Mask Guidance

Posted: March 9, 2022

Summary: Seattle Public Schools will lift its current mask requirements beginning Monday, March 14.

Masks optional for SPS students and staff starting March 14

Seattle Public Schools will lift its current mask requirements beginning Monday, March 14.

While masking will now be optional, the district welcomes and encourages staff and students to continue mask wearing through the end of the year if that is their preference.

In alignment with Gov. Jay Inslee’s updated health guidance, the Washington State Department of Health, and Public Health – Seattle & King County, masks will become optional both indoors and outdoors at SPS buildings and on school buses (yellow buses). Please note: masks will continue to be required for students who ride King County Metro public transit.

Until March 14, current masking protocols will remain in place. Masks will continue to be required for all students, staff, and visitors on all SPS campuses and school buses through March 13.

We are pleased that COVID-19 cases continue to fall in SPS schools and King County. However, there may be times when we will need to bring back effective mitigations if there is an increase in community, classroom, or school-wide transmission. SPS will continue to monitor COVID-19 rates in our schools. Updates can be found on our COVID-19 dashboard.

The health and safety of our students, staff, and communities remains a top priority for SPS. While masks will be optional, additional layers of mitigation remain in place including:

- Vaccine and booster access at SPS clinics
- Protected health care rooms
- COVID-19 testing opportunities
- Masks for students and staff, who want to continue masking
- Physical distancing to the greatest extent possible
- Increased air ventilation (HVAC) and air quality testing

As always, frequent handwashing and staying home when you are sick are still strongly recommended.

We understand that there are different beliefs, opinions, reasons, and comfort levels around masking, yet it is important to be patient and respect the personal choices of others.

Some families may have vulnerable household members or have younger siblings who are not yet eligible for vaccination. We will continue to foster a climate of empathy and equity. Our students and school community have been through a challenging – and in some ways traumatic – two years, yet our outlook is hopeful. We are grateful that brighter and healthier days are ahead of us.

If you have questions or comments, please use our Let’s Talk form.

Be well,

Dr. Brent Jones
SPS Superintendent