



Surry County Public Schools

P.O. Box 317
Surry, Virginia 23883

January 23, 2022

Dear Surry County Public School Families,

As you may know, Governor Glenn Youngkin recently issued an executive order that repealed Virginia's mask mandate for all public school divisions. The repeal is set to take effect tomorrow, January 24.

After careful consideration of a variety of factors, the Surry County Public Schools administration, headed by me, have decided to prioritize the health and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors by continuing our health mitigation strategy of universal masking for all. Please know that this was a difficult decision to make, but we feel it is the right one at this time given the rapid spread of COVID-19 in Surry County and in our schools.

It is our understanding that, even with the executive order, Virginia Commonwealth law allows school divisions the flexibility to continue requiring masks on buses and in our schools if their elected school boards choose to do so. Our school board will be holding a Town Hall Meeting on Thursday, January 27th at 6:00 p.m. to hear your views on mask wearing. This Town Hall Meeting will be held in-person at Luther Porter Jackson Middle School (masks and temperature checks will be required). You can also join us on Facebook Live where you will have opportunities to voice your concerns. The Town Hall Meeting will be followed by a School Board Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

As a school division, our top priorities are to protect the health and safety of everyone in our buildings and maintain in-person learning for our students. By continuing to require masks, we can help reduce the spread of the virus and avoid high numbers of exposures, quarantines, and positive cases that can disrupt the learning process.

We know that not everyone will agree with this decision. However, we ask for your understanding as we work to do what we believe is in the best interests of our students, families, and staff. Surry County Public Schools will continue to provide a safe environment and in order to do this, all students, staff and visitors are encouraged to adhere to all SCPS health and safety protocols. These protocols require mask wearing, social distancing, handwashing, cleaning and sanitizing, and contact tracing in our schools.

As always, thank you for your support as we navigate the many challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has presented to our school division community.

Sincerely,

Serbrenia J. Sims, Ed.D.
Superintendent