

# The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools

512 Cedar Street  
Scotch Plains, New Jersey 07076

Joan Mast, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

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Ext. 41102 or 41103

February 7, 2022

Dear SPF Community,

Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools will move to “mask optional” status starting on March 7, in light of the governor’s announcement today. This is a welcome step and a sign that we are moving slowly but surely to a more normal, pre-pandemic way of life.

In lifting the state’s mask requirement, Gov. Phil Murphy cited data showing that the number of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations have fallen dramatically in recent weeks. He set the March 7 date on the faith that the trend will continue and noted that district leaders can continue with current mask policies “should community conditions require”.

Our case numbers have followed state trends, as is demonstrated in the district [COVID-19 dashboard](#), leading us to the decision to not require masks. During the week of January 29, 2022- February 4, 2022, approximately 13 students and 3 staff members reported testing positive for COVID-19.

While mask use will be optional as of March 7, we may need to return to stricter mask policy if necessary. Also, it is important that we support each family's decision regarding mask wearing - everyone has personal circumstances that they are considering. Please note that the state Department of Health will develop guidance for school districts over the next few weeks, and there could be some adjustments to the mask-wearing rules for specific populations and/or circumstances. We will continue to work collaboratively with our Regional Health Departments for guidance.

As always we strive to make the best decisions for everyone’s well-being and safety. Navigating these times has been an ongoing challenge for our school community, and we appreciate your continued support.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Joan Mast  
Superintendent of Schools