



April 8, 2021

Dear WISD families,

Washtenaw ISD is closely monitoring the current surge in COVID-19 cases in Washtenaw County, in our southeast Michigan region, and across the state. We have received questions asking what this current increase in cases means for our school community, and we want to be transparent about our intentions to continue providing instruction as safely as possible in a way that works best for your family.

We have learned a lot over the past year. Just one year ago, we were unsure of exactly how COVID-19 spread and whether a vaccine would even be possible. At the beginning of the pandemic, Stay Home, Stay Safe orders were our best defense in slowing the spread of COVID-19 while we learned what strategies worked best.

While we are disheartened to see a fourth spike in cases, we want to recognize that we also know so much more now about how to be safe. We know more now about how this virus spreads and we know how to greatly minimize the risk of transmission within our schools. The opportunity for everyone 16 years and older to get vaccinated increases each day, and scientists are working hard so we can safely vaccinate younger children in the near future.

We want to do everything we can to continue providing you the choice of hybrid or remote instruction and services based on what works for your family. For those who hybrid, science currently shows schools can be one of the safest places for children because we strictly follow all the health and safety protocols. In order to continue providing instructional options, we need everyone in our community to do what we know works both inside and outside of school:

- **Mask up.**
- **Social distance and gather outdoors whenever possible.** Please do not have unmasked, multi-household gatherings, especially indoor parties or sleepovers.
- **Stay home when you feel *any* symptoms**, including anything that feels like spring allergies. If you have even mild symptoms, please [get tested](#). In students, mild symptoms can look like a runny nose, mild cough or sore throat, or complaints of a headache, as well as a fever, loss of taste/smell, or difficulty breathing.
- **Due to the spread of the variants which spread more easily, quarantines have now been extended to 14 days. Quarantine for 14 days if you are exposed as a close contact and:**
 - **You are not fully vaccinated;**
 - **Or if you are fully vaccinated and experiencing any symptoms.**
 - “Fully vaccinated” means it has been at least 14 days since getting the last dose in a vaccine series (2 doses of Moderna; 2 doses of Pfizer; or 1 dose of Johnson & Johnson).
- **If you can, get vaccinated.** All Michigan residents age 16 and older are now eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine. You can request an appointment with the [Washtenaw County Health Department](#), [Meijer](#) (including at [Ford Field](#)), [Rite-Aid](#), [CVS Pharmacy](#), and [Walgreens](#). You can also text ‘COVID’ to 75049 to register for a vaccine through Meijer. (Please know that only the Pfizer vaccine is currently approved for ages 16+; Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are approved for ages 18+.)



Washtenaw ISD remains committed to following science as it evolves and as we all learn more about minimizing the risk of COVID-19. We continue to have a close relationship with the Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD) as we evaluate the impact of the pandemic locally, and we continue to receive additional guidance from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

We are grateful to everyone who continues taking the health and safety precautions. We are all tired and the pandemic fatigue is very real, but we truly believe we are getting close to overcoming this pandemic thanks to your continued efforts and the immense vaccination efforts.

As always, if you have any questions, comments or concerns, please reach out to us using [Let's Talk](#). Thank you for your continued support and partnership as we all work together to keep our community safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Naomi Norman".

Naomi Norman
Interim Superintendent
Washtenaw Intermediate School District