

January 2, 2021

Madeira City Schools Families:

Hopefully you have had a safe and healthy break and made great family memories despite what has been a different holiday season. This districtwide communication is being provided as an update for starting up second semester as well as a few new guidance details. Please read through it carefully.

Our Madeira HealthWatch Assessment Team has continued to track our data over break. **Thankfully, our current staffing and student data remains strong for being able to begin our second semester on Monday, January 4 with students and staff back in the buildings as planned.** As a reminder, our primary drivers for decisions on our learning modality has been data evidence on our local key indicators:

- * Numbers of positive cases in our buildings
- * Numbers of staff and student quarantines
- * Numbers of staff and student absences

The additional local indicators that we are tracking have been the county numbers and how those numbers from the broader community might impact or influence our school operations. While our Hamilton County numbers continue to remain high, communication with county health officials just before our winter break and as recently as 12/31/20 indicate that all metrics have been continuing to decrease since December 10. Meetings with Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH) and Cincinnati Children's have still had as their theme that schools are doing an incredible job of managing our classroom environments with little evidence of in-school transmission within our classroom settings. Our Madeira staff and students are to be thanked for this! Our first semester Madeira data mirrors what our health officials have shared in that we have had zero evidence of transmission from close contacts becoming positive as a result of being in a classroom setting. Our data and experience in our reported cases is that transmission is most likely occurring in instances among family members living in the same house or from events outside of the classroom or school.

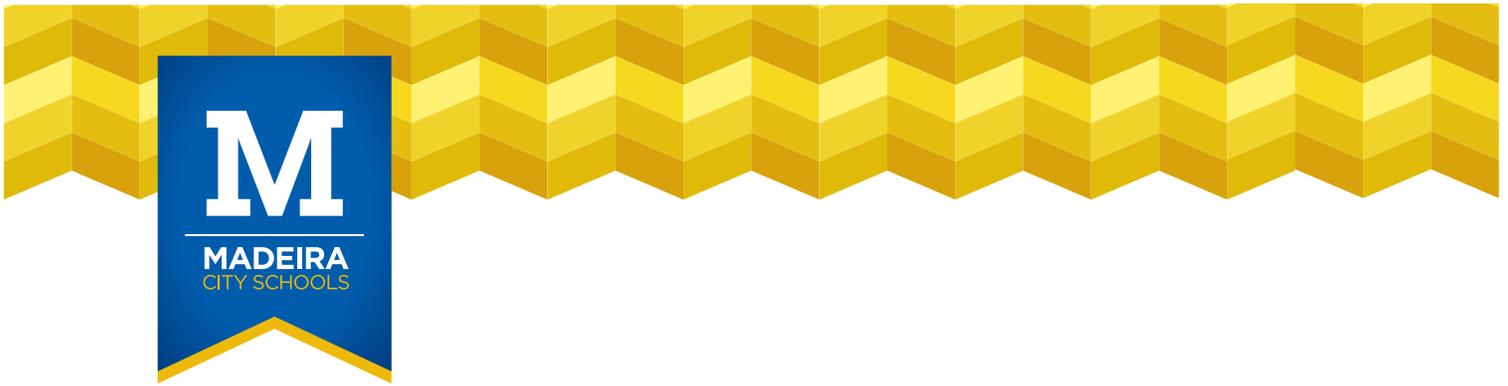
NEW FOR SECOND SEMESTER **QUARANTINE GUIDANCE**

As a result of evidence of low in-school transmission, Governor Mike DeWine announced in his press conference this week on Thursday 12/31/20 that **HCPH will no longer have to quarantine students and staff who are in a "classroom setting" wearing masks and following other safety protocols that would have previously been named a close contact and had to stay home.** We have not yet received official guidance from our local HCPH office and we will remain vigilant as we have been by continuing with our safety protocols of mask wearing K-12, hand sanitizing and washing our hands, maintaining social distance guidance, and continuing our cleaning practices. We have done this all first semester with great success!

This new guidance will **NOT** apply to "close contacts" that were derived from outside the classroom school setting. Students who are a close contact of someone outside of the classroom setting, a family member, etc., will need to follow the new [CDC / ODH approved guidelines](#).

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"A school community where learning is personalized and success is ensured"



CALENDAR CHANGES

As a reminder, we adjusted our [2020-2021 School Calendar](#) for second semester. We have replaced two early release dates in January and March with two full professional development days throughout the semester in order for our teachers and staff to have time to plan as well as time for their own mental well-being. Our PD days where we will not have school for students are **February 12 (already scheduled) and the two new dates of March 12, and April 30**. Again, these will be non-student days so that our teachers have time to plan and recharge.

SNOW DAYS

Much has been taken away from our kids in this past year – snow days will not be one of them. Should we have inclement weather that would require canceling school, a snow day will be a snow day and will not become a remote learning day unless we begin to rack up too many. The change to block scheduling this year will not make it feasible to utilize a two-hour delay format so our schools on questionable weather days will either be open and on a regular schedule or closed.

FLEXIBILITY AND OUR PROMISE

Just as we started with our *RESTART* plans in August, we will need to continue to remain flexible and responsive to our situation in the second half of the school year. Thanks in advance for remembering to keep our [My Madeira Promise](#) to ourselves, our staff, our neighbors, and our friends. Our first response will ALWAYS be to share care and concern for those who are ill or who may become ill. Please continue to work through your own family plans should we need to pivot to remote learning as a result of staffing issues, student absences, or evidence of in-school transmission.

HEALTH & WELLNESS CHECKS

It's important **now more than ever** that we stay vigilant in monitoring ourselves for [COVID-19 related signs or symptoms](#) - especially over these next few days. Families have been encouraged over break to make contact with their building principal if there is a concern. All parents must be taking your student's temperature and checking for symptoms each day BEFORE leaving for the bus or coming to school. Any student remotely sick or showing signs of illness should stay home.

As we have learned more about the virus and tracked our data first semester, our evidence shows that in-home transmission amongst family members is a greater possibility. **Therefore, if your student or a family member that lives in the same home as your student is awaiting a COVID-19 test result, your child should stay home until that test result is confirmed.** In most instances in Grades 3-12, your child will be able to attend their class remotely online. Doing so will help us support a healthy school environment.

It's a New Year 2021 with lots of new things to look forward to! Thank you for your continued support as we work together to make Madeira a great place for kids.

Kenji Matsudo, Superintendent
Madeira City Schools

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