



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 29, 2022

Contact: Paul Brubaker
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DISTRICT TO RETURN TO UNIVERSAL MASKING AFTER HOLIDAY BREAK

Everyone entering schools and district buildings must wear a mask until further notice

PATERSON – District officials have announced that Paterson Public Schools will return to universal masking when schools and offices reopen on Tuesday, January 3rd.

Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer notified parents and staff members in a December 22nd letter in which she cited the rising numbers of COVID-19, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and flu cases in Passaic County as the basis for her decision. She also noted that she made the decision after consulting with the City of Paterson's Chief Health Officer, Dr. Paul Persaud.

A copy of the letter accompanies this press release.

District officials will continue to monitor transmission rates and reevaluate the decision as needed.

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Ms. Eileen F. Shafer
Superintendent of Schools

December 22, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As you may be aware, COVID-19, RSV, and Flu rates are going up throughout the state. Currently, Passaic County is at a high transmission rate. Your safety and well-being is our priority so to mitigate the spread of illness, it has been decided that upon the return from winter break we are reinstating the district-wide mask mandate. This decision has been made under the guidance of Paterson's Director of Health, Dr. Persaud, as the city is currently experiencing a community spread. We will reevaluate this decision as we follow the data and monitor the change in the rate of transmission.

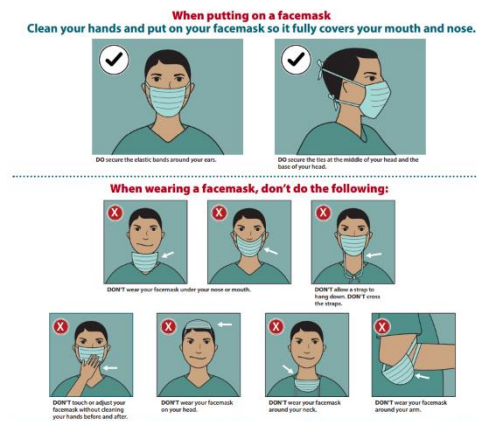
As for the mask requirement, I know this is a relief to some, and a frustration to others. No matter what your position may be, I ask for your cooperation. Please continue to maintain universal masking throughout our buildings and we encourage you to take all other precautions against the spread of the COVID-19, RSV, Flu virus including frequent hand washing, avoiding large gatherings, and staying home when sick.

All students must wear masks from the time they enter the building to the time they leave the building. Your child/children should wear masks from home. If they forget their mask, one will be available upon request. A variety of PPE will be available based on student and staff needs. The only time students can remove his or her mask is for eating, drinking, or taking medication. Additionally, any visitors will be required to wear a mask.

Please encourage your child/children to implement mask sanitizing procedures. They are:

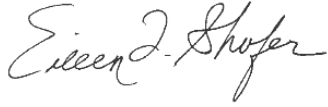
1. Wash your hands before putting on the mask; and
2. Wash your hands before removing the mask;

Also, see the diagram below on how to properly wear a mask.



Thank you for doing your part in keeping our District students healthy. Stay safe during the Holiday season.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Eileen F. Shafer". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Eileen F. Shafer, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools