



March 1, 2022

Dear Red Clay families,

In a press release on Monday, Governor Carney announced some COVID-19 updates that directly impact schools. This announcement came much sooner than the original March 31 mask mandate deadline. The changes announced are as follows:

- **COVID-19 State of Emergency order, including the masking requirement in K-12 public and private schools and child care facilities:** Ends on Tuesday, March 1, at 6 PM.
- **Mask Requirement in Schools, on School Buses, and in Child Care Facilities:** Lifted on Tuesday, March 1 at 6 PM.
- **Vaccination or Testing Requirement (Schools and State Employees):** No longer in effect starting on Tuesday, March 1.
- **Mask Requirement in Most State Facilities:** Lifted on Wednesday, March 2.

According to state officials, the decision to lift the mask mandate at this time is based on COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations falling dramatically over the last month. The timing of the state's announcement is also consistent with [new guidance](#) from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), which recommends universal school masking only in communities at the high level.

**The CDC's updated COVID-19 Community Levels will help people make choices that are right for them. It shows three levels of COVID-19 in a community: low, medium, or high.**

- **At the low level:** The CDC does not recommend universal masking. COVID-19 is causing a limited impact on the healthcare system and low amounts of severe disease in the community.
- **At the medium level:** The CDC does not recommend masks for the general population. People who are at high risk, such as those who are immunocompromised, should talk to their healthcare provider about taking additional precautions.
- **At the high level:** The CDC recommends that everyone wear a mask indoors in public. There are high amounts of severe disease in the community and a high potential for strain on the healthcare system.

Please know that the health and safety of everyone in our school buildings is our top priority. We are closely following the recommendations of our state and local health officials through the [de.gov guidance](#). As these recommendations change, we will adjust our health and safety protocols accordingly. It remains possible that we may need to re-implement our mask policy if the number of positive COVID-19 cases in our schools or community increases.

We thank our students, staff and families for following our mitigation measures over the past two years. We know it has not been easy. Thanks to your support, we have been able to keep each other safe and continue to provide in-person instruction and services for the thousands of students we serve across Red Clay schools.

As we move into a new phase of this pandemic, we will continue to maintain a safe and respectful environment for all students and staff.

- Anyone who wishes to continue wearing a mask will be encouraged to do so. Disposable masks and KN95 masks will still be available in all Red Clay schools.
- Mask wearing may be required if a student or staff member lives with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19. For details, please see our COVID-19 Process Maps for Red Clay Students and Staff at [redclayschools.com/covid19](https://redclayschools.com/covid19).
- The [Test to Stay program](#) is now available to anyone wishing to obtain a COVID-19 test, Sundays through Thursdays from 4 PM to 7 PM.
- Distancing, proper handwashing and daily screening of students and staff will remain in place as mitigation strategies. We will also continue to offer COVID-19 vaccination and testing opportunities.
- Students and staff who are symptomatic will still be required to obtain a negative COVID-19 test or a healthcare provider's clearance to return to school. At-home COVID-19 tests are not accepted as negative tests.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your school principal. As always, thank you for your ongoing support of Red Clay schools.

Sincerely,

Dorrell Green  
Superintendent