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# Sanford School Department

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

Paula Cote, Chair    Amy Seigny, Vice-Chair  
Jennifer Davie    Jonathan Mapes    John Roux

March 3, 2022

Dear Students, Staff and Families,

Yesterday, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Maine Department of Education (DOE) announced an upcoming change to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). **Effective March 9, 2022, Maine school units and child care providers will move to optional masking.** The announcement shared that the “change is dependent on continued stability in COVID-19 trends in Maine.”

At the next Sanford School Committee meeting on Monday, March 7, 2022, I will be recommending that the School Committee approve updating our 2021-2022 Return to School Plan making masks/ face coverings optional to align with the updated SOP. Effective Wednesday, March 9, students and staff who wish to continue to mask for any reason are most certainly welcome to do so until further notice. The following procedures will be in place to ensure everyone is safe based on the newly updated guidance:

- Continued masking will be optional for both students and staff. KN95 masks continue to be available in schools.
- Pooled testing will continue
- A positive test will require a five (5) day quarantine from the date of symptom onset or from the date of the positive test if no symptoms.
- Masking will be required for an additional five (5) days after release from quarantine and a return to school (days 6-10).
- The Sanford School Department will continue to monitor the following data points:
  - CDC community transmission maps
  - Wastewater COVID levels
  - Pooled Testing Results
  - County Transmission Data
  - Absentee data
  - Vaccination Rates

It is important to note that we will continue to maintain our other COVID-19 mitigation measures and emphasize that students and staff do not attend school if they are feeling ill.

In addition, I would remind the community that we must remain mindful that each child, staff member or family will make the decision on masking that they feel is best for them. We all need to be respectful of these decisions. We expect some students and staff to struggle with this change. I ask that we all continue to model understanding, compassion and civility as we make this transition.

Mission Statement: To create educational opportunities in which students are productive, caring, informed and involved citizens, and lifelong learners.

We are sharing this news with families as quickly and responsibly as we possibly can to allow individual families to make a decision on masking that they feel is best for their child. We will continue to consult with our healthcare professionals, Maine DOE, Maine DHHS, and Centers for Disease Control and update families when appropriate.

Thank you for your continued support throughout this entire pandemic.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt Nelson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "M" and "N".

**Matt Nelson**  
Superintendent of Schools