

March 3, 2022

Dear SRV Families,

There has been a change in the national COVID landscape and Center for Disease Control (CDC) policy. The CDC will now only recommend universal school masking in communities at high positivity levels. Public health prevention strategies, such as masking, can increase when our communities are experiencing more severe case counts and decrease when things are more stable. In addition, in the past few weeks, we've seen a dramatic decrease in COVID cases both on campus and throughout Delaware County. During the surge's peak in January, we saw Delaware County positivity rates exceed 38%, but current positivity rates show us at less than 6%.

The COVID Health & Safety Team met on Monday, February 28th, to discuss these changes. The purpose of this email is to communicate how this impacts the School's Health & Safety Plan and to alert our community to a return to pre-surge mitigation strategies, an adjustment to quarantine periods, the addition of a test-to-stay program, and a move to a mask-optional policy.

"Pre-Surge" Mitigation Strategies

- Allow students and staff to take their masks off outdoors, within their pod, beginning immediately.
- Resume weekly Sing outdoors and in-person, weather permitting, starting March 9th.
- Discontinue weekly use of electrostatic cleaner, except after an on-campus COVID case, immediately.

Quarantine Periods

- Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 can return to campus after Day 5 with a negative rapid antigen test. Students who can return after Day 5 will continue to wear a mask until Day 11. If a student or staff member tests positive on a rapid antigen test on Day 5, they can return to school after Day 10.
- Unvaccinated students with an outside-of-school COVID-19 exposure may return to school on Day 6, with a negative COVID test taken on Day 5. Students will continue to wear a mask until Day 11.
- Vaccinated students and staff with a COVID-19 exposure can continue to come to campus but will be masked until Day 11. They will receive a COVID test on Day 5, post-exposure.

Test-To-Stay Program

- We were approved for a Test-To-Stay Program through the PA Department of Health.
- For students to be eligible for the Test-To-Stay Program, students must be enrolled in the School's COVID testing program.
- Test-To-Stay is explicitly designed for unvaccinated students with school-based exposures to COVID-19 and will be used in addition to our weekly COVID testing. Hence, students exposed outside of school are not eligible to participate.
- To stay in school, students will need to take a rapid antigen test administered 2-4 days post-exposure and a second rapid antigen test administered 5-7 days post-exposure.
- All rapid antigen tests must be performed at school by the School's Health Coordinator or her designee. Home Tests are not acceptable.
- Students participating in Test-To-Stay must remain asymptomatic and masked.

Masking

The School will move to **Mask Optional on March 14, 2022.**

- All students and staff may make their own decisions about wearing masks in all settings on campus.
- We will continue to monitor all guidance, and if cases increase, we may have to pivot to Mask Required. We will notify you of all changes made to the masking policy, and you can stay up-to-date about on-campus cases by checking the School's COVID dashboard located on our website.

- There will continue to be situations where people should always wear a mask. For example, if they have symptoms, tested positive for COVID 19, or were exposed to someone with COVID 19. Events such as Recess and Sing will also be mask optional beginning March 14th.

Children's emotional well-being is at the forefront of our thinking. So we want to pay special attention to children's self-esteem and head off any confusion, stigmatization, or fear caused by this change. Teachers, supported by the School Psychologist, will explain the change during Morning Meeting on Friday, March 11th, and talk about respecting individual choices and needs and supporting one another. We can also respond to any questions students might have. Those conversations will be reflected in Friday's communications to parents. Our staff will do our best to support individual and family choices and collaborate with parents. We also acknowledge that this change may cause uneasiness for some. We fully support everyone at SRV and their choice of whether or not to wear a mask.

We appreciate the solidarity of our community during these challenging times and for your partnership as we navigate these changes and a shift from a pandemic phase of COVID-19 to an endemic phase. Know that we are available to you if you have questions or concerns and that we welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,

Rod Stanton
Head of School
The School in Rose Valley

Colleen Scheetz
Health Coordinator
The School in Rose Valley