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January 6, 2021

Dear Sunman-Dearborn Community School Corporation Parents:

Many of you will remember the first COVID-19 Parent Letter sent on March 10, 2020. That first letter described our preparedness plan, our sanitizing protocols, and reminded parents to keep students at home if exhibiting flu-like symptoms and to encourage frequent handwashing and other best practices. For all of us, it seems like a lifetime ago. It is hard to believe it has only been 10 months. Over that time I have sent an additional twenty-six (26) letters. Each letter gave additional information, and usually included information about a cancellation, postponement, or other bad news.

This time, however, I am happy to provide some good news. After several meetings with the Dearborn County Health Department, we have been authorized to change our close contact protocols. These changes are following and will be effective on Thursday, January 7, 2021.

Any student or staff member identified as a close contact **within the school setting** (classroom, lunch room, common area, etc.) **are not** excluded from school, but are excluded from extracurricular activities (**athletics, club activities, etc.**) Parents of students will be notified of the close contact and asked to monitor for symptoms. Students are also expected to follow quarantine guidelines for all non-school related activities.

Any student or staff member identified as a close contact **outside the school setting** (extracurricular, athletics, members of the same household, etc.) **are** excluded from school.

The decision by the Dearborn County Health Department is based on the data all Dearborn County schools provided regarding COVID-19 spread within the schools. For 1st semester at Sunman-Dearborn Community Schools, we had 121 students COVID-19 positive which resulted in 1,078 close contacts. Of the 1,078 close contacts, only two (2) students became COVID-19 positive in the classroom setting, and five (5) through extracurricular activities. The attached letter from Dr. Eliason, Dearborn County Health Officer, has additional information.

The new close contact protocols are approved with the expectation that students and staff will follow the various protocols - one-way hallways, social distancing as much as possible, handwashing, sanitizing frequently touched surfaces throughout the school day, and (most importantly) wearing facemasks properly over the nose and mouth.

This is not the time to ease up on the protocols, but rather make our best effort to follow them. Each one. This is our opportunity to get closer to normal.

Finally, I am excited to announce on Monday, January 11, 2021, all students in grades K-12 will return for traditional school and in-person learning, Monday - Friday. Hybrid Learning will not be implemented as planned. We will continue to provide traditional learning for all K-12 students as long as the data supports the decision and supports the new close contact protocols. Please do your part. Please remind your students to comply with all of the various protocols.

A copy of the current approved school calendar can be found here:

<https://www.sunmandearborn.k12.in.us/essentials/2020-2021-school-calendar-covid-19-revised/file>

We will continue to follow the school calendar, including planned E-Learning the week of March 15th. 2-Hour Early Dismissal days on Wednesday, January 13th and Wednesday, April 14th have been **canceled** and will be regular days of instruction.

Thank you for your continued support of our schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "A".

Andrew Jackson
Superintendent