

Friday, February 25, 2022

Dear CTECS Community,

After much discussion, input, and research, it has been determined that mask-wearing will be optional at all CTECS locations beginning Tuesday, March 1, 2022.

This decision was made in consultation with CTECS medical professionals, local health districts, and utilizing the Department of Public Health guidance. We analyzed the COVID-19 data from our own school system and from across the state to include vaccination, transmission, and quarantine rates.

The statewide data currently shows significant decreases in COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations. District-wide CTECS data reflects a daily new case quarantine rate of 0 to 1.

Please note:

- CTECS students, staff and visitors who wish to remain masked while on school property at any time shall be allowed to do so without interference of any kind.
- Masks will continue to be available at all school locations.
- Masks will be required for all students, staff and visitors while visiting CTECS nurse's offices until further notice.
- Masks will continue to be mandatory for all students and staff while riding all forms of CTECS and other school bus transportation through March 18, 2022, per the federal transportation mandate. Sending schools will continue to enforce and monitor school bus transportation requirements for CTECS student riders.
- COVID-19 mitigation strategies including recommended vaccinations, social distancing, testing, quarantining, reporting, etc. will remain in place for all CTECS students and staff until further notice.
- CTECS will follow all updated CIAC guidelines for student, staff, and spectator masking as optional at all CTECS sporting events effective Tuesday, March 1, 2022.
- Following SDE and DPH recommendations, all CTECS schools will provide enough COVID test kits so that all students and staff may elect to take a COVID 19 test prior to transitioning to a mask-optional school environment. CTECS strongly recommends this practice. Upon receiving a test kit, please test Monday before coming to school on Tuesday, March 1, 2022. Please report any positive results immediately to your school nurse. Test kits will be available for students and staff after Tuesday, March 1st and can be accessed from the school nurse's office.

CTECS is one of the larger districts in Connecticut with twenty school sites located throughout the state. COVID-19 conditions and mitigation strategies may differ greatly from one community to another. We are aware that conditions could potentially change rapidly in the event of new variants or increases in COVID-19 severity and infection rates. Therefore, CTECS will continue to stay in close

contact with our local sending school districts and with state and local health department officials to monitor any local changes in the virus. Because of this potential change in conditions, it is important to note that mask wearing requirements at CTECS may be immediately reinstated at any time, either district-wide or in individual schools.

We understand that there may be strong feelings regarding masking across Connecticut and we continue to welcome your valuable feedback and your questions. In addition, we will provide continuous updates to you as conditions warrant. Most important, we thank you for your continued patience and support as we work together to keep everyone in the CTECS district healthy and safe.

Dr. Ellen Solek  
Interim Superintendent of Schools