

USD 415 board votes to change quarantine policy

**(KNZA)--The Hiawatha School Board has voted to revise the district's quarantine policy.**

**Following a lengthy discussion Monday evening, the USD 415 board voted unanimously to only quarantine students and staff who have at least two symptoms of COVID-19.**

**That's a change from the guidelines established by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, which the board had adopted as part of the district's Return to Learn Plan.**

**At a special meeting August 31, the board voted to put a mask mandate in place for two weeks in an effort to reduce the number of students in quarantine. At that time, there were more than 100 students in quarantine.**

**At Monday evening's meeting, District Head Nurse Erin Wenger said coronavirus-related numbers in Hiawatha schools had dramatically improved. Wenger reported there were a total of six positive cases in the district, with three of those at the high school. In addition, she said there were 26 students in quarantine.**

**Concern over the possibility of a spike in quarantines after removing the mask mandate is what led the board to change the policy to only quarantine symptomatic students and district staff.**

**It was the general consensus of the board to let the mask mandate expire as of the original date of the morning of Tuesday, September 14.**

**During the public comment portion of the meeting several patrons voiced their concerns about the mask mandate.**

Many Signals Communications