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Westville Public School

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September 9, 2021

Dear Westville Parents and Staff:

Based on recommendations from the CDC, Westville Public Schools will require masks for students and staff at school, effective Monday, September 13. The safety of our school family is our greatest priority and increasing cases of COVID-19 in Adair County made this difficult decision necessary.

We believe, like most parents and community members do, that in-person learning is best for students. By wearing masks in the school setting, we can better protect the health of students and staff and likely reduce disruptions to learning. Health officials agree that masking is an important mitigation tool to have a safe, successful and in-person school year.

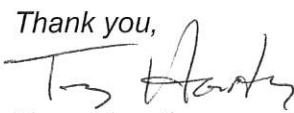
Masks will be required in the following locations of the school: in all school buildings and gyms. The cafeteria while not eating or drinking. All students PK-12 and staff will be required to wear masks.

An Oklahoma judge recently ruled that – at least temporarily – the masking requirement implemented by Westville is permissible under state law. This is because parents may choose to opt their children out of participation for any one of three exceptions: (1) medical reasons; (2) religious reasons; or (3) personal reasons. To opt-out your child, you will have to fill out a form in the appropriate office. **Before you opt out, I would encourage you to please reconsider because masks work more efficiently when we have 100% participation in classrooms.**

Teachers and support professionals are encouraged to visit with their principal or department supervisor about the process for opting out for religious or medical reasons.

In addition to masking, Westville Schools will continue to implement other strategies to protect students and staff, including social distancing, hand washing, sanitizing, etc.

Thank you for your support in this matter. Students' safety and wellbeing are the priority in this decision.

Thank you,

Terry Heustis