



Greater Johnstown Career and Technology Center

September 15, 2021

Re: Order of the Acting Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Directing Face Coverings in School Entities

Dear GJCTC Student and Parent,

As you know, the Greater Johnstown Career and Technology Center (GJCTC) serves students from a variety of school districts. During the past three years of Covid era teaching and learning, GJCTC has safely and consistently implemented Covid mitigation efforts based on similar methods of our sending schools. Specifically, if 50% of our sending schools are implementing a practice, GJCTC will as well.

On September 7, 2021, an Order from the Acting Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health was issued directing face coverings in school entities. I have learned two things from this order;

- 1) There are as many interpretations of this order as there are people that read it.
- 2) Per recommendations made by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH), students can avoid contact tracing and quarantining if they are exposed to a positive individual simply by wearing a mask in school.

An excerpt from the CDC website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact>

Close Contact through Proximity and Duration of Exposure: Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, *three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes*). An infected person can spread SARS-CoV-2 starting from 2 days before they have any symptoms (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days before the positive specimen collection date), until they meet criteria for discontinuing home isolation.

- **Exception:** In the **K–12 indoor classroom** setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a [clinically compatible illness](#)) if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) [correctly and consistently](#) wore well-fitting [masks](#) the entire time.

This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.

As of today, September 15, 2021, GJCTC now has over 50% of our sending schools requiring a bona fide medical exemption form to not comply with the Order. Therefore, to be consistent with our past practices, GJCTC will as well.

We will honor the current parent exception forms through the end of the week. Commencing on Monday, September 20, 2021 only a bona fide medical exemption form will be acceptable for a student and adult to not comply with the Order.

I am so grateful to have such an awesome GJCTC Spartan family of students, parents, faculty and staff that always pull together to support the education we offer at GJCTC. I need you now more than ever. As I write this, GJCTC has its highest case count of student covid positives at one time than any time prior to today. We must ensure the health and safety of each other as much as possible. GJCTC prides itself on teaching safe work PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) practices; wearing a mask is now one of them.

I truly wish you a happy, healthy, and safe day.



John S. Augustine II
Administrative Director