

GLOVERSVILLE ENLARGED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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August 19, 2021

Dear Gloversville School Community Members:

I hope this letter finds you all healthy, happy, and excited about the new school year. We had a very successful Kindergarten through grade 12 summer enrichment program and look forward to seeing all students return to full-time, in-person learning on Tuesday, September 7, 2021. We have been monitoring the latest developments in regards to COVID-19 transmission in our community and have been working diligently to ensure we are prepared to safely open our schools this fall. **Our highest priorities are the health and well-being of students and staff, and keeping our doors open for in-person instruction. All other decisions will be made with these priorities in mind.**

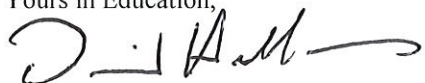
Our incoming Governor, current Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul, has been clear in recent days that she intends to implement universal masking across New York State when she assumes the office of Governor on August 24th. She is doing this to combat the Delta Variant of COVID-19. We have already been planning to mandate masks indoors when school opens due to current "high" COVID-19 transmission rates in Fulton County. I know this is disappointing to some, but we feel it is congruent with our priorities to keep our schools open and mitigate the spread of the virus in our community. If transmission rates in our region decline in the future to "low" or "moderate" levels, the district administration and Board of Education are certainly receptive to parents, students and staff using their own discretion in the wearing of masks in the school building if physically distanced 3 feet or more. With that said, if the state government mandates masks, as we think they will, local discretion will be lost until they determine otherwise.

Please note that masks will also be required on all district busses, but will NOT be required when students are eating lunch or when they are outdoors and maintaining a physical distance of 3 feet or more. We are still examining the feasibility of allowing masks to be removed during instruction if/when students and staff are sufficiently distanced. The guidance has been vague on that point. Regardless, there will be sufficient mask breaks for students throughout the school day.

The district will not be offering a remote instructional model with our staff, as we are unable to allocate the required resources while bringing all students back for in-person daily learning. We have secured a limited number of slots in a Capital Region BOCES virtual program for medically fragile students. If you believe your child is eligible for such a program, please contact your child's building principal as soon as possible to learn more.

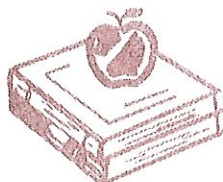
Thank you for your understanding as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. Educating children is a challenge in the best of times, and we need your support and cooperation now more than ever. We are thrilled to have your children return to daily instruction this fall and look forward to seeing them having fun learning alongside their friends and classmates. I hope we can all emerge from this difficult experience a little wiser and more patient. Our children are watching and learning from our actions and attitude. For their sake, let's all set a great example and remain steadfast in our optimism and grace when facing adversity and disappointment beyond our control.

Yours in Education,



David Halloran
Superintendent of Schools

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"Building a Bright Future for Our Community"

Key Points to GESD Reopening plan

Masks:

At this time, all students and staff will wear masks in school buildings regardless of vaccination status based on recommendations from the CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics, and likely forthcoming New York State Dept. of Health mandate.

Mask breaks will be provided throughout the day.

Masks will be on when not eating in the cafeteria.

Masks are required while riding district busses.

Masks are **NOT** required when outside and physically distanced 3 feet or more.

Physical Distancing:

When able, physical distancing of 3 feet or more will be maintained in combination with universal indoor masking.

Daily Health Screens

Daily health screens are no longer required, although our elementary schools may still opt to do them. **It is critical that all parents/guardians keep symptomatic children home.**

Seating Charts:

The district will continue to use seating charts in classrooms, during lunches and on busses for contact tracing and quarantine purposes.

Quarantine:

Based on CDC Guidelines, vaccinated individuals will **NOT** be required to quarantine after exposure to COVID-19 as long as they are asymptomatic. They will need to be tested in 3 - 5 days after exposure and wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result.

No Remote Learning Option

There will not be a remote learning option available in GESD. Slots in Capital Region BOCES' remote learning program are available for medically fragile students.

Please note that all reopening procedures are subject to change as conditions on the ground dictate