

# Smith-Green Community Schools

*Superior Schools ... In a Supportive Community*

222 West Tulley Street, Churubusco, Indiana 46723 • 260-693-2007 • 260-693-6434 • [www.sgcs.k12.in.us](http://www.sgcs.k12.in.us)

---

December 8, 2020

Smith-Green Families,

As many of you are aware, last week the CDC issued updated guidance regarding the quarantine requirements for those who have been exposed to COVID-19 as a close contact. The CDC shared that in certain situations, the quarantine times may be reduced for individuals who meet certain criteria. Our team has spent the last few days discussing these developments with our local and state health officials, as several aspects of this guidance have continued to develop and change as revisions have been made. Now that the guidelines appear to be stable for the time being, I wanted to share an update with our families so that everyone understands what options currently exist.

While the news reports have highlighted the possibility of reduced quarantine times for individuals who meet the new requirements, we have received additional guidance for how these changes affect our schools. There are several other requirements that must be met for a student or staff member to return to school early under these guidelines, which are important to consider so that families can make the best decisions for their child and family members.

It is important to note that when exposed as a close contact, individuals are still subject to a 14-day quarantine period. However, if an individual has remained symptom free for 10 days after being quarantined, they now have the option to return to school during days 11-14 of their quarantine period under the new guidelines. At this time, this is the option being encouraged by the Indiana Department of Health for schools, due to the current backlog at testing sites in Indiana.

If an individual chooses to return to school early from quarantine under this new guidance, there are several requirements that must be followed for days 11 through 14 of their 14-day quarantine period:

1. The individual must wear a mask at all times while at school, except when actively eating or drinking during their scheduled lunch period. This includes during extra-curricular activities, including athletic practices or games. This is mandatory; students who are unable to follow this requirement will be sent home immediately and will be required to complete the remainder of their quarantine at home.
2. The individual must do their best to maintain 6ft of space from others at all times while at school.
3. The individual must continue to self-monitor for symptoms for the full 14 days and will also be required to check in with the school nurse every morning before going to class for a wellness check.
4. If at any time the individual begins to experience symptoms, they must quarantine immediately and contact the school nurse for guidance.

*"The mission of Smith-Green Community Schools is to provide a superior educational experience that ensures success for every student through excellence in teaching and learning."*

It is important for me to stress, again, that the recommended quarantine period is still 14 days, and that both the CDC and the Indiana Department of Health recommend that most individuals still follow the full 14-day quarantine period to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. However, if families feel that it is in their child's best interest to return to school sooner, these updated guidelines provide a new option as long as the additional requirements are followed.

Before any student is able to return early from quarantine under these new guidelines, the school nurse must be contacted by that student's parent or guardian at least 24 hours in advance. This will allow the school nurse to verify that the student meets the requirements to resume in-person attendance and will also provide our staff time to prepare for that student's return to school. If no contact with the school nurse is made at least 24 hours in advance, a student may not return to school prior to the conclusion of the full 14-day quarantine period.

I wanted to also remind families that the deadline to apply for virtual learning for semester two is this Friday, December 11<sup>th</sup>. Please keep in mind that every student who would like to be considered for virtual learning must fill out an application, including students who are currently participating in virtual learning. Students who do not complete an application will be expected to return to in-person learning for semester two. If you have any questions, please reach out to your child's principal for assistance.

One final note: we have had several positive cases in the days following Thanksgiving break. However, the total number of affected staff and students is currently lower than the weeks leading up to Thanksgiving, which has allowed us to remain in-person up to this point. I want to thank you for everything you and your students are doing at home and at school to help us keep everyone healthy, as it is making a positive difference. While there are no guarantees, I am hopeful that we will be able to finish our first semester in-person thanks to the sacrifices that everyone continues to make. I am thankful that so many of our students are able to be in our buildings each day, and have the opportunity to continue participating in the classes and activities that they enjoy.

Thank you for your continued support of our students and schools. As always, if you have any questions, please reach out. Have a great rest of the week, and I'll talk to you again soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. G. Hile', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daniel G. Hile, Ph.D.  
Superintendent