



February 11, 2022

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We are writing jointly to all elementary and secondary school families with a status update regarding COVID-19 mitigation procedures in our schools.

As part of our continuous monitoring of COVID-19 statistics, we have seen a significant drop in the number positive cases within our school communities over the last two weeks. Now, as positive case numbers are declining and the data regarding cloth masks has been updated, we are looking at steps to adjust our plan slowly in order to return to a more traditional school environment while keeping children safe.

As such, we are pleased to announce that the use of masks will be optional for all students and staff in suburban high schools operated by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia as well as all suburban parish and regional elementary schools effective Monday, February 28.

This option will not apply to schools in the City of Philadelphia since the city's Department of Public Health guidance is to require masks within its geographic boundaries at this time.

While our schools have very few cases currently, the level of community transmission in our five county region is still defined as "High". Implementation of a mask optional policy at the end of this month allows additional time for cases to decline in the general population, which will help us prevent spread in our schools.

Any student or staff member who wishes to continue to wear a mask may continue to do so and we recommend that unvaccinated individuals and individuals with certain medical conditions continue to wear masks. Under federal law, masks are still required on bus transportation and masks will be required for students who have tested positive for COVID-19 for five days after their return to school.

All other COVID-19 protocols such as social distancing, increased ventilation, and enhanced cleaning will continue to remain in effect. We will continue to monitor and report COVID-19 cases and if there are case surges within a school building or a county there may be a need to return to the use of masks. The further reduction of other mitigation efforts will be considering over time pending circumstances.

We continue, in the strongest possible terms, to encourage all students and staff to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine and booster.

We remain grateful to our school families, school administrators, faculty, and staff for working with us as partners in school safety during some of the most challenging circumstances we have seen in generations. Our goal is to continue providing educational services at every level in an uninterrupted fashion while maintaining a safe environment for all members of every school community.

Please be assured of our prayers for you and your loved ones as we continue through these difficult times.

Sincerely,



Nancy Kurtz
Interim Superintendent for
Secondary Schools



Irene Horstmann Hannan
Chief Executive Officer
Faith in the Future Foundation



Andrew McLaughlin, Ed.D.
Secretary for Elementary Education