

March 9, 2022

Dear ReGeneration Schools Families,

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention removed the mask requirement for schools in communities with a low to medium risk of COVID-19 spread effective Friday, February 25th. Chicago is considered low risk at this time because of low infection and hospitalization rates. The State of Illinois moved to a mask optional policy for public schools effective Monday, February 28, 2022.

Based on this guidance and positive public health data, ReGeneration Schools (CICS Avalon, CICS Basil, and CICS Washington Park) will shift to a mask-optional policy effective Monday, March 14th. We encourage masking in accordance with individual staff and student comfort levels but will no longer require it.

Our decision was guided by the positive trend in Chicago's public health data:

- A drop in the COVID-19 positivity rate from 20% in early January to 1% as of Friday.
- A significant reduction in COVID-19 cases from a peak of 9,700 in early January to a low of 95 cases as of Friday.
- Declining hospitalization rates from an average high of 243 in early January to a low of 15 in late February.

Our schools will remain "mask-friendly," and masks will still be available to all staff and students who wish to wear one. We understand that, depending on their individual perspective and health situation, every community member will have a different comfort level with choosing to wear a face mask. We absolutely respect and support an individual's right to wear a mask. We expect that all of our students and staff will continue to treat each other with empathy and understanding supporting a person's individual choice.

If, at any point, there is a significant increase in cases in our classrooms, schools, or community, we will reinstate the mask requirement so that we keep our schools open and our staff and students safe. Specific instances that will still require individual masking including the following:

1. Anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 and returning to class after 5 days of isolation, will be required to wear a mask for days 6-10 after symptom onset.
2. Fully vaccinated children and adults who have been exposed to an individual who tested positive in the previous 10 days are eligible to stay in school instead of quarantining, but we ask that they wear a mask for 10 days to minimize any likelihood of spread.
3. Unvaccinated students and staff returning from quarantine following a COVID-19 exposure, will be required to wear a mask on days 6-10 after the date of exposure.
4. Unvaccinated students and staff who are participating in test-to-stay, will be required to wear a mask until they receive two negative COVID test results.

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5. Students that are identified as having possible symptoms of COVID-19 and are awaiting pick up from school by parents or caregivers will be required to wear a mask while they wait.

We will keep our other layers of protection in place – including distancing, hand washing, increased ventilation, contact tracing, isolation, quarantine/test-to-stay, and encourage everyone to get vaccinated. We will also carefully monitor community spread, responding to data as it changes.

We are eager to return our students to as normal a school experience as possible. Thank you for your partnership and understanding as we once again adapt to the evolving nature of this pandemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lori Flood", is positioned above the typed name.

Lori Flood
Chief Operations Officer