



Updated ZCCC Mask Policy



March 16, 2022

The statewide universal mask mandate for schools was lifted as of March 1, 2022, for our area public schools. We have been waiting on clarification for daycare centers. It was released that employers permit staff the choice of whether to wear a mask or not. With that being said, **as of Monday, March 21st**, ZCCC staff will no longer be required to wear masks.

Some staff and students may choose to continue to wear masks. There are many reasons that someone may choose to wear a mask, either for themselves or for their families. Regardless, **it is important that we treat all members of our community, wearing a mask or not, with respect.**

Things are much better in our region and the risk of contracting COVID is much lower. However, taking masks off does not mean that the pandemic is over. The health and safety guidance from the state and local health departments related to COVID-19 continues to evolve. While the latest state guidance removes the mask requirement, **the following Department of Health protocols remain in place:**

- *Regardless of vaccination status, a student tests positive for COVID-19 stay home and isolate for at least 5 days from the date your symptoms began. Wear a well-fitting mask when you are around others at home. If you are fever-free and other symptoms have improved after 5 days, you may leave isolation and continue to mask for 5 additional days to minimize the risk of infecting others*
- *If you come into close contact with someone with COVID-19, you should quarantine if you are not up to date on COVID-19 vaccines. This includes people who are not vaccinated. Everyone should wear a well-fitted mask around others for 10 full days.*
- *Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home from school, regardless of vaccination status or recent infection, until tested.*

As always, we remain committed to keeping your children well, while providing a safe learning environment for all. We will continue to follow additional mitigation strategies to prevent the spread of illness in our school. These mitigation strategies include:

- Air circulation will continue to include additional fresh air through the vents. We will also encourage opening windows.
- Frequent contact surfaces will be disinfected.
- Students and staff will continue to wash and/or sanitize their hands.
- Students and staff who are sick or not feeling well should not attend school.
- We will continue to take temperatures at drop off and various times throughout the day.

There will be times where it will not be possible to adhere to all our mitigation's strategies. The purpose of these strategies is to reduce the spread of infection and, as such, we will adhere to these plans to the greatest extent possible. We will also continue our due diligence regarding notifying impacted staff and families if we learn of a positive case.

I deeply appreciate all the ZCCC employees for leaning into the countless challenges, and for the continued dedication to be there for our students. Thank you to the parents, guardians, and families for their unwavering support. And, most importantly, I am grateful for our students, for their perseverance, sense of determination, and commitment to being learners and explorers despite the many challenges these past two years. We remain in close contact with state and local health officials and are committed to providing staff and families with clear, updated information on the latest health and safety guidance.

It is very important to mention that these health and safety guidelines could change at any time. **If cases should arise again in our area, we may require the use of masks.**

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