



16 February, 2022

Dear Students, Parents and Caregivers, Staff, and Community Members:

Finally after two long years of pandemic restrictions, Governor Hochul announced on Wednesday, February 9, 2022 that she would be evaluating the status of a number of measures to determine if the state would change the mask mandate that currently applies to schools. The Governor also announced that the state would be providing guidance to districts in early March for how to manage any potential changes.

As of today, no additional details have been provided as to what those changes may be or what specific metrics will be used. Further, there is discussion that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) may be changing their recommendations for masking in the coming days. As a result, a number of questions still exist for us and we do not want to cause confusion by announcing plans that may have to change again once we receive answers. While we know and understand the frustration that this brings, the Ballston Spa CSD Board of Education has always stated that it is the intention of the District to have the least amount of restrictions in place necessary to be able to maintain safe and healthy in-person instruction for our students and staff once we have the authority to make the decisions related to those restrictions. As stated in our [COVID-19 Reopening Plan](#), those decisions will be informed by the requirements from NYS and Saratoga County and an assessment of our local school and community environment, and they will reflect the position of the Board.

Once we have answers to the questions that remain, the District will communicate its intentions for an updated COVID-19 Reopening Plan that will address scenarios such as when we can go to mask optional for students and staff, and what measures will determine changes from mask optional to mask required, such as an increase in positive cases within a school. We anticipate releasing this information during the week of February 28.

Finally, it is imperative that when we move on to the next phase of masking, that everyone be respectful of each other's choices and comfort level regarding mask wearing and social distancing. We need to all be supportive of each other so that our students and teachers can maintain a focus on teaching and learning.

Thanks very much and please let us know if you have questions on any of this information by using our [schoolopening@bscsd.org](mailto:schoolopening@bscsd.org) mailbox.

Jason Fernau, President  
Ballston Spa Board of Education

Ken Slentz  
Superintendent of Schools