

February 28, 2022

Highland Parents and Staff,

I am so happy to see the blue skies and sunshine this morning. Perhaps the winter weather we experienced over the last couple of weeks will soon be in the distant past. We received some updated guidance over the weekend that I would like to share. The Illinois Supreme Court issued an order on the State Defendants' appeal regarding the school COVID litigation that originated in Sangamon County. The Supreme Court declined to rule on the merits of the appeal--i.e., whether the Governor had authority to issue the Executive Orders mandating masks, exclusion of close contacts, and employee vaccination/testing requirements. Instead, the Supreme Court denied the petition for leave to appeal but exercised its supervisory authority to vacate Judge Grischow's February 4 temporary restraining order. The Court then remanded the matter back to Sangamon County Circuit Court.

Directly following this occurrence, Governor Pritzker announced that the school mask mandate would end as of today. In addition, the CDC announced a change to the CDC order regarding masks on school buses. The CDC is no longer enforcing its previous requirement for masking on buses or vans operated by public and private school systems. This means masks are optional in all school environments indefinitely. The court case will continue in Sangamon County and hopefully clarify the authority and process by which any future mask requirements must follow. I will provide updates should any actions occur that will impact future school environments.

On another note, Highland CUSD No. 5 will have a regular board meeting on Monday, February 28 at 6:00 p.m. at 400 Broadway. The meetings are open to the public. The meeting is also available via live stream using the following link: <https://youtu.be/WauPsDGOwx0>

Happy Monday and have a wonderful week!

Sincerely,

Michael S. Sutton, Superintendent