

Effective February 22, 2022, Wetzel County Schools moved its mask guidance from mandatory to optional. Mask usage in buildings is optional for both students and staff. Effective Monday, March 7, 2022, Wetzel County Schools will be moving its mask guidance on buses from mandatory to optional. This means that mask usage on our school buses will be optional for both students and bus operators.

This decision is being made as Wetzel County and WCS positive case numbers are going down after the increase during the winter holidays.

Masks may also be required at individual school sites or buses if Covid-19 transmission rates warrant a mask requirement.

Masks are required for certain individuals regardless of the current mask status. Individuals who have tested positive and returns to school on Day 6 – 10, a well-fitted mask is required through Day 10. If a mask cannot be worn, individuals should isolate and remain home for 10 days OR have a negative test on day 5 or later.

WCS will still have masks available to anyone wanting one. We will also continue talking daily and as often as needed with the Wetzel/Tyler Health Department about special cases and any concerning trends in classrooms or schools. The superintendent may institute practices if determined necessary in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ultimate goal is to protect our students and prioritize learning...Given the quick spread of the Omicron variant and its rapid clinical course, it has made contact tracing in schools impracticable when combined with the newly reduced timelines for quarantine and isolation set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). With that being said, Wetzel County Board of Education Employees will not perform contact tracing on behalf of the Wetzel-Tyler Health Department.

Weekly school COVID monitoring: All WCS schools are now directly reporting positive cases to a new WV DHHR tracking survey, which appears here on Fridays. - <https://wvde.us/covid19/school-covid-dashboard/> . This is where you will find the most robust information regarding school cases from the week before.

As always, we will continue to monitor cases and mask guidance through the coming weeks and months.

Updated 3/4/2022