

MT. BLUE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHESTERVILLE – FARMINGTON – INDUSTRY – NEW SHARON – NEW VINEYARD – STARKS – TEMPLE – VIENNA – WELD – WILTON
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“Public Schools not only serve the public, they make the public.”

TO: RSU 9 Students, Parents & Staff
FROM: Christian M. Elkington, Superintendent
RE: COVID-19 Plan Update
DATE: 3-8-2022

At tonight's RSU 9 School Board Meeting our School Board voted 16-0 to adjust our district's COVID-19 Guidelines and expectations and to start with optional mask wearing in all RSU 9 Buildings and on all RSU 9 Buses for students, staff, and visitors immediately. We should all be proud of the work our students, staff and community have done together in a respectful manner to get us to this point! Thanks go to each of you for working on behalf of all of us in RSU 9.

The Board also approved the following recommendations, a two-phase plan and safety protocols:

Recommendations

- Change from Universal Masking to Masking Optional (based on local data) in school and on buses
- Continue:
 - To ask parents, staff, and students to follow the daily health screener before heading to school
 - With Pooled Testing for Spring Sports
 - To recommend that all students and staff participate in Pooled Testing
 - With increased school building and bus cleaning
 - With classroom spacing expectations
 - With present lunchroom spacing expectations for Grades PreK - 5
 - To open windows in classrooms and on buses whenever the temperature makes it possible
 - To not allow most during the day visitors into schools until May while we continue to monitor school and county data and prepare to safely (for students and staff) bring back some of these events and visitors
- Implement a 5-day isolation and quarantine period AND an additional 5-day masking protocol for students in grades 6-12 who test positive (*this current practice for students in grades PreK-5 & ME CDC Recommendation*)
- No outdoor masking
- Grades 6-12 return to non-COVID Breakfast and Lunch expectations
- Schools may return to grade level assemblies with some spacing but avoid full-school assemblies until May 2nd
- Give the Superintendent the authority to return to universal making at an individual school and the buses they ride for a two-week incubation period if there is an increase/outbreak in cases deemed concerning by ME CDC
- Contact tracing will not be reinstated. If none of the following *exemptions* are met, only those with reported exposure outside of school will quarantine.
 - *Exemptions*
 - Covid-19 in the last 90 days
 - Fully vaccinated
 - Participates in pooled testing
- **Phase Two of Opening:**
 - The Superintendent will return to the Board at the April 12th meeting with a draft plan for visitors and events to begin May 2nd if our county continues in Medium or moves to Low per Federal CDC guidance.

“Preach, my dear sir, a crusade against ignorance.” Thomas Jefferson

- Inside the school, after school events such as concerts and parent nights following the “Pod” format that athletics has been using
- Daytime school visitors - we will continue to monitor school and county data and prepare to safely (for students and staff) bring back some of these visitors, hopefully by May 2

Next Steps and Safety Protocols

- RSU 9 will fit-tested N95 masks for staff (based on their request)
- KN95 masks will continue to be made available for all RSU 9 staff
- KN95 masks will be made available to students (based on parent or student request)
- Principals and guidance counselors will develop talking points to review with students around the two-phase plan and the importance of showing support and respect for mask choice with classmates
- Principals and guidance counselors will visit classrooms or meet with grade levels (Grades 6-12) to discuss the two-phase plan and the importance of showing support and respect for mask choice with classmates.
- Negative student-to-student comments towards students who either choose not to wear masks or choose to continue to wear masks will not be tolerated and depending on the context will be considered either BULLYING or HARASSMENT and will receive immediate, age-appropriate consequences.