



Bullitt County Public Schools

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August 9, 2021

Dear BCPS Stakeholders:

Your Bullitt County Board of Education has the very important responsibility of making decisions that are in the best interest of all students. Despite each of us having our own personal opinions on all issues that require a vote, we must make decisions we feel are in the best interest of the whole. In the past week the status of the Covid-19 virus has put all but 22 of the 120 counties in Kentucky in the RED (an incidence rate greater than 25 cases per 100,000 people per 7-day period). Just two weeks ago, there were 9 red counties. Our own Bullitt County incidence rate of positive Covid test results has risen to 35.7, and we are seeing the effect of that in our number of positive cases (students and adults) within our BCPS system. According to our local Health Department the Bullitt County Case Count for people 0-18 years of age has increased over the past 4 weeks from 2 to 55. For these and other reasons, as of Tuesday, August 10, 2021, masks will be required for everyone, regardless of vaccinated status, when inside a Bullitt County Public School Building.

The most important job we have is to KEEP OUR STUDENTS IN SCHOOL. Will masks guarantee we stay in school -- of course not! But they will help stop the spread in our classrooms. University presidents across the Commonwealth have just joined forces to mandate masks in all campus buildings. After reviewing information released from the CDC, The Cabinet for Health and Family Services, and medical professionals our board feels a duty to mandate masks for all, inside our buildings. This isn't a popular decision. In fact, it is one of the most difficult decisions (along with setting tax rates) most of us have made. Our principals, teachers, staff, and students will have to work hard to make this happen. We need the support of all involved. As we watch the incidence/progression of this disease, and if the spike only lasts a few weeks, we will adjust. Our hope is that this will last a short time.

Our country has a reputation of doing what's best for the common good. As a fourth grader, I took the Salk Polio vaccine in the gym at my school. All students took that vaccine and ultimately polio was nearly eliminated, remaining today in only two areas of the world. Most of us over 60 years old have a smallpox scar on one of our upper arms due to a smallpox vaccination. Again, to rid our nation of smallpox for the common good.

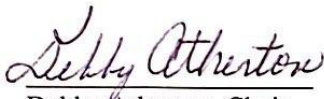
We cannot speak to the decisions our students' parents make regarding vaccinations or masks in most locations. If you allow your children to attend an optional event, outside of school, without a mask, they are among other children whose parents chose for their children to also be there. Attending school is NOT optional. When your children enter a BCPS building,


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they impact every other student (and staff member) they encounter. That's why decisions like this one fall on us. It is not just about your child, your opinion nor our individual opinions.

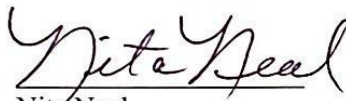
As school board members, we are united on this decision. We recognize the timing is difficult, this close to the beginning of the school year, as we had hoped to avoid making this decision. As of Tuesday, August 10, 2021, all individuals entering a BCPS building will be required to wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status. We hope you will support this decision!

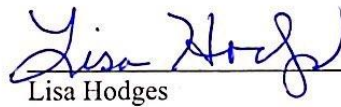
Thank you,


Debby Atherton, Chair
Region 3


Darrell Coleman, Vice Chair
Region 5


Linda Belcher
Region 1


Nita Neal
Region 2


Lisa Hodges
Region 4