



The School District of Jenkintown

West and Highland Avenue
Jenkintown, PA 19046-2698

Dr. Jill Takacs
Superintendent
(215) 885-3722

March 1, 2022

Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff and Students,

First, let me commend you on your tremendous efforts in keeping our school community safe after nearly two years of navigating the Covid-19 pandemic. We sincerely appreciate everyone's cooperation and understanding of our protocols and safety measures. Your efforts helped us achieve nearly no community spread within our schools. We feel that, at this time, it is appropriate to relax some of our restrictions. Last evening, our Board of Education voted to lift our universal mask mandate beginning on Thursday, March 3, 2022, due to the most recent guidance released by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) this past Friday. This decision was made, after much discussion and consideration, weighing the following factors: we are currently experiencing high levels of vaccination and immunity from infection, availability of new treatments, a lower severity of infection from circulating variants, and declining rates of infection. The details of the changes to our Health and Safety Plan are outlined below.

Changes to the Health and Safety Plan

The School District of Jenkintown

Effective March 3, 2022

1. Masks

The District shall maintain the following expectations:

Indoor Activities:

- Masks are **optional** for all students and staff, K-12 when Montgomery County is in low or medium spread, according to CDC guidance.
- Masks are **required** for all students and staff, K-12 when Montgomery County is in high spread, according to CDC guidance.
- Should Montgomery County reach high spread, the universal mask mandate will be reinstated until the County returns to medium or low spread.

Outdoor Activities:

- Masks are **optional** outdoors during any level of transmission.

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Athletes:

- Masks are **optional** for any athlete during periods of low or medium spread. Masks are required for all unvaccinated athletes during games and competitions when Montgomery County is in high spread. Vaccinated athletes have a choice to play with or without a mask. However, all athletes must wear a mask at all other times, when not in active play during periods of high spread. Masks are **optional** outdoors during any level of transmission for athletes.

Transportation:

- Seating will be limited to two (2) students per seat to the maximum extent feasible. Masking is optional during periods of low or medium spread. Masking is required during high spread.

2. Testing

The District will test symptomatic students and staff, if sufficient tests are available in periods of high spread only.

3. Vaccination Requirements for Visitor and Volunteers

Vaccination documentation will not be required in periods of low or medium spread. All visitors and volunteers must show vaccination documentation during periods of high spread.

4. Guidance from the following Health Entities: CDC, PADOH, MCOPH

The District shall consider the recommendations of the CDC, PADOH, and MCOPH, and revise their Health and Safety Plan in accordance with these guidelines, to address the health and safety needs of the students and staff at The School District of Jenkintown.

Today, our administrators are having discussions with staff members to ensure a smooth transition for our children. Teachers, in turn, are discussing the revised protocols with students. This change means that all individuals will have a choice to wear a mask, or not, while at school during periods of low or medium spread according to the CDC guidelines. We encourage all families to have follow-up discussions with their children to determine their comfort level and personal choice in this regard. All individuals, and families, are entitled to make personal choices that meet their comfort and safety. These decisions will be met with the utmost respect and understanding. We will not tolerate any type of ridicule or bullying of individuals because of the personal choice they make regarding mask wearing.

We take the health and safety of our school community extremely seriously and will continue to follow the science and recommendations of our health agencies. We will maintain our current cafeteria setup and social distancing of classroom desks to a minimum of three feet. We will also facilitate outdoor lunch space, weather permitting. Should a Covid positive case occur within a classroom or learning space, we will notify the parents and/or guardians of all children in that location. If our county transmission reaches a high level of spread, we will reinstate our mandatory mask protocol and

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vaccination requirements. The CDC strongly encourages all individuals to become fully vaccinated, if possible, as a strong mitigation strategy.

We sincerely appreciate your partnership and assistance in communicating these important changes to our students. Additionally, we are looking forward to celebrating our long-standing Jenkintown traditions this spring with our families.

With gratitude,

Jill A. Takacs

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