August 24, 2021

Hello, Citizens of Whitefish:

With the recent surge of Covid-19 cases in Flathead County, our community once again faces the need for everyone to consider increased precautionary measures to protect our vulnerable population, keep our businesses open, and students in school.

Flathead County continues to have the highest number of active cases statewide, and our hospitals are strained due to the large influx of COVID-19 patients.

The City of Whitefish commends the Whitefish School Board, which acts autonomously from our city government, for taking action to protect the health and safety of their students by temporarily requiring the use of face coverings for kindergarten through 6th grade.

These decisions are not easy to make. Schools in several states have already been forced to move to virtual learning because of high positive case numbers. Public schools in Billings just instituted a school-wide mask mandate because of a severe Covid outbreak among students.

We also commend the community for their efforts to work together to keep our businesses running and welcome our kids back to school. While we are all entitled to our opinions, it is up to each one of us to take our responsibility as citizens seriously. Civil dialogue and disagreement are an essential part of civic life. What we cannot tolerate is harassment, intimidation, or personal attacks on our neighbors.

Let us each work hard to treat each other with care and respect and model for our children the importance of our community working together to bring an end to the pandemic. Please help our community continue to be the supporting place it is as we navigate these times.

-Mayor John Muhlfeld