

Dear Coatesville Area School District,

As we move closer to spring and COVID-19 case counts continue to trend downward, I want to inform you that beginning **Monday, February 28, 2022**, the Coatesville Area School District will transition to **mask optional** for students, staff, and visitors in our schools, buildings, and school buses.

Many conditions have changed over the course of this school year, including:

- Vaccines are now widely available for children ages 5 and up, as well as adults.
- The Chester County Health Department eliminated contact tracing in schools.
- The severity of COVID-19 has generally decreased.
- Other schools that have gone to 'masks optional' have not seen a surge in COVID-19 cases.
- There has been a dramatic drop in hospitalizations, number of cases, and transmission rates, including in the CASD.
- No health agency (CDC, PA Department of Health, Chester County Health Department) currently has a mask mandate for schools. The state mask mandate for schools ended in December.

In addition, on Friday February 25, 2022, [the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) announced updated information on how COVID-19 community levels will be measured](#) and what school and community mitigation strategies are recommended. A summary follows:

- Three new COVID-19 community levels have been identified: low, medium and high. **At this time, Chester County is in the medium community level.**
- Masking indoors is recommended when the community level is at 'high.' When the level is 'medium,' those at risk for severe illness should consult with their healthcare provider about the need to wear a mask.
- The CDC no longer mandates masks on school district buses and vehicles.

Families should continue to screen children for COVID-19 symptoms and keep students at home if they are sick. Those who have tested positive for COVID-19 must isolate for 5 days and wear a mask for 10 days. If your child is symptom-free they may return to school on Day 6 and must wear a mask through Day 10. Please continue to contact your child's school if they test positive for COVID-19.

We will continue to monitor community transition rates and consult with local health officials and adjust our guidance as necessary. We will also continue our partnership with the Chester County Health Department, and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia for BinaxNow testing.

Masks will still be available for all students, and students may choose to wear a mask at any time.

The CASD Board of Directors has authorized the administration to revise the Health and Safety Plan and implement those revisions between Board meetings when health authority guidance has changed.

We will continue to communicate with you and keep you updated on any changes.

Sincerely,

Tomás Hanna  
Superintendent