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September 3, 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Please note that Colbert County Schools will be under a **FULL MASKING MANDATE** from the date students return to school following the Labor Day weekend (Wed 09/08/2021) until Friday, September 17th. This mandate covers buses, buildings, and other areas where students and employees are in very close proximity during the school day and in the after-school program.

Our COVID-19 positive numbers have quickly risen over the last five weeks of school and I fear the trend will only continue, especially following the long holiday weekend. There is currently more than triple the number of our students and employees who were positive at the start of school and the number who are currently positive. Statewide, approximately 24.8% of all cases diagnosed in Alabama over the past four weeks have been in children. Even worse, we have recently seen some of our own students who have been hospitalized due to COVID-19.

I fully understand that many of you are adamantly opposed to having your child wear a mask. I am also very aware of the fact that many of you have requested a mask mandate from the very beginning of school. At this time, the continual upward trend in positive cases in our schools justifies taking the extra precaution. If masking doesn't help slow the spread then we will consider additional steps to help mitigate the risk of COVID-19.

Please work with us over the next two weeks in order to help reduce the number of positive cases in our schools. My sincere hope and prayer is that we will see a decline in the number of children and employees who are contracting this virus.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and patience during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Chris Hand
Superintendent

