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DATE: July 10, 2020  
TO: ALLEN COUNTY SCHOOLS  
FROM: Matt Sutter, MD MBA FACEP  
Health Commissioner

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Mindy Waldron, REHS, CFSP  
Department Administrator

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**SUBJECT: COVID-19 Return to School Fall 2020 Mask Wearing Recommendation**

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As schools prepare for their fall return for students, and amid the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Health wanted to provide Allen County Schools with their official recommendation regarding the wearing of masks/facial coverings in school settings. This statement is provided below for your reference. We are extremely appreciative of the collaborative working relationship we have enjoyed with the schools over these past few tenuous months. Let's work toward a safe return for students and staff! Thank you for your consideration of this important public health issue. Best Wishes!

**Schools and Facial Coverings – OFFICIAL STATEMENT**

**We strongly support all Allen County schools that have made a decision to require face coverings for staff and students when social distancing cannot be maintained. For schools who have not adopted such a policy, we would strongly recommend doing so. This approach is consistent with guidance from the CDC, the Indiana State Department of Health, the Indiana Department of Education and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Masking is a powerful tool to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and other viruses. While no single tool will work on its own, we believe using masks along with social distancing, hand hygiene and other measures such as cleaning and disinfection of surfaces will likely decrease disruptions from closures and quarantines during the school year.**