



October 16, 2020

Seward Public Schools Parents/Guardians

It is hard to believe that we have already completed the first nine weeks of school! We have a lot to celebrate during the first nine weeks and one of those celebrations is having in-person teaching and learning. We also have a lot to celebrate within our activities as our softball team and girls golf qualified for state, our girls cross country team placed first at districts and the boys team placed second. Our volleyball team finishes the conference tournament on Saturday and our football team is getting ready for its last two regular season games. The Seward High Marching Band has been able to perform at a couple exhibition events and have been outstanding at our home football games and our quiz bowl team has competed well this fall.

On Friday we learned that the Four Corners Health Department Risk Dial moved to 2.50 which continues to be in the orange. District wide we have had 18 students/staff test positive since the start of school and numerous quarantines. Public health leaders have concerns about the trends they are seeing as we enter the cold and flu season. The prevalence of the virus has never been greater in this region than it is right now. Hospitalization rates are increasing and there is a growing number of people that are contracting Covid-19.

At Seward Public Schools, we are proud of the work that has been done by our staff and students since the start of the year. As a result of everyone's diligence, we continue to see evidence that the mitigation strategies we have in place are working. It will take this continued effort from our staff and students as we enter the late fall and winter months.

The Pandemic has been difficult for everyone, but now is not the time to let our guard down. It's a time when we need to come together to meet the moment. We can still participate in many normal life activities safely if we are diligent in taking proper precautions both in school and in our communities. To that end, below is a summary of public health and safety best practices to guide us moving forward to help us continue with in-person teaching and learning at Seward Public Schools.

- Wear a mask when gathering with others outside your home. The mask should cover your entire mouth, nose, and fit tightly around the side of your face.
- Practice appropriate physical distancing outside of your home, especially when not wearing a mask. Contact tracing has revealed that a large number of cases are being traced back to small gatherings of people that know each other well (i.e., friends and non-immediate family). Appropriate physical distancing and/or mask wearing will help reduce the spread of the virus and still allow you to be with others more safely.
- Stay home when you are sick and seek COVID-19 testing when you experience COVID related symptoms.
- Get a flu shot. This will help prevent the concurrent outbreak of COVID-19 and the seasonal flu.
- Practice good hand hygiene. Regularly wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with 60% or greater alcohol level.

Thank you for your continued support of Seward Public Schools and your patience, as we get ready to start the second quarter of school. Together we will get through this pandemic. Have a great long weekend!

Sincerely,

*Josh Fields*

Dr. Josh Fields