



SHELL KNOB SCHOOL
24400 State Highway 39
SHELL KNOB, MISSOURI 65747
(417) 858-6743

With the recent rise in COVID-19 cases in our school district and the state, the Shell Knob Board of Education approved a schoolwide mask mandate at the November Board Meeting suggested by the governor and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

What is the new guidance involving mask use and quarantine in K-12 Schools? On November 12, 2020, the guidance related to identifying close contacts in the school setting was modified. If the person diagnosed with COVID-19 and the close contact were both wearing masks appropriately during the time of exposure in the school setting, the close contact would not need to quarantine.

Are exposures that occur to students or staff wearing a mask outside of the school setting included in the updated guidance? No. The updated guidance is specific to exposures that occur while in the school setting.

What does this mean for parents and students? Not a lot will change. All classrooms are socially distanced as is the cafeteria. Students currently wear facemasks in the halls and on busses.

What if my child is wearing a shield? The amended guidance is specific to the use of appropriate masks. Face shields are not substitutes for the use of appropriate masks.

What if the individual with COVID-19 is wearing a mask, but the close contacts are not? The updated guidance only applies if the person diagnosed with COVID-19 AND the close contact were both wearing masks appropriately during the time of exposure in the school setting.

Are students and staff who are identified as close contacts to a case at school, but meet the modified guidance (proper masking), required to be in quarantine when not at school? Yes. Students and school staff members identified as close contacts to a case at school should quarantine to limit potential further exposure. This modified guidance serves only to create an exception for attendance at school, but does not impact the individual's designation as a close contact. Close contacts should quarantine, except for being eligible to attend school, even when both the positive case and the close contact were properly wearing masks.

If nothing will change why the mandate? The governor has declared that schools that have mask mandates in place can utilize the new masking protocols that help keep kids in school instead of being in quarantine because they are identified as a close contact. The main reason the board made this decision was that by having the mandate we no longer have to try and socially distance on our busses.

What about extracurricular activities? At this point, we are still evaluating how we can have these activities safely and also keep students in class. The governor's new protocols do not include extracurricular activities.

Can persons identified as close contacts but are not required to be quarantined, per the modified guidance, continue to participate in sports or other extracurricular school-related activities? No. This modified guidance does not authorize a close contact to participate in school associated sports, extracurricular activities, or any other activities outside of the school setting. Other than attending school, these close contacts should continue to quarantine.

What about exposures during recess, PE, or activities such as sports, band, on the bus, etc.? It is important to continue to ask questions and assess the opportunity for exposures for all cases. If an individual at school meets the CDC definition of a close contact and either the case or the close contact were not wearing masks, then the close contact would need to quarantine.

If you have questions or concerns please contact Dr. Fransen at 417-858-6743 ext 235