

# Deckerville Elementary

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Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s),

We are entering a school year unlike any other and the COVID-19 pandemic is going to affect how we conduct ourselves at school. As much as we want school to be as “normal” as possible, there are conditions and routines that all students, parents, and staff must realize will be different. As we prepare to return to school on August 31, 2020, we are all adjusting to this new normal and we sincerely hope that all parents and students provide necessary support and cooperation to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all members of the Deckerville School Community.

The first of these differences will be masks. If you choose to be part of face to face education at school, you are agreeing to the conditions required by the state of Michigan. In Phase 4, students in 6th grade will be required to wear a mask at all times, except while eating or drinking (time will also be given for mask breaks). Students are expected to wear a mask and keep it on throughout the day. If you do not want to wear your mask, the alternative available to you would be the virtual option. In Phase 4, students in Kindergarten - 4th grade will be required to wear masks, including but not limited to: the hallway, breakfast room, cafeteria, and other commonly shared spaces. Once your Kinder - 5th grader arrives in the classroom your child(ren) may remove their mask. *However, a doctor’s note must be provided for a medical concern to opt out of wearing a mask in the required areas for students in grades K-6.* Fortunately, there is light at the end of the tunnel and it is when our district reaches Phase 5. Phase 5 means the mask requirements are loosened and will become more of a recommendation to continue to wear masks in the areas mentioned above.

Another difference is the hospital grade hand sanitizer in every classroom and common areas. All classrooms will also have hospital grade cleaning wipes for desks, calculators, books, etc. Health and safety will be a top priority for all students and staff. We want everyone to stay healthy, therefore, we are asking that if any student or staff member is running a fever of over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, they should stay home. This is the year, we as parents, cannot send our children to school if they feel sick and we cannot even have them try going to school up to lunch time and pick them up if needed. Let’s err on the side of caution and keep them home. You know your child(ren) best and a runny nose or seasonal flare ups doesn’t mean COVID or doesn’t mean they cannot come to school. Please monitor your child(ren) and keep the elementary office in the loop.

In addition, during Phase 4, we will limit the number of people in and out of the school on a daily basis. Also, if you need to bring something to your child at school, you may be asked to wait outside or stay by the front doors until your child can come get it from you. I know the first week of school is often difficult for some parents / children with separation, but parents wearing a mask may walk their child to the classroom door (Aug 31-Sept 3). After the first week of school (beginning Sept 8, 2020), parents will be asked to not accompany their child(ren) beyond the elementary office area. When we move to Phase 5, building visitors will be re-evaluated.

We know there will be health and safety situations that may occur in school and our district will work in conjunction with the Sanilac County Health Department. Ultimately, we may not have a specific answer to a “what if” parent question / concern available at that time. In the event a student is tested for COVID-19 or an exposure to COVID-19 is reported, guidance will be given to the district by the Sanilac Health Department. In addition, please contact the school and inform us of a potential exposure or positive test result. We will protect the confidentiality of that student and then we will let others know that there has been a positive result and that they may wish to be tested as well.

These are very uncertain times for all of us and the resolve and character of the Deckerville Community will be tested. I firmly believe with cooperation from all, we will meet the challenges of the new school year and emerge as an even stronger community. We are looking forward to seeing all of our students again and we look forward to August 31!

Respectfully,

*McConnelly*

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