



## Jacksonville | North Pulaski SCHOOL DISTRICT

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[www.jnpsd.org](http://www.jnpsd.org)

*Building Futures: Every Scholar, Every Day*

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February 26, 2021

11:28 am

JNPSD School Community:

Please continue to stay informed through all of our postings on JNP social media, JNP website, local media, and other communication outlets. All community updates, official documents, and other information posted since March 6, 2020 are available for your reference.

### **Governor's Press Conference (APSRC Report)**

Governor Asa Hutchinson hosted a press conference this morning to announce the extension of the public health emergency for an additional 30 days. With the signing of the proclamation today, the public health emergency will now expire on March 31. It was set to expire on February 27.

"The public health emergency includes very important executive orders to have Medicaid reimbursement for telehealth, business liability protection, remote learning, and other orders necessary during this pandemic that the legislature is trying to put into legislation. The reason that we are making this announcement today on the continuation of the public health emergency is because we need to have these items still in place," Governor Hutchinson said.

The Governor added, "Nothing is guaranteed for the future, but while we're still in an emergency we have made progress - in addition to the reduced cases each day, but also on the vaccination front."

The Governor announced that the proclamation included two key provisions - the lifting of the mask mandate on March 31 if certain conditions were met and converting all other public health directives that have been issued to public health guidelines.

In order for the mask mandate to be lifted on March 31 the state must have:

A positivity rate of 10% or less of combined PCR and antigen tests (7-day rolling average) with at least 7,500 specimens tested on a daily average; or

If testing is below 7,500 average specimens daily, then fewer than 750 patients hospitalized statewide for COVID-19.

The Governor explained the change from directive to guidance will not only eliminate potential penalties for those who do not comply, but allow more flexibility for businesses like restaurants, gyms, salons, and indoor and outdoor venues.

“We’ve had increased public education. They know where they can go safely and they can make those judgements. The public needs to understand how we move out of this pandemic and into a more normal life. We get through by following guidelines,” Governor Hutchinson said. “Just because we’re changing these directives to guidelines doesn’t mean we’re going to see a change in behavior. For state government, we will tell them to continue to follow social distancing guidelines, and continue to wear masks if you cannot social distance.”

The Governor also stressed that the directives regarding quarantine and isolation have not been changed.

Arkansas Department of Health Secretary Dr. José Romero said, “We’ve shown significant progress in the number of cases and the number of hospitalizations, and we have a robust system to monitor the situation carefully. What merits bearing in mind is this should not change the behavior of the citizens of Arkansas. We still need to wear our masks, maintain social distancing, and wash our hands.”

### **JNPSD Announcements**

We will review this latest information from the Governor’s Office and await additional guidance from the Arkansas Department of Education. This information will inform decisions about school operations through the end of this school year.

We appreciate your support of JNPSD!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryan Duffie', written in a cursive style.

Bryan Duffie. Ed.D.  
Superintendent