

# ONTONAGON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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James Bobula, Superintendent / Principal

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Back to school COVID Protocols and Guidance:

As the 2021-2022 school year quickly approaches, the Ontonagon Area School will follow CDC and MDHHS guidelines and recommend mask wearing while in the school building. **Federal Law requires that all students wear a mask while riding a school bus.** We will still follow social distancing guidelines where feasible, hand sanitizing/washing and rigorous cleaning measures. As we receive information regarding changes in COVID protocols, we will continue to inform students, parents and community.

We are looking forward to a fun, safe and educational school year. The most updated key takeaways from the CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention are listed below. Thank you for your help in making our school a better place for our students!

- Students benefit from in-person learning, and safely returning to in-person instruction in the fall 2021 is a priority.
- Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Promoting vaccination can help schools safely return to in-person learning as well as extracurricular activities and sports.
- Masks are the recommended option to be worn indoors by all individuals (age 2 and older) who are not fully vaccinated. Consistent and correct mask use by people who are not fully vaccinated is especially important indoors and in crowded settings, when physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, combined with indoor mask wearing by people who are not fully vaccinated, to reduce transmission risk. When it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least 3 feet, such as when schools cannot fully reopen while maintaining these distances, it is especially important to layer multiple other prevention strategies, such as indoor masking.
- Screening testing, ventilation, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, staying home when sick and getting tested, contact tracing in combination with quarantine and isolation, and cleaning and disinfection are also important layers of prevention to keep schools safe.
- Students, teachers, and staff should stay home when they have signs of any infectious illness and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care.
- Many schools serve children under the age of 12 who are not eligible for vaccination at this time. Therefore, this guidance emphasizes implementing layered prevention strategies (e.g., using multiple prevention strategies together consistently) to protect people who are not fully vaccinated, including students, teachers, staff, and other members of their households.
- COVID-19 prevention strategies remain critical to protect people, including students, teachers, and staff, who are not fully vaccinated, especially in areas of moderate-to-high community transmission levels.
- Localities should monitor community transmission, vaccination coverage, screening testing, and occurrence of outbreaks to guide decisions on the level of layered prevention strategies (e.g., physical distancing, screening testing).

With regards,

James Bobula, Superintendent, and Jon Uotila, Principal, OASD