

March 17, 2021

Parents & Guardians,

Last evening, the Bentonville Schools Board of Education voted to accept a series of COVID-19 related recommendations from the Bentonville Schools Reopening Task Force. These recommendations allow us to host a traditional graduation, prom and end-of-year celebrations while employing common sense precautions. It's important to provide these opportunities and create a feeling of optimism as we close this academic year. Our teachers and staff are ready to roll up their sleeves and plan some memorable events that I know your family will appreciate.

The adoption of these recommendations also includes the use of face coverings in our schools until the end of this semester. The board took this action in response to recent remarks by Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson. Governor Hutchinson indicated he may rescind the state mask mandate on March 31, provided certain COVID-19 infection criteria have been met. Should he do so, students and staff will continue to wear face coverings until the end of the school year. At the close of this school year, the Bentonville Schools policy requiring face coverings will expire.

You may recall last winter break when we asked you to use an online reporting system should your student test positive for COVID-19. We will employ this system again over spring break to keep our reporting numbers as accurate as possible. The form is on our website bentonvillek12.org and may also be found [HERE](#). It will be active Saturday, March 20. Until then, all COVID-19 positive test results should still be reported to your school principal. Once you complete the form, you may receive a follow-up call from a District nurse to complete contact tracing information.

Next week is spring break. I hope you find the time to rest and reconnect with your family. We'll return to school for about eight weeks knowing the finish line is in sight and good things are here to stay.

Sincerely,

Dr. Debbie Jones

Superintendent, Bentonville Schools