

# BLIND BROOK-RYE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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**COLIN BYRNE, D.P.S.**  
INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

March 1, 2022

## **Mask Wearing at Blind Brook**

Dear Members of the Blind Brook Community,

Following the Governor's announcement regarding the lifting of the New York State mask wearing mandate, I have spoken with our school physician, the District's Medical Advisory Committee and representatives from Westchester County to determine the best path forward for the Blind Brook community. My goal, as always, was to look for a solution that would best support our students both physically, mentally and emotionally.

Based upon a review of all available data, it has been determined that the wearing of masks will be optional for all students and staff in the Blind Brook school district effective tomorrow, Wednesday, March 2nd. Each individual will be able to make the decision as to whether to wear a mask at school and on school buses moving forward.

While mask wearing will no longer be mandated, some concerns have been raised, by our medical professionals, about the removal of masks so soon after the return from a vacation week. To err on the side of caution, the District is recommending that everyone wear masks at least through the end of this week. As symptoms of COVID can take up to four days to appear, this would help prevent the spread of COVID in our schools.

I want to make it clear that this is only a recommendation and should not be taken as support or opposition to anyone's choice on mask wearing. Any bullying, harassment, or mean spirited behavior regarding an individual's decision as to this issue will not be tolerated and will result in consequences for harassment as outlined in the District's code of conduct.

I do want to note that there will be some instances in which students and staff will still be mandated to wear masks. Masks will be required for anyone entering the nurse's office due to this being a location where some of our more vulnerable students need to frequent. Also, anyone who has tested positive for COVID and is returning after five days must continue to wear a well fitting mask for the remaining five days of what would have been their quarantine as per New York State guidelines.

Please keep in mind that the optional wearing of masks is based on the current low transmission rate in the County. Required masking may return if it is determined that there is a need for it.

Additional information is coming from New York State about COVID protocols which I will share with you as soon as I can.

I thank you in advance for your help in providing a safe, supportive, and stable environment for everyone at the Blind Brook School District.

Sincerely,

Dr. Colin M. Byrne  
Interim Superintendent of Schools