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To: [SaGurney, Pamela](#)
Subject: District Update
Date: Thursday, August 19, 2021 8:01:27 PM

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Dear Southwestern Families:

It is hard to believe we will officially start the 2021-22 school year in 21 days. While we are not out of the pandemic, we do have more flexibility and the ability to return all kids five days a week. We are following the guidelines for CDC, NYSED, DOH, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. We are still monitoring all guidance and will communicate all changes to you between now and the start of school year. Our number one priority is to have our kids back in school five days a week in a safe environment.

Here are some highlights from the guidance:

- Masking: The Chautauqua County Health Department strongly recommends that schools require universal indoor masking for all students, staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status, in agreement with current CDC guidance.
- Close Contacts: Identification of Close Contacts: Outside of the classroom, close contacts are individuals who are within 6 feet of an infected person, without masks for 10 minutes or more. If **universal masking** is used in classrooms, students do not need to quarantine if they are more than 3 feet from the infected individual (this exception does not apply for teachers, staff, or other adults). Individuals who are fully vaccinated or who have had prior COVID-19 infection within the last 90 days do not need to quarantine if they are identified as a close contact.
- Daily Screenings: Schools are no longer required to document or conduct daily temperature checks and wellness screenings. Parents should continue to screen their own children before sending them to school. If a student develops symptoms during the school day, the child should be evaluated by the school nurse and sent home if necessary.
- Transportation: [CDC's Order](#) applies to all public transportation conveyances including school buses. Passengers and drivers must wear a mask on school buses, including on buses operated by public and private school systems, regardless of vaccination status, subject to the exclusions and exemptions in CDC's Order. Learn more [here](#).

Attached is guidance from the NYSED and Chautauqua County Department of Health. Please reach out with any questions. Have a wonderful end to the summer and hopefully no rain!

Mrs. Donahue

[Health and Safety Guide for the 2021-2022 School Year \(005\).pdf](#)

[Fall 2021 COVID-19 Back to School Basics.pdf](#)

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