



DATE: November 6, 2020

TO: Tom Goodney

FROM: Dr. Mysheika Roberts and Joe Mazzola

We are following up on our conversation with Franklin County superintendents earlier this week, and the request of the group to put some guidance in writing about COVID 19 and k-12 education. Yesterday, we met with our local COVID Defense Team to discuss next steps in our collective fight against COVID-19. We are encouraged by the many partners who were at the virtual table, including some of our k-12 leaders, and the commitment we all share to protect the health and safety of our community, including our youngest residents.

Cases are increasing at a rate not seen since the pandemic started and new cases are occurring as a result of gatherings at people's homes and informal settings, outside of schools and businesses where safety measures are closely monitored and followed. As we move into the ninth month of the pandemic, we know more now than we did at the onset and we continue to learn as we go.

Despite rising case numbers, we believe that it is safe for kids to go back to and remain in the classroom as long as all safeguards are followed, including wearing a mask and social distancing. The data shows that children and teachers are safe in the classroom, our behavior outside of schools puts them – and all of us – at risk. We also understand that each district has to make the best decisions for its students, educators and families. Franklin County Public Health and Columbus Public Health will continue to support our districts as we all continue to navigate this pandemic.

As our COVID Defense Team works to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our community, we are asking everyone to help protect their individual health – and the health of our entire community – by avoiding gatherings with people outside of your household, wearing a mask, staying home if you are sick, keeping your distance and washing your hands. We also remind everyone that if they have been exposed to COVID-19, they must quarantine for 14 days regardless of a negative test result. You cannot test your way out of quarantine! We understand that the community is tired, but we cannot let our guard down and give up now. It will take all of us doing everything we can to once again flatten the curve and get to the other side of this pandemic.