



BRANDEN ROEDER
SUPERINTENDENT

Rising Sun ~ Ohio County Community Schools

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January 5, 2021

Dear Families,

I am writing this letter to explain the new quarantine guidelines that our district will implement beginning on January 6, 2021. The Rising Sun-Ohio County School Board, administrators, school nurse, and Ohio County Health Director have been continuously reviewing data regarding COVID-19 cases. Our data suggests that we have quarantined 1,026 students (this number includes students quarantined more than once) due to 33 total student positive cases. Our COVID-19 positive rate represents under 4% of our student population. Ohio County's positive rate is roughly 7% nearly double the school's rate. Additionally, less than 1% (0.19%) of the quarantined students became COVID positive. Therefore, we believe that being at school did not increase the transmission of COVID for our students.

The state of Ohio modified their quarantine rules on December 20, 2020, stating "children who were close contacts and appropriately masked had rates of COVID-19 that were similar to children with no known COVID-19 exposure in school." The study also stated, "the COVID-19 rate in the comparison group suggests community transmission occurred outside the school setting."

Therefore, in conjunction with all entities listed above, students and staff will no longer have to quarantine for close contact during the supervised and structured academic day provided face coverings are properly worn (covering both the nose and mouth). This change does not apply to extracurricular activities as these are often unmasked and fluid.

We will continue to contact trace and notify parents when your child has been exposed to a person that is COVID positive. Guardians may choose to self-quarantine their child but are no longer required. The phone call from the school will provide the guardian with the appropriate information to monitor their child for symptoms.

Extracurricular Activities

If a student is deemed a close contact, he/she may continue to attend the academic day and attend practice (masked). Unfortunately, he/she may not participate in practices or games until their quarantine period is over. This rule is in place due to the fact that most extracurricular activities are unmasked.

Close contacts will need to quarantine under the following situations:

1. If exposed to a COVID-19 positive outside the structured academic day.
2. If the person begins experiencing symptoms.
3. If masks are not appropriately worn during the school day.

I understand that not everyone will agree with these new guidelines. We are making these decisions based on our COVID-19 data and the fact that students do better academically, socially, and emotionally while at school. We will continue to monitor our data, and if the trend changes, we may need to implement our former policy.

Sincerely,

Branden Roeder, Superintendent