

Thank you, parents,

First, let me recognize the teachers and staff for the extraordinary effort in keeping our children safe and healthy during this pandemic and overseeing the new Covid protocols this year while also performing their regular duties as teachers. **If you have not done so lately, I would encourage you to thank your schoolteacher.** Also, I am grateful for all the emphasis and effort each of you have put forth in keeping our school a safe place during this global pandemic. Regardless of your role in our school, as parents, grandparents, or teachers, you are vital. We could not provide our vital role for our constituency without the devotion and effort shown by each of you every day.

I would like to pass on the new changes to our Covid Case Response policy that was voted by the school board this week. As was stated in our earlier Covid policy proposal at the beginning of the year, this policy is fluid – we are continuing to make adaptations to our policy as new information, data, and studies become available. These voted changes are the result of the Tennessee Department of Health adjusting their recommendation to schools.

I would also like to share some other information that was considered when these changes were initially proposed:

- 1) Dr. David McLain, Director, Greene County Schools, sent me an email regarding their findings within the Greene County School System.

“We know from our data so far; **the virus IS NOT being spread by students at school in the classroom.** We analyzed every contact this year through Friday, October 23rd (nearly 400 students and adults) to see how many later became infected with COVID. What we found is that **there have been ZERO students who became infected due to contact with a known positive student in the classroom.** As of Friday, October 23, only seven (7) of the 46 COVID cases appear to have been spread at school, from one staff member to another.”

- 2) This is an article published in the American Academy of Pediatrics which concluded that school-aged children are far less drivers of SARS-CoV-2 transmission than adults. (SARS-CoV-2 is the virus that causes COVID-19)

<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/146/2/e2020004879.full.pdf>

- 3) The Greeneville City School System changed their policy to better align with recommendations from the TN Department of Health who also changed their recommendations last month. GAA is also adopting the Covid Case Response Rubric with a few changes. The green box at the top (No Cases in the Building) will be used with the GAA Covid Policy Protocols as voted by the school board. The TN Department of Health’s Covid Case Response Rubric can be found here:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/health-&-safety/TDHCovid19CaseResponseRubricandNarratve.pdf>

- 4) The data will be drawn from the TN Department of Health website and the link is also included in WhatsApp.

<https://covid19.tn.gov/data/dashboards/?County=Greene>

- 5) I have also included two screen shots in WhatsApp to help you navigate where the data will be drawn.
- 6) The GAA Covid Policy Protocols as voted by the school board is attached in this WhatsApp message.
- 7) Reminder that although our new protocol under yellow that masks are recommended, Greene County is still under a mask mandate until December 30, 2020. Teachers may still require masks in their individual classrooms while GAA is in the Yellow Zone.

Please contact the office or Mr. Nomura with your questions or comments.

Blessings,

Randy Nomura, Principal