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**Public Health Order No. 20-9-01**  
**Requiring masks or face coverings in schools and at school events.**

Securing the health and well-being of Cowley County residents and providing the safest environment for education in our community is a high priority in the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Local school districts and Boards of Education have worked diligently with the Cowley County Public Health Officer to craft the most reasonable health protective plans possible in order to allow the children of Cowley County to return to school and continue learning while simultaneously keeping the virus out of our schools. Health protection safeguards including; remaining home when ill, social distancing, increased hygiene and the wearing of protective masks and face coverings are being implemented in all schools to keep children and teachers safe and illness free. Reducing the spread of the virus within the County is essential to allow for uninterrupted school attendance at all levels.

Extracurricular activities are a vital part of each academic year. Sadly, all events, be they athletics or fine arts will all be affected by the pandemic this school year. Not only are the participants going to experience restrictions, so too will family and fans of these events. Limitations on crowd sizes and attendance requirements will be used in lieu of cancellation of such events so long as we can successfully keep our schools healthy.

As the Cowley County Public Health Officer, I am aware of the personal feelings that are held by individual citizens both pro and con centered around the wearing of masks and face coverings. I empathize with you and acknowledge that not all people can wear such a mask due to health conditions. Nevertheless, the proper use of masks especially in crowded spaces is proven to limit and block the spread of particulate from person to person which is how the virus is transmitted.

As such, in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to promote the health and well-being of Cowley County residents especially children, faculty and staff in our schools the following public health order is issued as authorized by K.S.A. 65-202.

**All individuals wishing to enter any school venues or buildings including sports stadiums or game sites must properly wear a protective mask or face-covering as follows:**

- When standing in lines at gates, restrooms or concession areas.
- When entering or exiting the facilities as part of a crowd.
- When seated in areas outdoors (including stadiums & fields) where adequate social distancing cannot be maintained.
- When inside school buildings for any reason.
- When attending indoor school events including sports.

This order will take effect on Friday, September 4, 2020 and remain in effect for the duration of the 2020-2021 school year or until such time that the pandemic threat has passed, and the order is rescinded.

September 2, 2020



Thomas Langer, MPA  
Cowley County Public Health Officer