Greetings and Happy New Year!

As the spring semester begins on Monday, 10.1.2022, all of Joensuu’s comprehensive and upper secondary schools will continue with in-person teaching.

Joensuu is in the pandemic’s spreading stage now. In accordance with recommendations from the infectious disease doctor and the decisions of Joensuu’s contingency management team, the following health and safety instructions will be in power in Joensuu’s comprehensive and upper secondary schools as the spring semester begins on 10.1.2022.

1. A strong mask recommendation for students in sixth grade and above in all indoor spaces in schools and for all students in school transport. In combined classes with fifth and sixth grade students, the mask recommendation also applies to fifth-graders.
* Schools will distribute masks to the students mentioned above and to staff.
* The proper use of masks will be reviewed in school.
* School staff must wear masks when there are other people in the room.
* Due to the situation and the regulation of mask distribution, the guardian will contact the school principal if the student cannot wear a mask for some reason.
1. Based on the recommendations given by the OKM and THL on 22.12.
* Schools will pay attention to handwashing and social distancing while taking into account the special aspects of activities.
* Students will eat with their own class or group. Lunch can be served at different times if social distancing is not otherwise possible.
* Teaching groups are kept separate for the whole school day in primary school. The teaching group may be changed for elective classes and teaching in one’s mother tongue if the teaching cannot be arranged otherwise.
* Grades 7-9 will focus on social distancing and hygiene if teaching groups are impossible to keep separate.
* Extracurricular activities will continue in schools.
* Teaching in facilities outside of school is allowed according to the instructions of the facility’s administrator and the instructions in this announcement.
* Students may not come to school with symptoms of infection.
* If a comprehensive school student falls ill or has symptoms of infection during the school day, they will wait for their guardian in a separate room with adult supervision. An upper secondary student or adult student will inform the staff of their illness and leave the school.
* Large school events will not be held if social distancing and adequate hygiene cannot be ensured.
* General restrictions on group sizes (in public events) will not be applied to teaching in schools and other activities regulated by law.
* If people other than school staff and students participate in a school event, it will be considered a public event. In that case, the current local and regional orders must be followed.
* Having guests in schools or school areas should be avoided. The following are allowed
	+ A single guardian’s visit related to carrying out the curriculum.
	+ Taking care of official tasks or necessary work tasks.
	+ Completion of official internships or on-the-job training periods that are included in the degree curriculum.
* The mask recommendation and other health safety instructions in this announcement apply to guests.
* Meetings for the whole staff will be arranged online.
* Staff does not generally move from one place to another if it is not necessary for the completion of the curriculum.

We will inform you when there are any changes to the above.

Announcement from SiunSote:

* Schools do not necessarily have the latest information on SiunSote’s quarantine and exposure procedures, child and youth testing practices or the recovery time after falling ill before returning to school. You can find more information on these on the SiunSote website [Front page - siunsote.fi](https://www.siunsote.fi/en/web/english)
* SiunSote is preparing for all 5 to 11-year-old children’s corona vaccinations starting week 2, 2022. The new regulation on children’s corona vaccinations came into power on 23.12.2021, and it permits the vaccine to be administered to the whole age group. SiunSote will inform more on media and social media as well as on Wilma after the beginning of the spring semester in schools.

Have a good weekend,

Joensuu 7.1.2022
Olli Kauppinen
Director of Education