



MERIT ACADEMY COVID-19 PLANS

Merit Academy takes to heart the need for in-person learning to minimize further learning loss, as well as the need to care for the safety of our staff and students.

As noted by the Teller County Board of County Commissioners (TCBOCC), we remain committed to respecting the State and Federal Constitutional rights of our citizens to gather, go to school, honor their religious freedoms (including vaccinations), and pursue happiness.

Given:

- According to the TCBOCC's press release on August 5, nearly 70% of our Teller County residents have had at least one dose of the vaccination, and
- According to voluntary conversations, it seems a majority of our staff have received the COVID-19 vaccination, and
- The current Teller County one week cumulative incidence rate is 35.5 and one-Week Average Positivity is .025, and these numbers continue to improve, and
- The CDPHE states, "If you're fully vaccinated, you don't need to quarantine after being exposed to someone with COVID-19," and
- The CDPHE recognizes, "Quarantining can be voluntary, and people should self-quarantine if they have a known exposure and do not know whether they have been infected. Colorado also has the legal authority to issue quarantine orders to people who were exposed to a contagious disease. This will not occur in most cases and is reserved for circumstances where it is difficult for people to voluntarily quarantine", and
- The TCBOCC on August 5, 2021 strongly urges individuals and organizations to be respectful of each person's rights and choice.

Therefore, Merit Academy:

- Will adopt the practice recommended by the TCBOCC, and will not create a "divisive environment by requiring proof of vaccination, as the right to privacy is cornerstone to our republic."



- Will respect each person’s rights choose whether or not they wish to wear a mask (or have their child(ren) wear a mask), and will not permit shaming for either decision.
- Will respectfully require parents to keep students at home, and for staff to stay home, if they are sick
- Will take precautionary measures regarding the protection of the health of our students, staff and visitors, to include
 - Frequent handwashing
 - Incorporating outdoor education as often as possible
 - Using hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
 - Emphasizing good hygiene, including but not limited to: cover one’s mouth when sneezing or coughing with a tissue or elbow sleeve; avoid touching one’s eyes, nose, or mouth; avoid sharing personal items like utensils, or cups
- Will clean and sanitize frequently touched items like desks, door handles, countertops, restrooms, and more
- Will not require staff, students, or visitors to wear masks, nor will Merit Academy inquire of one’s vaccination status, and we do respect each person’s individual decision.
- Will protect in-person learning and student and staff health. Given the background and data provided herein, as well as the layers of protective health measures in each classroom; Merit Academy will not quarantine cohorts in contact with a person who test positive for COVID
- Will respect any voluntary quarantine
- Will work with the ER BOCES and Teller Department of Health when/if dealing with an outbreak, or as the situation evolves.

Adopted 8/2021