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Dear Parents and Community Members,

As many of you are aware, the K-12 mask mandate issued by the Genesee County Health Department ends on December 22, 2021. This is primarily the result of a vaccination now being available to elementary aged students in grades K-6 and not the current levels of infection occurring in our state and county. Both the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and the Genesee County Health Department have issued guidance for all schools strongly recommending the continued wearing of masks in school buildings. After much discussion and reflection on the benefits of universal masking, we at Atherton will also strongly encourage mask wearing by our students, but will allow for parent choice to be the final determination when we return to school in January.

As we begin a new year, COVID cases will likely continue resulting in isolation for the infected individual and also result in 10 day quarantine periods for those deemed close contacts. The best way to avoid having to quarantine if you've been deemed to be a close contact is to be vaccinated. Fully vaccinated students will be allowed to attend school unless they begin exhibiting symptoms. As a district we realize that vaccination is a family choice but we would encourage all eligible students to be vaccinated if they can. This will minimize the chance of missing school due to potential infection or quarantine.

Fortunately, we have the ability to continue daily antigen testing which allows for close contacts to test and, if negative, attend classes as normal. If close contacts do not test, they are required to quarantine for 10 days. Currently, we have the virtual option for any quarantined student to log into Zoom for live instruction. Class participation would be expected, not optional, as long as the student is not COVID positive.

Attached you will find a graphic organizer to help you understand what the Genesee County Health Department has laid out for us. If you are having difficulty understanding it, please contact your building principal.

I would like to wish all of our families a happy holiday season. We look forward to our students returning on January 3, 2022 and continuing to educate your children!

Sincerely,

John Ploof
Superintendent

To provide students with an educational experience that inspires a successful future.

**Quarantine Options for Schools without Universal Masking
(Masks Recommended)**

	Vaccinated	Unvaccinated
Masked	<p align="right">*See Below</p> <p>Less than 3 feet for more than 10 minutes then Mask x 14 days AND Antigen test on day 3, 4, OR 5 (after last exposure)</p>	<p>(If both the COVID+ person and the CC were masked)</p> <p>Less than 6 feet for more than 10 minutes then Mask x 14 days AND Antigen test on day 3, 4, OR 5 (after last exposure)</p>
Unmasked	<p>Less than 6 feet for More than 10 min then Mask x 14 days AND Antigen test on day 3, 4, OR 5 (after last exposure)</p>	<p align="right">**See Below</p> <p>Less than 6 feet for more than 10 min then Mask x 14 days AND Antigen test on days 1-7 (after last exposure)</p>

* Exception to testing: if masked, vaccinated and greater than 3', then no testing needed.

** If unvaccinated & unmasked AND unwilling to wear a mask for 14 days, then quarantine for 10 days after exposure OR get PCR test on day 7, which if negative, may return on day 8.

NOTE:

- All symptomatic people must be tested.
- All COVID positive people must isolate.
- All close contacts must eat lunch 6 feet apart in a well-ventilated room while unmasked.