



---

Dr. Jeffrey Bearden, Superintendent • 1120 Dahlonega Highway • Cumming, Georgia 30040 •  
Telephone 770.887.2461 • Fax 770.781.6632

November 6, 2020

Dear FCS Parents/Guardians:

As you are aware, cases of COVID-19 are on the rise throughout our county, state, nation, and world. Forsyth County had been a leader in practicing COVID-19 preventive actions since early spring, which allowed us to remain healthy and transition our students safely back to school and remain in school through Fall Break. But since that time, we have noticed a drastic change in our community which greatly concerns us. This is my second request for assistance to you since October 23. On October 28, 2020, as a result of a spike in cases and direct exposures, we transitioned Lambert High School (LHS) to all virtual learning for a two-week period. This is the first Forsyth County school that we had to temporarily close, and I fear that without immediate assistance from you in two areas of concern, more schools are to soon follow.

The first area of concern is what students are doing after school hours and on weekends, particularly at non-school related gatherings and parties where social distancing and mask wearing are not practiced. FCS has no control over what happens outside of school, but parents/guardians do. Please know that from these events we have had students test positive for COVID-19, which forced many in their schools (who were not at the non-school related events) to quarantine at home for two-weeks of online learning due to the direct exposure. The increase in quarantined students has added stress to our face-to-face teachers who are now having to teach both in school and online to ensure all students are being educated. We request that you please review what your children are doing after school hours and on weekends.

Our second area of concern continues to be masks. After LHS transitioned to virtual learning, principals reported an increase in the number of our students' district-wide wearing a mask. It appears the situation at LHS was a wake-up call for our community, but as we know, the further we move from a situation, the easier it is to forget it. We request that you please reinforce with your children that wearing a mask continues to be an expectation while on the bus, in school, and at school events.

Health experts continue to repeatedly remind us that practicing social distancing and wearing a mask are our best defenses in mitigating the spread of COVID-19. Please have family conversations around the importance of these two preventive safety measures and help us impress upon our students the importance of remaining vigilant for their health and the health of others. I am asking that we all continue to work together to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in our community and schools, which will allow us to keep our schools open for face-to-face instruction for the next two weeks and when we return from Thanksgiving Break.

Sincerely,

*Jeff Bearden*