



March 1, 2022

Dear Lamoille North Families and Staff,

I hope all of you were able to enjoy some time with loved ones over the February break and to spend some time relaxing. I had not intended to communicate until my normal Friday afternoon letter, but there have been some changes to Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance that will impact bussing and will likely impact the Vermont Agency of Education's (VTAOE) recommendations regarding the COVID-19 context in very short order. **Effective immediately, masking on all busses is optional and will not be required.** If you recall, masking on public transportation was a Federal mandate and not under the school district authority. Schools were directed to enforce this mandate, which now no longer exists.

Further, as you likely recall, the School Board exerted its statutory authority to adopt the VTAOE guidelines regarding COVID-19 mitigation strategies, including requiring masks for all students and staff in school buildings. We were told by the VTAOE that removal of masks would be tied to vaccination rates in schools and that we would receive vaccination rates from the VTAOE last week. To date, schools have not received any formal indication of rates, or any formal guidance. We have been told, however, that the VTAOE considered vaccination rates as an interim step and that it would be quickly followed by a recommendation for optional masking for schools in general. With this information in mind, the **LNMUUSD/LNSU Boards have called a special meeting for tomorrow, March 2, 2022, at 6:45 p.m.**, for the sole purpose of discussing their COVID-19 mitigation policy around masking and to take possible action. Please see a virtual link to this meeting on the LNSU website or feel free to attend in-person should you choose. Please note that the Cambridge Elementary School Board will be taking up the same issue at its School Board meeting tomorrow, March 2, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. as well.

We know that any changes to school protocols will be a welcome move to some, and it will be a source of anxiety for others. As we enter this endemic phase, it is vital that we keep kindness, generosity of spirit, and respect at the forefront of our interactions.

I will communicate with you about any guidance I receive from our agency officials.

My best to you,

Catherine Gallagher, M.Ed.  
Superintendent of Schools  
Lamoille North Supervisory Union