

STERLING HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Matthew Sheehan
Superintendent



February 25, 2022

Dear Sterling High Community,

On February 7, 2022, Governor Murphy announced that the Universal Mask Mandate would be lifted in public schools effective March 7th. The decision was based upon the actual and projected decline in COVID-19 cases in our school community, the South Jersey region, and the state. Additionally, the number of students who are vaccinated and boosted has increased. The target date of March 7th allows schools, students, and their families time to prepare for this transition back to a "normal" school setting.

Sterling High School will recognize the March 7th mandate and will allow students the option of wearing masks during school. Likewise, our staff will also have the same option to protect themselves and their families from the virus. Individuals exhibiting COVID-like symptoms will be required to wear a mask until they can be safely off school grounds. School districts are not permitted to bar the use of facial coverings by individuals, and we remind the community to respect one another's decisions on mask wearing. In accordance with District policy, bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.

The decision by the Governor will have an impact on all co-curricular activities. Additionally, visitors to the school will not be required to wear masks while attending school sponsored activities such as performing arts presentations, athletic events, BOE meetings, assemblies, etc. Be advised, that masking on transportation is mandated by the Federal government, therefore masking on buses is required, unless the federal mandate is lifted.

The Administrative Team will develop plans for the appropriate adjustments within the school day. Parents and students are expected to report COVID-like illness to the school via pandemicresponse@sterling.k12.nj.us. Quarantine still applies for individuals testing positive or being identified as a close contact. School districts may implement universal mask-wearing policies after March 7th should the need arise due to a spike in COVID-19 cases, outbreaks within the school, or if the Governor's orders change.

Sterling High School will continue to work with state and local agencies for guidance and to support our goal of providing a safe environment for our students and staff. We cannot achieve this goal without your assistance, understanding, and partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MS", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Matthew Sheehan
Superintendent