



August 9, 2022

Dear SLSD Families:

We are excited to start the 2022-2023 school year and wanted to provide the latest COVID-19 safety updates and protocols for this school year. Just as we have managed to attend school safely these past two and half years, our goal as a school district is to continue to attend school as normal as possible while still also respecting the many differences of opinions and approaches that each family has made since March 2020.

Ohio school districts received a major update this past spring (March 11, 2022) from the Hamilton Co. Dept. of Health where the guidelines “**shifted mitigation tactics toward allowing people to take personal responsibility for themselves and their families.**” Since this update, we have received no further updates or changes with regards to schools. We will notify folks if things would need to change...

Specifically, as this relates to schools in Ohio, districts are no longer required to report positive COVID-19 cases to their local health department or perform contact tracing in our schools. Just as we ended last school year with this guidance and the removal of requiring reporting and contact tracing, we will begin this school year with the same approach. As of 8/5/22, Hamilton County Dept. of Health recommends that people stay up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations and recommends wearing a mask indoors when local levels of transmission are high. Both vaccines and masking are recommended, not required, and are the responsibility of each individual family. **Any student or staff member who chooses to wear a mask may do so, but SLSD will not require that masks be worn PK-12.**

As we have continued to live and learn, COVID-19 is unpredictable and our willingness to remain flexible and responsive will help us live our mission and stay galvanized as a community.

Thank you for your continued trust and support. We have so much to be proud of as a school community in navigating the challenges that have come our way. If you have specific questions, please reach out to your building principal or school nurse.

Here's to an AWESOME 2022 / 2023 School Year!

**John C. Hamstra**  
**Superintendent**  
**Southwest Local Schools**