



Rochester Community Schools

August 25, 2021

Dear RCS Families,

On Tuesday, August 24, 2021, the Oakland County Health Division (OCHD) issued an [Emergency Order \(2021-01\) for Control of Pandemic](#), which is effective immediately. The order states that daycares and educational institutions, to include pre-kindergarten through grade 12, are required to ensure all students, teachers, staff and community members consistently and properly wear facial coverings while inside a school building or structure, regardless of vaccination status.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also requires masks to be worn on school buses.

In the event that a student forgets their mask at home, staff members will offer the student a face covering.

We know that there are many families in the district who are wary of mandates. We also know that there are many parents who are pleased with the mask mandate as a measure to protect their children and our school community from the aggressive Delta variant. It is our hope that our families will join together with mutual love and respect for each other to ensure that our students can continue to receive the best education in the safest environment possible.

We all agree that our children belong in school where they can have consistent schedules five days a week; enjoy meeting with friends; and have the opportunity to build lasting relationships with our teachers and support staff. We believe with all our hearts that having students in front of an RCS teacher will give them the learning advantage that will carry them through their entire educational experience.

Rochester Community Schools supports all efforts to keep our community safe and our children in school buildings. For those families who prefer an additional TK-12 learning option, we are proud to continue to offer the RCS Virtual Campus.

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), the [Michigan Department of Health and Human Services \(MDHHS\)](#), the [Oakland County Health Division \(OCHD\)](#), and the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) agree that the Delta variant of SARS-CoV-2 virus may cause more serious illness in persons of all ages, including children. This is particularly concerning in an educational setting, where students under the age of 12 are not eligible for the vaccine.

According to these experts, facial coverings are a safe, essential, and proven strategy to prevent secondary transmission of this aggressive Delta variant in schools. Masks are primarily intended to reduce the emission of virus-laden droplets. They also help reduce inhalation of these droplets by the wearer.

The OCHD guidance indicates that masks and vaccination status will limit the need to quarantine when an individual is exposed to COVID-19.

We are compiling a list of frequently asked questions to help our families as we prepare for the 2021-22 school year. Additional information, including details specific to contact tracing and quarantining, will be provided shortly.

Supporting healthy learning environments

The safety and well-being of our community is always our priority. RCS supports healthy learning environments by thoroughly cleaning and sanitizing buildings and school buses following CDC recommendations.

- Classrooms, including high-touch areas, are disinfected at the end of each school day. Electrostatic sprayers are used in main offices, locker rooms, weight rooms, and other areas as needed.
- Buses are sanitized twice per day following the morning and afternoon routes. High-touch areas are cleaned between all bus runs.
- Hand sanitizer, masks, and cleaning supplies are available throughout the district. Building doors and windows may be open when appropriate, depending on weather and physical safety conditions.
- Water systems have been flushed. Bottle filling stations are available; however, drinking fountains remain closed.
- Air-balance contractors continue to inspect and balance air flow for our building HVAC systems. A designated employee inspects filters on a continuous basis and changes filters as needed to maximize ventilation and reduce the concentration of airborne contaminants.

RCS continues to evaluate all protocols and procedures as additional information becomes available from county, state, and national health protection agencies.

We are proud to be part of a community that values education and partners together with us to prioritize the health and wellness of our students, staff, and families.

You are invited to view a [video message](#) about our approach to safety as we start the 2021-22 school year.

We appreciate your support to help keep our students safe and in-person.

Sincerely,
Dr. Robert Shaner
Superintendent