



MORTON

UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

Dec. 11, 2020

Quarantines to be shortened in schools

Effective immediately, Morton School District 709 will be implementing the new, 10-day healthy quarantine guideline issued by the Centers for Disease Control, with concurrence from the Illinois Department of Public Health. That's a change from the previous 14-day isolation period.

There are some caveats to the new 10-day rule. One is that the person in quarantine *cannot exhibit any COVID-19 symptoms* during that time frame. Otherwise, the quarantine reverts to the 14-day standard.

From the district's perspective, this is a reasonable condition, as school officials certainly do not want shortened quarantines to result in additional sickness or quarantines for others. That said, the CDC is making this change because it considers the latter risk a minimal one.

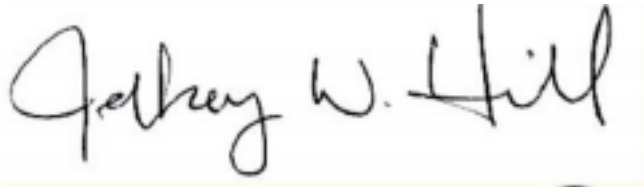
Other precautions include correct and consistent mask use, social distancing, hand and cough hygiene, constant surface cleaning and disinfection, crowd avoidance and limiting contact with those most vulnerable to severe illness. The district will be relying on individuals and families to honestly self-monitor those situations.

Meanwhile, the district will take a more cautious approach to the new provision allowing those in quarantine to test out of it with a negative result after seven days, exercising this option **with employees only**. For now, coordinating test results and verification with potentially dozens of students makes this CDC provision too difficult to administer.

District officials continue to converse regularly with the local health department. All involved will be informed of any changes to protocol as we move forward.

In the meantime, stay well, everybody.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "Jeffrey W. Hill" in a cursive, slightly slanted script. The letters are connected, and the overall appearance is that of a personal or professional signature.

Jeffrey W. Hill, Ed.D

Superintendent

Morton Community Unit District 709