

In order to provide a quality education, we are proposing the following Mask Guidelines at Browning Public Schools beginning 4th quarter (March 28th):

Green: Masks are optional below 50 total cases 5 hospitalization 5 day average

Red: Masks are required above 50 cases 5 plus hospitalizations 5 day average

We will continue to provide Rapid Testing to Staff and Students. We will provide masks and hand sanitizer.

Most schools have dropped mask mandates. (Including Missoula County- a large “liberal” district and one of the last

Research has shown that “mandates” are not as effective as education, support and personal choice. We have a high rate of vaccinated staff and students.

Being vaccinated and wearing a mask offers an appropriate level of protection against omicron.

Masks are providing barriers to learning including the ability to teach basic phonics at the younger grades which is vital to reading, promoting classroom engagement and reading student and staff emotion.

Poor attendance and the potential for academic disengagement has replaced COVID as our primary health concern:

Students who drop out of high school may experience poor health and premature death.[4](#), [19](#), [20](#) Individuals who do not graduate high school are more likely to self-report overall poor health.[19](#), [21](#), [22](#), [23](#), [24](#) They also more frequently report suffering from at least 1 chronic health condition—for example, asthma, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, hepatitis, or stomach ulcers—than graduates.[25](#) Ultimately, finishing more years of high school, and especially earning a high school diploma decreases the risk of premature death.[26](#)

This is from the CDC and the United States office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.