

# HARDING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL

*Matthew A. Spelker, Ed.D.*  
*Superintendent of Schools*

*Beverly Vlietstra*  
*Interim School Business Administrator*



*Mary Donohue, Ed.D.*  
*Principal/Director of Curriculum*

*Christopher Magno*  
*Director of Special Services*

February 11, 2022

Re: Masks Optional Effective 3/7/22

Dear HTS Community:

On Monday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, Governor Murphy announced that Executive Order 251, the mandate for masks in all New Jersey Schools, will expire on Monday, March 7<sup>th</sup>. At that point, the decision as to whether to continue requiring masks for students, staff, and visitors will be left to the sole discretion of local school districts. After discussion with our County Board of Health and other careful consideration, I have made the decision to make masks **optional** for all students, staff, and visitors effective Monday, March 7<sup>th</sup>.<sup>1</sup> All students, staff, and visitors should be respectful of each individual's choice to wear, or not wear, a mask. We will not tolerate anyone being singled out or mistreated based upon their decision in this regard.

I am pleased to announce that, effective Monday, February 14<sup>th</sup> HTS community members will no longer be asked to fill out a daily health check form and temperature checks will no longer be taken at the beginning of the school day.

Over the coming weeks and months, we will continue to closely monitor the guidance from the C.D.C., local, county, and State Health officials and the New Jersey Department of Education to ensure that we continue to implement best practices for the health, safety, and well-being of our Harding Township School District community. Of course, we reserve the right to tailor the guidelines to meet the needs of our school district, including implementing stricter health measures, if the circumstances warrant it, but we truly hope this will not be necessary.

I would like to once again thank the Harding Township School community for your continued support and understanding over these past twenty-three months; we have been

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<sup>1</sup> **Note: By Federal Order, masks are still required on school busses.**

more successful than most at keeping our students in school. I ask that you continue to follow our district guidelines and protocols in order to keep all of our school community members safe in the weeks and months to come. We should be mindful that, if we become too complacent, we could end up back where we started. None of us wants to see that happen.

Lastly, our safety protocols and safety management practices will continue to be guided by all officially issued HTS plans, State statutes, regulations, and BOE policies that were previously explained and/or presented to the parent community by myself.

Please stay safe. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to email me directly.

Regards,



Matthew A. Spelker, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Harding Township School