

January 3, 2022

Dear HSD2 Employees and Families,

El Paso County Public Health (EPCPH) has updated its school guidance to no longer require close contacts (masked or unmasked) to quarantine after COVID-19 exposure at school. A close contact is someone who has been within three feet for more than 15 minutes with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. This guidance aligns with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) guidance.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

1. **Effective January 4, 2022, HSD2 will no longer require close contacts (masked or unmasked) to quarantine after exposure at school so that our COVID-19 protocols align with CDPHE and EPCPH latest guidance.** Household contacts should still quarantine. Isolation is still required for anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 or develops symptoms after exposure.
2. El Paso County Public Health (EPCPH) updated their guidance to match new recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) regarding COVID-19 isolation and quarantine for [the general population](#). **The updated guidance shortens the recommended time for isolation from 10 days for people with COVID-19 to five days, if asymptomatic on day five**, followed by five days of wearing a mask when around others. The CDC stated that this change is based on science demonstrating that more COVID-19 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the one to two days before symptom onset and the two to three days after.
3. With the rise in COVID-19 cases, HSD2 will continue to utilize a mask mandate to keep students and staff safe and in school. We will revisit this practice on Friday, February 4, 2022. Masks will continue to be required on school buses per federal law.

VACCINES

Our goal is to provide a safe learning environment for our students and staff. We realize that the COVID-19 vaccine is one of the most effective strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and reduce quarantines. For a list of places to get the vaccine, please visit [El Paso County Public Health](#) and our District website and social media for upcoming mobile vaccine clinics.

OTHER PREVENTION

Social distancing and handwashing remain important strategies in reducing the transmission of COVID-19. Operations staff will continue to conduct frequent cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces. In addition to the KN-95 masks, disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizers will continue to be provided to schools and departments.

STAY HOME IF SICK OR EXPOSED AT HOME

We cannot stress enough that sick students and staff should stay home to avoid spreading illness to others. Notify your school or building that you will be home if you are ill.

Thank you,
Dr. Wendy Birhanzel, Superintendent