



Dr. Jeffrey Bearden, Superintendent • 1120 Dahlonega Highway • Cumming, Georgia 30040 •
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October 23, 2020

Dear FCS Parents/Guardians,

I am writing this letter for two reasons. One, I want to be completely transparent about the slight uptick in COVID-19 cases in our district. Two, I need your assistance in mitigating the spread. We need to continue to fight this pandemic together.

On Wednesday, October 21st, we had 22 active student cases. That is the highest number since August 31st when we had 23. On Wednesday, 1.3% of our students (426 total), were quarantined due to a direct exposure. This is the largest percentage of students quarantined since September 3rd. While our number of cases and quarantined students remain small in comparison to our overall number of students, any increase in regard to health is best addressed sooner rather than later.

Masks are still an expectation for all students and staff unless a disability prevents an individual from wearing one. We are experiencing a decline in the number of students wearing a mask during the school day. Most show up at school with a mask, but wind up taking it off or wearing it around their neck. Most medical experts continue to impress upon all of us that wearing a mask helps to mitigate the spread of the virus.

To be clear, if your child is exposed to someone with COVID, whether they are wearing a mask or not, they will be subject to quarantine as directed by the Georgia Department of Public Health. However, by your child wearing a mask, he or she is less likely to contract the virus even if directly exposed. That's why we "expect" all students and staff to wear a mask. We want to keep them all safe.

I think we can all agree, we have had an excellent first quarter. Our students have been able to be actively engaged in the classroom and with activities. There is a semblance of normalcy. It's human nature to become complacent when things appear to be going well. We cannot be complacent. We **MUST** remain vigilant. As adults, we must set an example. **I implore your assistance.** Please speak with your children, once again, about the importance of following ALL precautionary measures: Mask Up, Wash Up, Cover Up, Clean Up, and Back Up.

This is **NOT** a Forsyth County Schools issue in isolation. This is a battle we must fight together as a community. I encourage you to share this letter with your friends and neighbors. Thank you for your continued support to keep our schools open and safe.

Sincerely,

Jeff Bearden