



Mr. Thomas J. Colabufo  
Superintendent

August 30, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

One of the first mandates that the new NYS Governor has issued in conjunction with the NYS Health Department is universal mask wearing for all students and staff when they are indoors, regardless of their vaccination status or the COVID-19 transmission rate in their county. You can see this mandate by viewing the following link, [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OiyfNvUoY\\_fIHv94dXN3QHyc9gjcebSo/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OiyfNvUoY_fIHv94dXN3QHyc9gjcebSo/view?usp=sharing).

Before this universal mask mandate, we created the Central Square Masking Guidelines that utilized the CDC's four transmission rate categories based on the number of new COVID-19 cases on a 7-day rolling average per 100,000 people in the county. We then established when students and staff would be required to wear a mask dependent upon the specific CDC transmission rate category the County was experiencing. **This will no longer be used to guide our masking protocols because all NYS school districts are required to adhere to all mandates issued by the NYS Governor and the NYS Health Department. All students and staff will be required to wear a mask on the bus and in our schools.** Similar to last year, any student that cannot medically tolerate wearing a mask will receive special accommodations, however, the school nurse at your child's school will need a signed statement from your child's physician stating why the child cannot tolerate wearing a mask. This is also a NYS Health Department requirement, not a procedure that our school district is requiring beyond the mask mandate from NYS Governor Hochul or the NYS Health Department.

The NYS Health Department is asking that all NYS school districts comply with the CDC recommendations, which includes separating students at least three feet when possible. We are continuing to utilize the plexiglass barriers in all of our cafeterias as another layer of protection for our students because students will obviously have to remove their masks to eat their food. We will provide students with mask breaks every hour, or at least one time during a 40-minute class period. If students occasionally need to pull their masks down for a few seconds to breathe between mask breaks, we completely understand and want all students to feel as comfortable as possible, while still adhering to the universal mask mandate.

We are still in the process of finalizing a procedures document for all staff, students, parents and guardians that will address every aspect of our opening of school protocols, and we will be sending that to all of you this week. The fact that the guidelines, restrictions, and mandates seem to change very quickly from the NYS Health Department makes it very difficult to put a finalized document out to parents/guardians. With that said, we understand the importance of providing you with all updates that impact your children when we receive them, and we will continue to do just that. Thank you and enjoy your evening and family time.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Colabufo  
Superintendent