



Excellence



Commitment



PRIDE



Success

Eau Claire Public Schools ~ 6190 West Main Street ~ Eau Claire, Michigan ~ 49111

September 1, 2021

Dear Friends and Families of Eau Claire Public Schools,

Well, we are halfway through what has been an incredible start to 2021-2022. On behalf of the ECPS administration team, I can say we have loved watching our buildings come to life with the energy and excitement that our staff and students bring each day. If the first few days are an indication of what to expect, we are in store for a wonderful school year!

The purpose of this update is to notify you that due to the rise of COVID cases locally and across the state, the Berrien County Health Department has issued a Public Health Order for universal masking in grades Pre-K through 12, regardless of vaccination status. The order will be effective beginning **Monday, September 6, 2021**. The order is inclusive of all staff, students, guests, etc., who are inside a building or structure that belongs to Eau Claire Public Schools, regardless of vaccination status.

The order in full is attached for you [here](#). We have also included the following support documents should they be helpful to you:

- [Why a Public Health Order for Masking, extended content \(summary points and data\)](#)
- [FAQ on Public Health Order](#)
- [Research on Benefits of Masking](#)

*You will find many of these resources, as well as the press release on the BCHD Website [HERE](#).

This order requires that:

1. Educational Institutions ensure that **children** in pre-kindergarten (pre-K) through grade twelve (12), **regardless of vaccination status**, consistently and properly wear a face mask covering both nose and mouth while **inside** any enclosed building or structure of the institution. **This includes student-athletes**. Students may remove their masks while outdoors.
2. Educational Institutions ensure that **all persons**, regardless of vaccination status, providing service to any child in pre-kindergarten through grade 12, properly and consistently wear a face mask while inside any enclosed building or **structure** of the institution.

The Order will remain in effect until the county transmission levels have stabilized in moderate or low categories for a period of 21 consecutive days and no increases in hospitalizations or deaths have been observed during that same period of time. **Once the mandate is lifted, Eau Claire Public Schools will shift back to "strongly recommended"**.

While I know many of you are disappointed by the Health Department's decision, we also know that you are committed to ensuring your child receives a high-quality education in a warm and engaging learning environment. That was evident last school year when our families did a tremendous job following the safety protocols that were implemented to protect our school community.

Your continuous diligence in monitoring symptoms, adjusting to safety protocols, and staying flexible does not go unnoticed. Your cooperation as we look to continue providing a learning environment where each student can thrive is most valued. Our goal is to have another school year of minimal disruption and allow our students to learn in person, which is essential to their success. That is dependent on providing a safe learning environment.

While we will continue to evaluate the data associated with COVID-19 and implement mitigation strategies as needed to slow the spread of COVID-19 per our Return to Learn Plan, at this time, we will not be implementing any additional mitigation strategies which mean parents may still visit classrooms and volunteer. In addition, there will not be any crowd restrictions at indoor events except that all persons inside our buildings will have to wear a proper face covering. We appreciate your willingness to comply with the mandate and the ECPS Return to Learn Plan.

One last reminder: there is no school on Friday, September 3, and Monday, September 6, 2021, in observance of the Labor Day holiday.

As always, if you have any questions about the Order, please contact your child's building principal.

Go BEAVERS!

Ann =)

Ann Marie Cluff
Superintendent
Eau Claire Public Schools

Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Sick Students:

If your child is sick, PLEASE DO NOT SEND THEM TO SCHOOL
If they come to school and are sick, you must pick them up from school.

*Based on written guidance from local, state, and federal health officials, in order for a student to return to school after experiencing one or more of the above symptoms a **parent/guardian must provide** either a negative COVID-19 test result or a doctor's note releasing the student to attend school.

- **If they do not provide a negative COVID-19 test result or doctor's note, then** the student will be excluded from Eau Claire Public Schools for ten (10) days from the first day they had symptoms.
- They must also be fever-free for 24 hours and/or their symptoms have improved **after** the ten (10) day exclusion period before they can return.

Virtual Learning Option



The Eau Claire Public Schools, in collaboration with the Berrien RESA, are offering a virtual option this year for students and families who wish to remain remote learners.

The option will involve students completing coursework virtually in classes coordinated by the Berrien RESA, classes that are similar in nature to the classes that a student would be taking, were they attending the district in a face-to-face format.

Students will be assigned an Eau Claire Public Schools mentor teacher and will work with that teacher, and with their virtual instructors, to complete coursework. Decisions on approving students for this virtual option will be made on a case-by-case basis, so that student success can be maximized for students who will flourish in this kind of setting.

If you are interested in this option, please contact the following:

- *6th-12th Grade Students Contact: Jonathan Schultz, jschultz@eauclaireps.com*
- *K-5th Grade Students Contact: Tim Keathley, tkeathley@eauclaireps.com*