

September 3, 2021

Dear DPS Family,

The school year has begun, and I really enjoy my role as interim superintendent and getting the opportunity to watch kids learn and grow at every level. I think one of the best sounds in the world is the playground before school starts for the day. The sound of kids excited to see one another looking forward to a day of learning. I encourage you all to take time to listen to the sounds of a playground the next time you are at school. As Covid-19 cases continue to rise in our community and the state, I want to provide some updates on where our district is.

First, as a father of three students in our district, I want you to know that we are considering many factors regarding mitigation strategies related to Covid-19. Schools are a partner with families in providing physical, emotional, social, academic, and overall developmental health for our children. The decisions we make can have an impact on any one of these factors. For this partnership to occur, I believe we need to keep our schools open.

We currently have approximately 70 students and eight staff members out from either being identified as close contact by the North Dakota Department of Health (ND DOH) or testing positive for the Covid-19 virus. Being we are not contact tracing in schools, our information is dependent on family and self-reporting. We will continue to update our district Covid-19 tracker on the Dickinson Public Schools website on Fridays.

As we continue to see numbers go up, please do not send your children to school sick. The ND DOH recently updated their [Covid-19 Childcare & School Attendance Guidance](#). This document is an excellent resource for identifying signs of infectious illness. You are the expert when it comes to your child, and we appreciate your assistance in working with us to keep our schools safe and open.

We are constantly working on mitigation strategies and reevaluating our daily processes to be safe and more efficient. Our principals and staff are doing an incredible job and have recently engaged their leadership teams to review and improve our mitigation strategies at each building.

I hope you all have a wonderful Labor Day weekend and get to enjoy some time with your loved ones. Thank you for your partnership in our children's education.

Sincerely,

Marcus Lewton
Interim Superintendent