



# THOMPSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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February 15, 2022

Dear Thompson Families,

Governor Ned Lamont has recently announced that he will lift the state-wide mask mandate in Connecticut schools as of February 28, 2022. The decision to continue the face covering requirement or end masking in school settings will then be the responsibility of local Boards of Education.

The members of the Thompson Board of Education (BOE) at their meeting held on Monday, February 14, 2022, unanimously voted 8-0 to end the mask mandate as of Monday, February 28, 2022. Parents will have the option to choose to have their children to carry on with wearing a face covering or opt out of this obligation. Employees of the Thompson Public School system also have this choice as well.

Members of the BOE acknowledge that students and staff must be respectful of individual choice and refrain from criticizing others. Parents are asked to discuss this topic at home with their children to avoid any hurtful conflict.

The majority of families (81%) completed a recent survey indicating that their children will not continue to wear face masks if the mandate was lifted. As a result, this will create a very different way we handle quarantine when we are notified of a positive COVID-19 case. The length of a quarantine period may fluctuate depending on each case. At a minimum, students and staff will need to quarantine for five days. This period could be extended if a student or employee still exhibits COVID-19 symptoms. As a reminder, parents must continue to keep students that have the following symptoms home from school.

#### COVID-19 Symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

As always, if your child is out sick, please contact your school nurse. If your child or a household family member tests positive for the virus, please contact Shannon Grauer, Director of Nurses at [sgrauer@thompsonpublicschools.org](mailto:sgrauer@thompsonpublicschools.org) or by calling 860-923-9303 ext. 12473. Mrs. Grauer will provide you with up-to-date information regarding quarantine practices.

### Masks on Buses

Students and bus drivers are still required to wear masks while riding on school buses. This is a federal public transportation requirement. Parents must be sure their child has on the appropriate face covering when boarding school buses.

### COVID-19 Testing

Weekly COVID-19 testing will continue to be available to students provided by Quest Diagnostics. Testing will not be conducted during the week of 2/21/22-2/23/22 due to the shortened school week. Parents who would like to have their child participate in the testing program can be added by signing a consent form. Please contact your child's school secretary for the form.

The district will continue to implement the following mitigation strategies that include:

- Social distancing
- Frequent handwashing
- Mask breaks
- Limited large group exposure

### Vaccination Clinic

The district is willing to organize another onsite vaccination clinic for the convenience of students and their families. A survey will be sent out this week to determine if there is a need in our school community for this service. The goal of Thompson Public School district continues to ensure a healthy and safe learning environment for students, faculty, and staff.

Sincerely,



Melinda A. Smith, M.Ed.  
Superintendent of Schools