



# WILLOUGHBY-EASTLAKE Board of Education

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August 23, 2021

Dear Willoughby-Eastlake Families,

On August 18<sup>th</sup>, Willoughby-Eastlake opened our doors to students and staff with a strong recommendation that all persons wear masks. This decision was made following a work session of the Board of Education during which time they were able to seek advice from the Lake County General Health District Health Commissioner, Mr. Ron Graham.

When beginning the school year, it was made abundantly clear that the priority of the district would be to keep students and staff safe and to continue to offer in-person instruction for all students while maintaining that safety. During the first week of school, the district has been impacted by 25 cases of COVID-19, which have resulted in approximately 82 quarantines. These numbers have shown us that failing to implement a mask mandate, coupled with the rising number of ill students and staff, will not allow the district to sustain a safe and in-person learning environment.

Following a conversation with our local health department this morning, and a review of the rising cases of COVID-19 in our community and in our schools, Willoughby-Eastlake will mandate face masks for all students, staff, and visitors effective Tuesday, August 24<sup>th</sup>. This mandate will be in effect until further notice and is in accordance with the [Willoughby-Eastlake Board Policy 8405.01](#).

According to the [CDC](#) and the [Ohio Department of Health](#), students and staff who are wearing a mask, when coupled with additional layers of protection, have a significantly less opportunity to be identified as a close contact and will therefore, be able to continue to remain in school for face-to-face instruction. It is our hope that the implementation of this change will facilitate that and will also keep students, staff and our community members as safe as possible.

For your convenience, we have created a video with additional information about masks and the need for them in our schools. You can watch the video here: [Mask Information](#).

I would like to ask that you assist me to support our students, staff, and one another as we travel through these very difficult times. COVID-19 has presented everyone with challenges that we never imagined possible and in order to overcome those challenges, we must work together to remain strong.

Thank you for your patience and continued understanding.

Sincerely,

*Steve Thompson*

Steve Thompson, Ed.D.

Superintendent, Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools

Willoughby-Eastlake COVID-19 Hotline - (440) 283-4401

[www.weschools.org](http://www.weschools.org)