February 7, 2022

District 205 Community:

As you may be aware, on Friday, February 4, 2022, Sangamon County Judge Raylene DeWitte Grischow issued a ruling related to the Governor’s mask, close contact exclusion, and testing of unvaccinated personnel mandates for Illinois schools.

Thornton Township High School District 205 is not one of the districts named in the lawsuits presented to Judge Grischow, so her ruling does not affect the day-to-day operations in our district. Accordingly, all District 205 students, staff, and visitors will still be required to wear a mask covering their nose and mouth while in our school buildings. In addition, students, staff, and visitors must continue to adhere to all other COVID-19 mitigation policies that have been put in place by the district. District 205 implemented its COVID-19 mitigations, including universal masking, before the Governor required such a measure for all schools in the state. District 205 made our decision early on for the safety of our students and staff members. It was and is the best way to keep us all safe as we educate our students during these difficult times.

District 205 is committed to our students, staff, and community's health, well-being, and safety. Wearing a properly fitting mask is one of the many mitigation strategies used to reduce the potential spread and the possibility of COVID-19 outbreaks in our district. Thanks to our overlapping mitigation strategies (masks, social distancing, cleaning, and adaptive pause), we have been able to identify, mitigate, and help control the spread of COVID-19 within our school system.

Our mask mandate allows the district to follow the CDC’s reduced quarantine time when there is close contact and when seating students closer than 6 feet in the classroom. This seating is particularly important as not all of our classrooms can meet the six-foot requirement with 100 percent attendance. If the district did not require masks, it could affect the amount of time students spend in our buildings and the health of students, staff, and our community.

We appreciate you and your continued support as we continue on this journey together. District 205, in partnership with our local, state, and federal health departments, will continue to monitor health conditions to determine when it might be the appropriate time to remove any mitigation strategies. In addition, we will continue to provide you with any changes in the strategy and mitigation practices we have in place to keep everyone as safe as possible.

Thank you for working alongside us to do what’s best for our schools.

Educationally Yours,

Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Jr
Superintendent of Schools