



2021-22 School Year Information

11.9.21

Dear Fargo Public Schools Community,

This message is to provide an update on COVID-19 mitigation strategies used in our schools **outside of the instructional day** and COVID-19 mitigation strategies currently being used in Fargo Public School buildings **that are not schools**.

Currently, universal masking is a mitigation strategy being used inside all Fargo Public Schools buildings at all times. This mitigation strategy **will continue in district school buildings during instructional hours**.

Today, I had a conversation with Fargo Cass Public Health and the North Dakota Department of Health regarding masking requirements in our schools for activities, after school activities and meetings, evening events, facility rentals, and non-school buildings. Per our conversation and after reviewing the guidance provided to Fargo Public Schools, **effective immediately, masks will be strongly encouraged (not required) for all individuals in school buildings during non-instructional hours and district facilities that are not schools. This recommendation is subject to change based on the guidance being provided for general community events.** In addition to other mitigation strategies including but not limited to screening, testing, and handwashing, **universal masking will continue to be required for all students, staff and visitors in school buildings during instructional hours.** Students that participate in instructional activities during the school day not in a Fargo Public Schools building (i.e. field trips) are strongly recommended to mask or follow the guidance provided to the general community at that time.

The North Dakota Department of Health will continue to notify Fargo Public Schools of students or staff that test positive for COVID-19. However, FPS staff will not contact trace or communicate close contact exposures that are not within a school day in a school building. This is subject to change based on a need determined by the North Dakota Department of Health if they notice multiple related cases in an after-school student activity.

Masks will still be required for all riders and drivers on Fargo Public Schools (FPS) transportation, including school buses and activity buses [due to a federal requirement](#).

Fargo Public Schools continues to encourage students and staff to take advantage of the opportunity to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, which is now available for those who are age 5 and up. Healthcare agencies continue to stress vaccination as the most impactful mitigation strategy, and we are hopeful that increases in vaccine availability and rates of our community population being vaccinated will reduce the potential threat of COVID-19 and need for other mitigation strategies.

FPS continues to be grateful for your understanding, cooperation, and flexibility during these difficult times. FPS will continue to work closely with Fargo Cass Public Health regarding COVID-19. If recommendations change, FPS will adapt and communicate accordingly.

Sincerely,
Dr. Rupak Gandhi, Superintendent
Fargo Public Schools

