
Dr. Dwight Bonk • Superintendent of Schools
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February 26, 2022

Dear Governor Hochul,

I feel compelled in my role as Superintendent of Schools of one of the largest school districts in New York State, to send a follow up correspondence to my initial letter of [February 2, 2022](#). That letter requested the need for New York State to release metrics from the NYS Department of Health or allow local county health departments to lift the school mask mandate in their respective communities.

As you are aware, the [Center for Disease Control released such metrics yesterday](#), and Dutchess County was identified as an area of low transmission. Thus, the CDC indicated that mask wearing in schools should be left up to personal choice regarding potential risk factors. Dr. Greta Massetti, a senior CDC official stated that, "We know that also because children are relatively at lower risk from severe illness that schools can be safe places for children. And so for that reason, we're recommending that schools use the same guidance that we are recommending in general community settings."

In closing, I ask that the New York State Mask Mandate for schools be rescinded **as soon as possible**, based on the CDC metrics provided yesterday. Clearly, we are all concerned about the health, welfare, and safety of our staff and students, and since the positivity rates of COVID have decreased significantly within our county over the past month and a half, it is time to move forward. As an educator, my focus is on safety for all, and for the education of the over 10,000 students of the Wappingers Central School District and supporting our families. These tasks can be accomplished through continuing to provide the necessary academic, social, and emotional supports that are very much needed at this time and well into the future.

Respectfully,

Dr. Dwight Bonk
Superintendent of Schools

cc: Dr. Mary Bassett, New York State Department of Health Commissioner
Ms. Sue Serino, State Senator
Ms. Didi Barrett, State Assembly
Mr. Kieran Lalor, State Assembly
Mr. Marcus Molinaro, Dutchess County Executive
Dr. Livia Santiago-Rosado, Dutchess County Department of Health Commissioner
Wappingers Central School District Board of Education

