



January 26, 2022

Dear Parents & Guardians of the Rumson School District,

Over the past few days, we have heard from numerous parents on all sides of the issue of COVID quarantines, masking, vaccination status, and degrees of illness related to the virus. We certainly value all of this feedback, input, and inquiry and use it to ensure our district protocols continue to move in a direction that supports the health, safety, and academic, social, and emotional wellness of our students and staff while giving our students as much in-school seat time as possible with their teachers and fellow students. What this means to each person in our school and extended community varies greatly and it is for this reason that our district bases our decisions locally while staying true to the guidance provided by our health and medical experts. This faithful approach pushes us to the boundaries of the guidance allowing our protocols to be identified as progressive AND sensible.

With that being said, this constant focus on COVID has fatigued us all. Because there is no rest for the weary, conversations continue among our administration and Board of Education to keep us moving forward. Below is the current state of where we are as a district in relation to COVID-related protocols. It is our hope that this update provides you with some sense of clarity around this constantly evolving topic. Everything outlined below is part of our Road Forward COVID Plan found on the COVID-19 tab at [www.rumsonschool.org](http://www.rumsonschool.org).

1. **Quarantine Guidelines** - Due to our district numbers being less than 15 over multiple days this week the following will take effect on Monday, 1/31/22. This will be the same process successfully used prior to the holiday break. Please understand that if in-school transmissions are confirmed or positivity numbers in the district increase above 15, former quarantine guidelines for in-school contacts will be temporarily reinstated.
  - a. When the Central East region is orange (per the COVID-19 Weekly CALI report issued by the NJDOH) OR,
  - b. district positivity numbers are less than 15 (per the data posted on the Rumson COVID-19 webpage):
    - i. *vaccinated and unvaccinated in-school close contacts will not quarantine and will symptom watch for 10 days;*
    - ii. *for unvaccinated in-school close contacts individuals must get a PCR test taken no sooner than day 5 from the contact.*
    - iii. PCR testing is available at the Forrestdale School every Monday and Wednesday from 8am -12pm. Please find further information on the main page of [www.rumsonschool.org](http://www.rumsonschool.org) or you may secure your own.
2. **Vaccination Status** - As per the updated 1/19/22 NJDOH guidance, effective Monday, 1/31/22, the following definition of “fully vaccinated” will be used by the district.
  - a. For 12 year olds and older, to be considered fully vaccinated an individual must have the appropriate booster shot if/when eligible.
    - i. 12 -18 year olds with Pfizer must be boosted at month 5 from the original series.
    - ii. 18 years and older with Pfizer/Moderna must be boosted at month 5 from the original series.
    - iii. 18 years and older with J & J must be boosted at month 2 from original shot
    - iv. The time period between the original series and the booster month eligibility is considered fully vaccinated.
    - v. 5-11 year olds are not eligible for booster and are considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after completion of the original series.

3. **Masks** - In the past few days there has been an indication that, in the near future, the state will be sunsetting Governor Murphy's Executive Order Number 281 (1/11/22), which extends the powers of Executive Order Number 251 (8/6/21) for the "foreseeable future" and "requires all public, private, and parochial schools, including charter and renaissance schools, to maintain a policy regarding mandatory use of face masks by staff, students, and visitors in the indoor portion of the school district premises..." With this on the horizon, the Rumson Board of Education and administration is watching carefully to determine an actual timeline on this issue's return to local control. In the meantime, we are in the process of developing a Mask-Optional Policy and associated protocols to be ready to enact and will consider any other appropriate response as we have done in the past.

That stated, it is critical that our school community knows that the greatest influence on this timeline lies with our District 13 legislators ([contact information can be found by clicking this link](#)) and members of the Assembly and Senate Education Committees ([contact information can be found using this link](#)).

Because it is an executive order, which is constitutionally supported by the declaration of a state of emergency, it carries the weight of law in terms of enforcement, so local Boards of Education and school officials are bound by the following directives outlined in the executive order:

"6. No municipality, county, or any other agency or political subdivision of this State shall enact or enforce any order, rule, regulation, ordinance, or resolution which will or might in any way conflict with any of the provisions of this Order, or which will or might in any way interfere with or impede its achievement. 7. Penalties for violations of this Order may be imposed under, among other statutes, N.J.S.A. App. A:9-49 and -50. 8. This Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until revoked or modified by the Governor."

We know some of you will be attending our Board of Education meeting tonight with potential thoughts on masking, and we look forward to a productive conversation as usual.

Our commitment to our students, throughout this pandemic, has been evident and under the leadership of this administration, staff, and Board of Education will continue to be. Although a tumultuous journey, we are proud of the decisions made to keep students in school and to keep them safe. It has been demonstrated that we are always prepared and willing to take the steps necessary to be progressive in doing what we can agree needs to be done - supporting the health of our community AND supporting the social, emotional, and academic well being of our students by ensuring they are in a school environment that gives them the routine, responsibility, and support they need in their development towards future success.

Regards,

Dr. John E. Bormann  
Superintendent of Schools  
Borough of Rumson School District

Dr. Charles H. Jones, III  
Board of Education President  
Borough of Rumson School District