



February 8, 2021

Prairie Hawk Families and Staff:

We have received some questions related to the Governor's announcement this past Friday to scale back COVID-19 restrictions in the state. Specifically, eliminating gathering restrictions and rescinding state mask mandates.

This announcement will cause no change to our mitigation plans and efforts in the College Community School District. Our mitigation strategies, including masking, were set prior to many of the recently rescinded restrictions. It has been our goal to offer full onsite instruction since the start of the year. Our mitigation strategies, including masking and gathering restrictions at events, have been instrumental in meeting this goal and will continue to be as we maintain full onsite instruction for PK-12 students. Therefore, **face masks are still required in all schools at all times, including on school buses. Mitigation strategies for athletics / activities will remain the same also.**

In addition to respecting and supporting students, staff, players and performers in their goal to stay in school and/or complete their seasons, the following points are important to share in this decision:

- 1.) Masking remains a key CDC mitigation strategy, especially when distancing is not possible.
- 2.) Masking and our gathering limits at events has been a key strategy to return to onsite instruction and remains a key strategy for staying in full onsite instruction.
- 3.) The preponderance of scientific evidence still points to masking being a key behavior to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
- 4.) Our mitigation strategies for masking were in place in advance of any proclamation for masking at the state level.
- 5.) The vast majority of school personnel in Linn County have not been vaccinated and vaccination beyond established priority groups has not started. In order to be effective, individuals need both doses before being considered vaccinated; therefore, we are still weeks away from vaccination being a scalable mitigation strategy for keeping schools open.

We have been overwhelmed with the support we have received from students and families in adhering to mitigation measures, especially masking. We have seen our students, families and staff do everything it takes to ensure educational access to students. Thank you for supporting our students and the College Community Schools.

In Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Wheeler".

Doug Wheeler