to our *Return to Learn Plan*.

An important factor that assisted us in our decision-making is that, earlier this fall, the FDA and CDC finalized approval for children ages 5-11 to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Accordingly, the vaccine has now been made available for several weeks for all K-12 students who are interested in receiving it. All students and staff in LPS choosing to receive the vaccine will have had the opportunity to be fully vaccinated by the time classes resume in January. Vaccine opportunities continue to be readily available for anyone interested in our community, with several clinics scheduled in the coming days. For more information, [click here](#).

We recognize that we have seen an increase in COVID-19 cases in recent weeks, which was expected following the recent Thanksgiving holiday. Please know that we remain committed to staying in close contact with our local public health officials and understand future revisions to our plan may be necessary. In addition, if changes to our *Return to Learn Plan* would potentially cause your child(ren) to change learning modes for the second semester, you will need to notify your child's home building by Wednesday, January 5, 2022.

In closing, I cannot emphasize enough how challenging this semester has been for our staff. Words cannot express our gratitude for the efforts put forth by our entire team to navigate this semester. We should all be proud of the way our community has handled this unique period of time. It is my hope we can now focus on finishing these last few days of the semester on a strong note and be able to unwind and refresh during the upcoming holiday break.

Thanks for your attention, have a great weekend, and be well!

Dr. M. Jeremy Tucker
Superintendent - Liberty Public Schools

