



# ADM Community Schools

Greg Dufoe, Superintendent | 215 North 11th Street Adel, IA 50003 | Phone: (515) 993-4283 | Fax: (515) 993-1921

ADM Families,

The 2020-21 school year is off to a great start and I am energized by the passion and commitment that students, families, and staff have demonstrated during the first several weeks of our return to learning. This past Friday I visited dozens of classrooms in all of our buildings. What I observed affirmed all I know about the people in our system - in spite of all the challenges presented by COVID for our staff and students, we are living our mission of ensuring all students learn at high levels. This is why we exist. As I have stated before, this time is a defining moment for us all at ADM and I cannot express my appreciation adequately.

The purpose of this update is to provide you with important information about the start of the 2020-21 school year and recent changes in guidance from the Iowa Department of Public Health.

**County Positivity Rate:** One metric that impacts decisions about return to learn is the county positivity rate of COVID-19. The county positivity rate measures the percentage of individuals that receive a COVID-19 test who test positive. The data is reported daily by each county using a 14-day average. With all schools in Dallas County returning to some form of on-site learning in August, there were some concerns that the county would see a significant spike in the 14-day positivity rate average.

- On August 12, the Dallas County Positivity Rate was 7.0%. As of 10/1/20, the county positivity rate is 6.4%, still lower than prior to school starting on August 24. At this time, it does not appear that students returning to school are having a significant impact on the 14-day county positivity rate, as the rate has decreased since schools in Dallas County have resumed on-site learning.

**Average Daily Attendance Rate:** Another metric that impacts decisions about return to learn is the district's average daily attendance rate. The average daily attendance rate measures the average daily attendance rate for students expected to learn on-site but who were unable to attend on-site due to illness.

- During the 2019-20 school year, ADM's average daily attendance rate was 95.25%. As of 9/30/20, ADM's 5-day average attendance rate was 95.73%. At this time, it does not appear that COVID-19 is having an impact on ADM's 5-day average daily attendance rate, as the current average rate is nearly the same when compared to the 2019-20 school year average.

**COVID-19 Numbers At ADM:** At the regular board meeting that took place on Monday, September 14, Travis Wilkins, Director of Innovative Learning and Communication, and I provided the ADM Board of Education with an update about COVID-19 positive cases, quarantines, and isolations since the start of the school year. The overall message is that we have had a terrific start to the school year with minimal numbers of positive cases among students and staff. At this time, it does not appear that on-site school attendance is having a significant impact on positive cases and quarantines. Parents and community members can view all COVID-19 positive case notices at ADM's COVID-19 website: [www.admschools.org/COVID19](http://www.admschools.org/COVID19). Below are current student COVID numbers at ADM.

- As of 10/1/20 ADM has had 14 (0.66%) students and 6 (2.06%) staff members (0 classroom teachers) test positive for COVID-19 since the start of the school year.
- ADM has had 47 students identified by the local health department as a "close contact" and quarantined due to an exposure to COVID-19 **in a school classroom, on a school bus, or an ADM Event**. Zero of these quarantined students tested positive for COVID-19 during their 14-day quarantine period.



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- In contrast, there have been 97 students identified as a close contact due to an exposure taking place **outside of a school classroom, bus, or ADM event**. These are close contacts that are likely to have occurred whether or not ADM School was even in session, as they typically occur over the weekend, at family events, social gatherings, etc.

**New Guidance - Face Coverings & Quarantines:** Close contacts are defined as an individual who has been within 6 feet for 15 minutes of another individual who has tested positive for COVID-19. On Tuesday, September 29, the Iowa Department of Public Health issued [new guidance](#) and an [infographic](#) related to quarantine and the impact of individuals wearing face masks during the time of exposure. Below are the key points and the impact that they will have at ADM.

- Close contacts of COVID-positive individuals in a school setting will no longer be required by the local health department to quarantine for 14 days if a face covering was worn consistently and correctly by BOTH the positive individual and the close contact during the time of exposure.
- In instances where both the positive individual and close contacts were wearing face coverings consistently and correctly, the close contact will only be asked to self-monitor for symptoms. If symptoms develop, the individual should self-isolate and contact their health care provider.
- It is worth noting, that if this new guidance had been in place since the start of the school year, the Dallas County Health Department would likely only have quarantined 4 students (rather than 47 students) due to exposure to COVID-19 at an ADM school, on a bus, or at an ADM event.

**Changes In ADM Policy:** The Dallas County Health Department has determined that the new guidance will only apply to individuals wearing a face mask and will NOT apply to individuals wearing a gaiter or face shield. Therefore, **starting Monday, October 5, all ADM students and staff in grades 3-12 will be required to wear a face mask and will not be allowed to wear a gaiter as an approved face covering.** ADM has provided all students in grades 3-12 with two cloth face masks. Students in grades 3-12 who did not receive their cloth face coverings may pick them up from their building office.

- At this time Adel Elementary students are not required to wear face masks. However, in light of the recent changes in guidance, the ADM Health and Safety Return To Learn Committee will be meeting to review the new guidance and to determine if a change in face mask requirements for students in grades PS-2 is appropriate.

**Understanding Isolation, Quarantine, and Self-Monitoring:** We recognize the challenge in understanding the impact of a student or staff member being identified for isolation, quarantine, or self-monitoring by the local health department. The following document provides parents with an overview of each health department designation, what parents need to know about each designation, and answers to common questions about designations and attending school. Please take a moment to review the following document for a better understanding of Isolation, Quarantine, and Self-Monitoring.

- [Parent Guide: Isolation, Quarantine, and Self-Monitoring](#)



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**On-site and Remote Learners:** Currently 92.5% of ADM students are attending school on site, with 7.5% of ADM students enrolled in the first 9-week remote learning period from August 24-October 23. Families are reminded that the next enrollment period for remote learning will open on October 12 and close on October 18. An email will be sent to all families when the enrollment period opens. Please use the following link to learn more about parent choice and remote learning during the 2020-21 school year.

- [Parent Choice - Remote Learning](#)

**Meadow View Elementary:** On Monday, September 14, the ADM Board of Education voted to approve the name Meadow View Elementary, following the recommendation of the ADM building naming committee, as the name of the new 2-4 elementary building being constructed in Adel. We are excited about the new name as well as the progress on the new building. We are on schedule for the August 2021 completion target!

Thank you for your continued support and patience as we navigate the 2020-21 school year. Please know that we are in the process of updating all of our documents and website materials to reflect these most recent changes. The school year is off to a great start and we continue to be inspired by our students who are learning in the face of many challenges and our outstanding staff who are making it all happen.

Greg