



COVID-19 UPDATE
10/29/2021

Dear Dover-Eyota Parents, Guardians and Staff Members,

In this update I have an answer to a question that many of you have wondered about.

What is the end point for the mask requirement at Dover-Eyota?

We are looking at two specific data points to help us make the change to mask optional. Attaining either threshold would prompt a review by the COVID-19 Advisory Council.

1. When we have verified that at least 75% of the student population in a school is vaccinated. Currently we know that 59% of our students in grades 6-12 are fully vaccinated. Fully vaccinated means that they are 14 days post-completion of both courses of either the Pfizer or the Moderna shot.
2. The infection rate for our attendance region drops back to the moderate transmission point. We are using the [Minnesota School Opening Statistics](#) website to track infection rates as it relates to our school district. The good news is that infection rates are trending downward. Our target is to be in the less than 50 per 100,000 range. Infection rates were below 50 in June and July this year so it is possible to get there again.

Compared to our neighboring school districts, Dover-Eyota has had relatively low reported positive covid infections. I do believe that our masks and close contact tracing has helped to keep those numbers low. However, it is time to prepare for the eventual shift to a mask optional protocol.

Once we get to mask optional, we will need to monitor for any escalation of infections. If 2 ½% of students in a school are found to be COVID-19 positive, we would have to shift back to “masks required”. For reference, 2 ½% of the student population represents 15 positive cases at the middle/high school. That would be an indication of a serious outbreak, at that point we would review the decision in two week increments to determine when we could return to allowing masks optional.

Immunizations

Governor Walz has announced a new incentive for children between the ages of 12-17 years old who have not received a COVID-19 vaccine yet. Students ages 12-17 will be eligible to receive a \$200.00 VISA gift card. They must complete their two dose vaccine series between October 18th and November 30th to qualify. Once completed, they are also eligible to enter a drawing for a \$100,000 Minnesota College Scholarship Drawing. Follow the link for more details. [Kids Deserve a Shot!](#)

You have probably heard that the COVID-19 vaccine will soon be available for children ages 5-11. The Minnesota Department of Health is working with a network of 1100 providers to be prepared to administer the vaccine once the final approval is announced. We may know something as soon as next



week. At the request of Olmsted County Public Health I will be sending out a survey to find out if there is interest in hosting a vaccine clinic at Dover-Eyota.

“Test To Stay”

With the support from MDH and MDE, our schools now have access to the [CUE Test](#). Since many cold and flu symptoms mimic the beginning COVID-19 symptoms, the CUE test can rule out COVID-19 as a condition in ONLY 20 minutes. This test has been implemented on a trial basis in both schools and we have found it to be useful for avoiding unnecessary quarantine time waiting for a test result. Our school nurses are only allowed to use the CUE test with parental permission. A [permission form is available for you to print](#), or you can request that one be sent home with your child by contacting your child's school main office. The permission form will only be in effect for the 2021-2022 school year.

Home test options

In addition to the CUE test that is conducted at school, we have a limited supply of home testing kits available called [BinaxNOW](#), they are available upon your request. The BinaxNOW test has certain limitations. If you get a positive result with the BinaxNOW, they advise you to get a PCR test done to confirm the result. A negative result has been found to be a bit more accurate. Another free home testing option that you can order through the state is the Vault PCR test. Vault is considered to be a fairly accurate saliva test that you can use at home with some online guidance. Follow this link [Vault COVID-19 test](#) for more information.

Quarantine protocol

We are aware that students who are identified as close contacts often do not get COVID-19. Consequently they can miss too much school. We are working on some strategies to reduce the quarantine time when it is appropriate to the situation. Right now we do not have a system or the personnel in place to support a “test to stay” procedure for close contacts, but we are exploring some options.

Please be patient as we work out our systems. We are working hard to balance the safety and education needs of all our students. The school board appreciates and encourages respectful feedback on our mask policy at the monthly board meetings.

Michael Carolan

Superintendent
Dover-Eyota Schools