

To all MVCS community members,

The board of trustees, in following the careful review and discussions brought forth by the COVID-19 working group, announces a revision to the public health policies at MVCS with respect to masking.

Beginning March 14, 2022, masks will no longer be mandated for students and staff during normal school periods. The use of masks will be at the individual discretion of MVCS families and staff. However, all other aspects of public health policies and practices will remain in place at this time.

This decision was made as a result of numerous factors including recommendations by the CDC, New Hampshire DHHS & DOE, and from careful consideration of public health trends in our community. It is also because of these considerations that the MVCS board will still strongly recommend the use of masks, at the discretion of individual families, to assist in preventing any potential local outbreak within MVCS. SARS-CoV-2, the viral pathogen responsible for COVID-19, has shown to be resilient and unpredictable and properly fitted high quality masks, especially N95 and clinical grade, remain a proven means of effectively preventing viral transmission. Our COVID prevention measures are multi-tiered and include social distancing where possible, as well as air filtration, and ventilation.

Masking has always been one component of a larger effort to protect the health of MVCS. It is out of an abundance of caution that March 14, 2022 was selected as the date when our masking mandate will be lifted to ensure that any post winter break transmission is mitigated.

Mitigation of disease transmission, as well as prevention of harm to our students and the MVCS community at large will forever remain considerations in any policy. In that effort to do no harm, we ask that the MVCS community make mindful, informed decisions on what is best for everyone and that everyone be respectful of the choices made. Some of the community will choose not to have their students come with masks. Similarly, others will choose to continue their masking practices and we must all remember to hold space for their choices as privilege allows us all different viable options in life. The inconvenience of disease can be an insurmountable challenge to those faced with different circumstances than we are able to see.

In closing, we will continue to monitor the unique challenges this pandemic presents our community, including recommendations by public health entities, which may alter our own MVCS-specific recommendations, and are always open to hearing the voices of that community in order to build the strongest safest school possible.