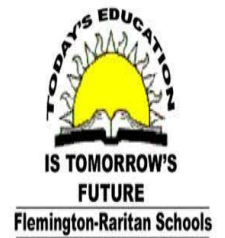


Flemington-Raritan Regional School District
Dr. Kari McGann
Superintendent of Schools
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February 11, 2022

Dear Flemington-Raritan Regional School District Parents, Faculty, Staff, and Community Members,

This past Monday, on February 7, Governor Murphy shared information that the universal statewide mask mandate for schools and childcare settings will be lifted effective March 7, 2022. See previous communication [here](#) and [here](#). Governor Murphy further indicated that he would be releasing information from the Department of Health to assist schools with regard to the lifting of the mask mandate.

Yesterday, on February 10, 2022, Governor Murphy reinstated the Public Health Emergency with the publication of [Executive Order \(EO\) #288](#). EO #288 extends the Public Health Emergency for thirty days from publication, essentially March 12, 2022. Due to the Governor's announcement earlier this week announcing March 7th as the lifting of the mask mandate, we will continue to move forward with the date of March 7, 2022. (Please note, March 7 is a Staff Development Day for Staff. School is closed for students.) The District will continue to abide by all Executive Orders.

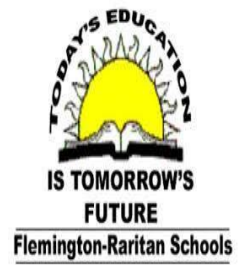
Our District's Road Forward Plan has been revised to read that *"In alliance with Executive Orders if masks are not required by an Executive Order or State mandate, face coverings will not be barred by any individual as all individuals will have a choice to continue to wear a mask. Instances of bullying will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action."* The Board of Education's anticipated approval of the Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan-- School Closure Preparedness Plan on Monday night, February 14, 2022, will formalize the Superintendent's recommendation. Following approval, masks will not be required in school beginning on March 7, 2022. However, to be abundantly clear, the Executive Order currently remains in effect for facemasks to be required in schools. Students, staff, and faculty should continue to wear masks while indoors at school until March 7, 2022.

The District understands that the optional masking is welcomed by some and that others have concerns. The District's approach is that for those that desire to wear a mask, the District will ensure that the environment is conducive to learning and that everyone feels safe and respected. Those staff and students that do not want to wear a mask will be allowed to make that choice once the mask mandate is lifted. Everyone will be treated with the dignity, respect, and care that all deserve whether selecting to wear a mask or not wear a mask.

At this time, the [CDC requirement](#) for *"persons to wear masks when traveling on any conveyance (e.g. airplanes, trains, subways, buses, taxis, ride-shares, ferries, ships, trolleys, and cable cars) into or within the United States"* remains in effect. This means that until the mandate is amended, students must continue to wear a mask while riding the school bus. We expect the upcoming information released will assist schools to clarify the mandate of continuing to wear a mask while on a school bus. Until then, students should continue to wear a mask while on the school bus. We understand how the Governor's announcement to lift the mask mandate but still require students to wear a mask on the school bus may seem contradictory. The District continues to relay concerns and strongly urge others for clarification.

Regarding quarantine protocols and contact tracing, the District is reviewing guidelines published by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia which provides guidance for in-person education in K-1 educational settings, along with consulting the latest direction and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and reviewing State and localized data regarding transmission. Guidance from the State will be critical to understanding how contact tracing and quarantine will be handled, if at all.

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A thoughtful response is required on all matters, especially those concerning policies that are targeted toward the guidance for health and safety. Please keep reading all school and district communication so that you have accurate and timely information. The District will continue to update our community regularly as guidance is shared with us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kari McGann".

Dr. Kari McGann
Superintendent of Schools