

February 16, 2022

Dear West Deptford Township Staff and Families:

Recently, Governor Murphy announced that effective March 7, 2022, the Statewide mask mandate in schools and child care settings will end. Although school districts are still awaiting guidance from the NJ Department of Health in regard to any possible changes in the recommendations for close contacts and/or quarantine/isolation periods, we feel it is essential to inform you of our anticipated procedures which will go into effect next month. Please see details below that will go into effect on March 7, 2022 in West Deptford Township Schools:

Face Masks

Face masks will be optional for students, staff, and visitors, both indoors and outdoors. This includes during the school day, as well as before and after school events, and weekend/holiday events.

Face Masks Required on Buses

School buses are subject to Federal masking regulations. As of the date of this letter, the Federal mandate requires masks to be worn on school buses. Note: In the event this mandate is lifted or changed prior to March 7, 2022, you will be updated.

Visiting the Nurse Due to Symptoms

Anyone visiting the school nurse due to symptoms of illness will need to wear a mask. This is for the benefit of well students who visit the office throughout the day, as well as the nurses who are dealing with ill students all day long.

Outside of School Requirements/Trips

Students traveling to outside schools or facilities for field trips or activities must abide by the mask policies of the site they are visiting.

Quarantining/Close Contact

(Please note, these guidelines are subject to change based on expected upcoming guidance from the Department of Health.) Contact tracing will continue to be conducted by our nurses. Parents/guardians will be informed via email if their child becomes a close contact in school.

Regardless of their child's vaccination status, **parents/guardians** will choose one of the following for their child should their child be determined to be a close contact:

1. Their child may remain in school (as long as they do not develop any symptoms).
2. Their child may complete the recommended quarantine (currently 5 days) with virtual learning.

Due to increased transmission within the home compared to in school, household close contacts must quarantine as follows:

- Preschool - Grade 12: If an unvaccinated student is identified as a close contact of a positive case IN THE HOME, they will need to quarantine: for a minimum of 10 days if you choose for your child not to test, OR test on or after day 5 and provide a negative test result in order to return to school on day 6. Note: Negative home-test results cannot be accepted to shorten a quarantine period. The isolation period for positive individuals may change pending further guidance from the health department.

Additional information will be provided from the district in the upcoming weeks. Please note: All the above changes take effect on Monday, March 7, 2022; however, updates will be provided in the event that the Federal

mandate requiring wearing masks on buses or any other updated guidance specific to isolation or quarantine is provided from the State.

Current classroom and lunchroom/recess procedures will remain in place at this time. If your child is symptomatic, refer to our [at home daily health screener](#) for guidance, contact your school nurse, and please keep your child home. If you or your child need to be tested for COVID-19, please try one of these links: [Testing Link 1](#) or [Testing Link 2](#) to locate a local testing facility. In the event the Governor reinstates the Statewide mask mandate, West Deptford Schools would be required to comply.

Sincerely,

Greg Cappello
Superintendent