

# Dunklin R-5 School District Communication

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**Proposed Message: Additional Update following New Guidelines for Schools**

**Intended Audience: Faculty, Staff and Community**

**Released on: November 13, 2020**

**From: Dr. Clint Freeman, Superintendent**

Yesterday, Governor Parson, announced modifications to Missouri's K-12 school reopening and operating guidance regarding close contacts and quarantines. Under the new recommendations if the school has implemented a mask mandate, and appropriate masks were being worn correctly by both individuals during the time of exposure in the school setting, the individual who came in contact with the person with COVID-19 does not have to quarantine at home.

The Jefferson County Health Department has been reviewing local data, evaluating new cases and reviewing CDC guidance. At this time the Jefferson County Health Department has made the decision **not** to implement the recommended school guidelines at this time. The new guidelines as written, go against CDC guidance and have the potential to accelerate transmission in Jefferson County. The following information has been released from Jefferson County Health Department.

Jefferson County Health Department strongly agrees that vigilant and comprehensive mask-wearing will reduce the risk of transmission. However, recent guidance issued by the state of Missouri does not currently align with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In addition, the St. Louis region is experiencing uncontrolled community transmission – with serious implications to the regional health system and ability of local public health practitioners to effectively trace and investigate cases.

With these facts in mind, the Jefferson County Health Department will maintain current quarantine and isolation practices.

Social Distancing, avoiding large gatherings when possible, hand washing and wearing a mask are the most effective mitigation strategies to slow the spread of COVID-19. After conversations with the Health Department and other area school districts, the Dunklin R-5 School District will continue to follow the guidance of the Jefferson County Health Department and continue our efforts as we have been. This approach will allow us to be effective in minimizing the transmission of COVID -19 in our school buildings, which will allow us to continue with our students in our current 5 days a week in-person learning.

Each day remember: “Stay Safe Stay Positive; Focus on what we **CAN** do, not what we can't.