

Thomas Edison Families,

Welcome back! I hope everyone had a wonderful summer full of fun, adventure and rest and relaxation.

Many of you are wondering what procedures and protocols will be in place this year to help prevent the spread of COVID. In following the Utah Department of Health layered prevention approach, the following information is what we will be using at Thomas Edison Charter School South to guide our COVID practices.

## **PREVENTION**

### **Face Coverings (Masks)**

Masks and other face coverings remain an important tool for reducing the spread of COVID-19. While masks are not required in our school building or on school grounds, mask use is encouraged as a prevention approach. For example, individuals may choose to wear a mask to keep themselves and others safe, if they have underlying health conditions, if transmission rates are high, or if they have been exposed to COVID-19. Any individual who chooses to wear a mask should feel comfortable and welcome to do so in our school.

### **COVID Testing**

The Bear River Health Department will provide free diagnostic testing for anyone that experiences symptoms or believes they have been exposed. Information on testing locations and times will be provided on the Bear River Health Department website. The health department will also assist with "Test to Stay" protocols should we experience significant outbreaks.

### **Vaccination**

A major tool currently available to anyone 12 and older is vaccination. Most of our adult population over 65 have been vaccinated, as well as a majority of adults 18 or older and a significant percentage of our student population 12 and older. The decision to receive a vaccine is a personal decision and parental consent is required for anyone under 18. Vaccinations are free through the Bear River Health Department or can be scheduled through local pharmacies or health care providers.

## **Illness Protocols**

It is critical to continue to be diligent with TECS illness protocols. Employees or students who experience symptoms or are ill should remain home until symptoms subside. If symptoms are COVID-19 related, individuals should take advantage of testing.

## **Hygiene**

As simple as it may seem, handwashing and hand-sanitizing are both important ways to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Hand sanitizer and soap dispensers are readily available in our building for students and staff. Handwashing, hand sanitizing, and other good hygiene practices will be encouraged by teachers and school staff.

## **Enhanced Cleaning**

Enhanced cleaning of our school will continue during the 2021-22 School Year. Enhanced cleaning is defined as more frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces, strategic cleaning of high-use areas, and focused cleaning if a classroom has a high case count.

# **INTERVENTION**

Positive COVID-19 cases will continue to occur in schools. In cooperation with the Bear River Health Department, we will address positive COVID-19 cases in the following ways:

## **Individuals Who Test Positive**

The health department will notify Mrs. Kirk of any positive cases of COVID-19 among students or staff populations. Individuals testing positive for COVID-19 must isolate themselves for 10 days from the onset of symptoms or from the point they receive a positive test result. They may return to school after those 10 days, and if it has been 24 hours since symptoms subsided.

## **Individuals Who Are Exposed**

Staff or students who shared a classroom or participated in an extra-curricular activity with a positive individual for 15 minutes or longer are considered exposed and will be contacted by the school. The following recommendations will be provided:

There are no recommended restrictions for students or staff who:

- Regularly wear a mask; or
- Have had COVID-19 in the last 90 days; or
- Have been fully vaccinated.

If a student or staff member does not meet any of the above criteria, the following is recommended:

- Quarantine at home for 10 days; or
- Wear a mask at all times while at school during the 10-day period following exposure; or
- Wear a mask at all times while at school during a 7-day period and remove the mask if you test negative on day 7.

Anyone who has been exposed to COVID-19 should monitor for symptoms and seek testing at the onset of any symptoms.

### **Test to Stay**

If our school meets a threshold of 30 positive cases, a “Test to Stay” protocol will be implemented in cooperation with the Bear River Health Department.

A “Test to Stay” protocol means that individuals would need a negative COVID test result to remain in school during an outbreak period. If an individual chooses not to be tested, they would not have a negative test and according to state statute cannot attend school during an outbreak period.

The bottom line is that we DO NOT want to get to the point of 30 positive COVID cases which would instigate a “Test to Stay” protocol. Please encourage extra hand washing, hand sanitizing, encourage masks and KEEP YOUR KIDS HOME IF THEY EXPERIENCE COVID SYMPTOMS. If we are diligent and work together as faculty, staff, students and parents, we can make this a fantastic school year.

I look forward to the return of our students and am excited for the academics that they will have the opportunity to excel in as we start the 2021-2022 school year.

Sincerely,

Melani Kirk, Principal