



School Board Services

Carolyn T. Rye, Chair  
District 5 - Lynnhaven

Kimberly A. Melnyk, Vice Chair  
District 7 – Princess Anne

Beverly M. Anderson  
At-Large

Sharon R. Felton  
District 6 – Beach

Jennifer S. Franklin  
District 2 – Kempsville

Dorothy M. Holtz  
At-Large

Laura K. Hughes  
At-Large

Victoria C. Manning  
At-Large

Jessica L. Owens  
District 3 – Rose Hall

Trenace B. Riggs  
District 1 – Centerville

Carolyn D. Weems  
District 4 - Bayside

Aaron C. Spence, Ed.D., Superintendent

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**School Board SPECIAL Meeting MINUTES**  
**Monday, December 20, 2021**

School Administration Building #6, Municipal Center  
2512 George Mason Drive  
P.O. Box 6038  
Virginia Beach, VA 23456  
(757) 263-1000

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- 1. Call to Order and Roll Call:** Chairwoman Rye convened the special meeting of the School Board in the School Board chamber at 6:00 p.m. on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of December 2021 and announced pursuant to the Virginia State Health Commissioner’s Order of Public Health Emergency Statewide Requirement to Wear Masks in K-12 Schools issued August 12, 2021, and Virginia Acts of Assembly No. 1303, Chapter 456, and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)’s guidance for K-12 schools, and the School Board’s 2021-2022 Reopening Plan adopted August 10, 2021, it is determined that physical distancing will be used in School Board Chambers as a health mitigation strategy. Therefore, there will be designated public seating during the School Board Meeting. Members of the public will also be able to observe the School Board Meeting through livestreaming on [www.vbschools.com](http://www.vbschools.com), broadcast on VBTV Channel 47, and on Zoom.

Pursuant to Bylaw 1-46, and Virginia Code § 2.2-3707, at the request of three School Board Members in writing to the Chairwoman and the Clerk of the School Board, to hold a Special Meeting on Monday, December 20, 2021 at the School Administration Building #6 at the Municipal Center, 2512 George Mason Dr., Virginia Beach, VA at 6:00 p.m. The purpose of this special meeting is (1) discussion pertaining to student athletes being required to provide proof of vaccination and/or test for an athletic club or non-VHSL program; and (2) discussion and vote on resolution to make masks optional in Virginia Beach City Public Schools.

Note, no public comment will be taken at the meeting. The School Board invites the public to submit comments through our group e-mail account which can be found on our website.

The following School Board members were present in the School Board chamber: Chairwoman Rye, Ms. Melnyk, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Felton, Ms. Franklin, Ms. Holtz, Ms. Hughes, Ms. Manning, and Ms. Riggs. The following School Board members attended the meeting via Zoom: Ms. Owens (family health reasons), and Ms. Weems (personal health reasons.)
- 2. Adoption of the Agenda:** Chairwoman Rye called for a motion to approve. Ms. Holtz made a motion, seconded by Ms. Manning. Without any modifications or discussion, Chairwoman Rye called for a vote. The School Board Clerk announced there was a unanimous vote.
- 3. Information: Discussion pertaining to student athletes being required to provide proof of vaccination and/or test for an athletic club or non-VHSL program:** Chairwoman Rye opened the floor for discussion; Ms. Manning explained the reasons for the special meeting; proof of vaccination or test weekly for COVID for a futsal club program: clarification if athletic clubs need to vaccinate and/or test; First Colonial High School futsal program has been operating for many years; First Colonial administration determined the soccer preseason conditioning program would include futsal; indicated incorrect form was used; clubs not affiliated with VHSL not required to participate in health protocols; conditioning programs; part of the First Colonial soccer program – a VHSL program; clarification of vaccination and testing for a club program; explanation of futsal; futsal part of First Colonial pre-season conditioning program; example and comparison of courthouse recreation using school buildings; how long futsal program at First Colonial; other high schools with futsal program; information regarding topic had been shared via email with School

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Virginia Beach, VA 23456

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Board members; topic should have be added to regular meeting workshop agenda; needed clarification on topic, concerned parents; concerns not added to regular meeting agenda.

4. **Action: Resolution to make Masks Optional in Virginia Beach City Public Schools:** Chairwoman Rye asked Ms. Hughes to read the resolution to introduce the motion, Ms. Manning seconded the motion. Ms. Hughes read the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION  
MASKS/FACE COVERINGS NOT REQUIRED IN  
VIRGINIA BEACH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**WHEREAS**, the School Board of the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia is committed to the physical safety and emotional well-being of all students and staff as well as being committed to providing the least restrictive environment for all students; and

**WHEREAS**, multiple states have lifted all mask mandates with no increase in COVID numbers; and

**WHEREAS**, other divisions in Virginia are making masks optional; and

**WHEREAS**, other divisions with similar populations and demographics as Virginia Beach City Public Schools who have implemented a mask-optional policy have the same or lower numbers of COVID positive cases; and

**WHEREAS**, the state of emergency expired on June 30, 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, all Virginia Beach City Public Schools staff has had an opportunity to become fully vaccinated; and

**WHEREAS**, Virginia Beach City Public Schools acknowledges that parents are best-suited to make decisions for their children,

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that

1. Masks/face coverings shall be optional in all Virginia Beach City Public Schools buildings and offices, both indoors and outdoors.
2. This policy shall be in effect beginning January 3, 2022.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that it will not be the policy of Virginia Beach City Public Schools to either encourage or discourage any student, staff member, or guest to wear a mask or face covering.

Chairwoman Rye opened the floor for discussion; Ms. Hughes shared documents with the School Board members; health commission orders; shared email; parents best to make decisions for children, not seeing higher numbers, no disciplinary action, no reason to be masked all day; possibility of contacting COVID even with precautions; given plan at last meeting; January 11 receive update on status of data; effectiveness of masks; support those who wish to wear masks and those who do not want to wear masks, choice; federal government and masking; Virginia Department of Labor; masking on school buses; other school divisions and masking; places with no masks (churches, malls, etc.); traveling over break; update on January 11, review of data before/after holiday.

Without further discussion, Chairwoman Rye called for a vote on the resolution. The School Board Clerk announced there were three (3) ayes in favor of the resolution: Ms. Hughes, Ms. Manning, and Ms. Weems. There were eight (8) nays opposed to the resolution: Chairwoman Rye, Ms. Melnyk, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Felton, Ms. Franklin, Ms. Holtz, Ms. Owens, and Ms. Riggs. The resolution did not pass 3-8-0.

5. **Adjournment:** Chairwoman Rye adjourned the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Regina M. Toneatto, Clerk of the School Board

Approved:

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Carolyn T. Rye, School Board Chair