

Dear Faculty and Staff,

On Friday the CDC released guidelines that suggest most individuals can stop wearing face coverings. Sunday afternoon, Governor Hochul held a press conference and **effective Wednesday, March 2 the state mask mandate in schools will be lifted**. Wearing face coverings will remain a requirement for Monday & Tuesday this week.

Below is an update on the protocols we will still be following:

**Face Coverings** - as of Wednesday, March 2, the mask mandate in schools will be lifted. This means that the wearing of a face covering for faculty, staff & students will be optional in all classroom and school settings on our campus. We will continue to supply face coverings for anyone who chooses to wear one. Please note that face coverings are optional as of Wednesday. The choice to wear a face-covering is at the discretion of the individual employee/student/guardian.

**Social Distancing** - We will continue to enact our social distancing procedures to the extent practicable. We will survey families in the coming weeks on their support for student group work with this new change in place.

**Testing Kits** - we still have a supply of test kits and anticipate receiving more this week and will continue to make them available as long as supplies last. If you would like a kit, please see your principal/supervisor.

**Mandatory & Volunteer Testing** - as of now mandatory weekly testing for individuals who have not submitted proof of vaccination continues. All of these individuals will still be required to test weekly. Individuals who have elected to volunteer to test will also still be allowed to do so on a voluntary basis. I will keep you posted if any of this changes.

**Reporting of Positive Cases** - We will continue to work with the local departments of health to report positive cases. I will keep you updated on any changes to this process.

**All other protocols** - including quarantine, close contacts, and Test to Stay remain in place until further notice.

We expect more detailed guidance to follow from NYSED. If that guidance impacts our protocols we will communicate those changes ASAP.

Throughout this pandemic, we have developed our protocols based on guidance from the State Education Department, the New York State Department of Health, local departments of health, and the CDC. Therefore, these protocols may change as conditions change. Thank you all for doing your part to keep each other safe and healthy, while continuing to provide instruction and opportunities for students. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions regarding the above information.

Beth