

NACEA Statement

The teacher's association in Northwest Allen County Schools wants to express our thank you to the Allen County Department of Health and to other medical/health professionals and agencies for guidance in the effort to mitigate and reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus for our NACS community of students, employees, and families.

The announcement by NACS to allow a mask optional choice starting July 5 is welcome news. Teachers recognize that there still are risks to vulnerable employees and students; however, continuing to follow social distancing requirements and sanitation

protocols, the risks of spreading the virus can be kept as minimal as possible.

As welcome as this announcement is, we should be humble enough to not celebrate by proclaiming complete victory over the pandemic. There are still children and adults who are not vaccinated and are vulnerable. If professional agencies such as the Indiana Department of Health and the Allen Co. Department of Health recommend it necessary to become more stringent in enforcement of mask policies due to new unforeseen data, we would expect Northwest Allen County Schools to comply with those recommendations. Many teachers are aware that children under the age of 12 have not had the opportunity to be vaccinated. The Indiana Department of Health recommends that students in grades K to 6 continue to wear masks to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Masks are intended to reduce the spread of Covid-19 to others rather than necessarily protecting the person wearing a mask. We hope that the parents and students in NACS will consider the Indiana Department of Health's recommendations to help keep the transmission of Covid-19 as minimal as possible so that non-vaccinated students have minimal disruptions to their in-person classroom experience.

We should also commemorate this moment with the thoughts and prayers for those who succumbed to Covid-19 and those who are facing long-term health challenges from the virus. Over six-hundred thousand Americans have died in the last 16 months from Covid-19. That includes over 13,800 deaths in Indiana and nearly 700 deaths in Allen County.

To complete the entire 2020-2021 school year in-person with no shutdowns to the elementary schools and minimal interruptions to the secondary schools has required sacrifice and patience by students, employees, and parents. Thank you to all who kept us in school by following the guidelines of the NACS Covid-19 Reopening Plan.

Steve Driver

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