SOUTH ROUTT SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-3
Po Box 158 | 305 S. Grant, Oak Creek, Colorado 80467
Telephone: (970) 736-2313 | FAX: (970) 736-2458

July 1, 2023

Dear South Routt School District,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! Navigating the pandemic last year was a learning experience for everyone. We are looking forward to a bit more normal school year with fewer interruptions for all.

At this time, we are working closely with Routt County Local Public Health (LPH) and Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE). Both agencies are strongly recommending mask wearing indoors, but are not requiring masks indoors. South Routt School District will follow LPH and CDPHE guidelines and masks will NOT be mandated; masks are highly recommended for everyone.

South Routt will continue with a layered approach of best practices to COVID-19 prevention. This includes increased ventilation, maximization of outdoor activities, testing, spacing, symptom screening, cleaning and disinfecting, and handwashing.

Local public health still has the authority to enforce local public health orders, which may include indoor masking, quarantine requirements and school closures. This will be decided on a case by case basis.

2023-2024 Reopening Plan

- South Routt School District will only provide in-person learning for the 2023-2024 school year. Online learning opportunities will be available on campus with a teacher to supplement the curriculum.
- Students, families and staff members should perform daily symptom screening using the At Home COVID-19 Symptom Screening Tool for Parents and Staff. Please monitor your symptoms daily and stay home when sick.
- South Routt will not have a mandatory mask requirement for students or staff; however, mask wearing is strongly encouraged for individuals while indoors. Masks will be available for staff and students as needed. Any person may voluntarily wear a mask and we will fully protect and honor individual choice.
- South Routt will not discriminate against participation/access to in-person learning or activities or have different protocols (such as mask wearing) based on vaccination status of either students or staff. South Routt will not collect vaccination information.
- Mask wearing is federally mandated on all public transportation. School vehicles are considered public transportation and masks will be required during transport.
- Social distancing of at least 3 feet will be maintained when possible.

We will continue providing the safest environment possible for students through tried-and -true disease prevention measures. These include promoting hand washing, ensuring good ventilation, encouraging activities outside, social distancing, and asking sick students to stay home.

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All school staff, students and parents can improve the safety of our school by taking their own individual actions to protect themselves.

1. Get vaccinated
2. Participate in COVID-19 testing (when appropriate)
3. Wear a mask indoors if you are not fully vaccinated
4. Practice good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
5. Stay home if you're sick and get tested right away if you have symptoms of COVID-19
6. Adhere to requirements of isolation if you test positive

When making the decision to mask or not, keep in mind the following information:

The Delta coronavirus variant is now responsible for most of the COVID-19 cases in the country, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC described Delta as more transmissible than the common cold and influenza, as well as the viruses that cause Ebola, smallpox, MERS, and SARS—and called it as contagious as chickenpox. The variant is concerning because it spreads quickly and easily, may make vaccines less effective, and may reduce the effectiveness of some monoclonal antibody treatments. As of now, this is the CDC's list of COVID-19 symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Experts say early symptoms associated with the Delta variant have shifted slightly compared to the original strain of the virus. "Delta seems to be more likely to cause stuffy nose, sore throat, and headache, while the original strain caused more cough, shortness of breath, and loss of taste and smell," says Richard Watkins, M.D., an infectious disease physician and professor of internal medicine at the Northeast Ohio Medical University. But those symptoms appear to become more severe, particularly in those who have not received a vaccine.

We are looking forward to a wonderful school year!

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Kirk Henwood, *Superintendent*

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