

**2021-1-29**

**Happy birthday, Kansas! Today our great state celebrates 160 years. Kansas Day is celebrated annually on January 29 to commemorate the anniversary of the state's 1861 admission to the Union. We became the 34th state. According to the Kansas Historical Society (KHS), Rooks County received the county name from John Calvin Rooks, a private in the Union army during the Civil War. The county was organized on November 26, 1872. The KHS reports there was a pandemic in Kansas in 1918.**

**Rooks County has seen a decrease in new COVID-19 cases throughout the county. This week the absenteeism rate is at 1.7% above the baseline from 2019-2020. The positive testing rate continues to decline and is at 11.5% this week. Rooks County is starting to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and will follow the Kansas Vaccination Phases. Rooks County has moved into Phase 2. If you are interested in getting on the list to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, please call the health department or your primary care physician.**

**School districts will continue in-person for the week of February 1-5, 2021. If there is any adjustment required to the learning setting due to concerns in the schools, we will update your family quickly following a decision.**

**KSHSAA adjusted their guidelines regarding participation and spectators. Beginning today through the end of the winter activities regular season, districts will be permitted to allow up to four spectators per participant. Districts may have stricter policies based upon facilities and local health guidelines.**

**Rooks County School Districts have done an excellent job working to minimize the spread in our county. At this time all of the schools in the county are planning to allow up to four spectators per participant if the nature of the event allows us to do so. The districts will make this determination per sport/event. In addition, each district throughout the state will have their own policy for entrance. Please check prior to attending the event.**

**The Rooks County School Districts encourage all spectators to follow the regulations as presented in each district. The current policy will be monitored closely and will change as needed. Face masks and social distancing are required at all times and at all events. Children attending an event must sit with their parent/guardian. We ask spectators to only attend the events their students are participating. Should we see an increase in the spread or if spectator attendance becomes unmanageable, we will not be able to continue with four spectators. We are working hard to ensure all contests are live streamed. If possible, we encourage fans to watch the event virtually.**

**We ask you to do everything you can to help us keep our students in school and our community in a healthy place. Please wear a mask when you interact with anyone outside your immediate household and avoid all gatherings, large and small. We are thankful to live in a county where we take care of one another. It is a great day to be a Kansan.**