

New York State Governor Kathy Hochul has announced that a decision regarding the mandated wearing of masks in schools could be made as soon as early March. It is speculated that masks could soon become optional for Liberty students, staff and visitors, just as they have become optional in many business environments.

Right now, though, the mask mandate remains in place for all Liberty school buildings and school buses, and we do not know what the governor will announce or exactly when to expect an update. We will, though, keep our community informed and will share updates and announcements as soon as we can.

Meanwhile, we understand that after two years of mandated masks in schools the anticipated elimination of the mandate marks a big change, and we know that our families and staff will have questions. To share your thoughts or ask a question, please email [Questions@LibertyK12.org](mailto:Questions@LibertyK12.org). We welcome your comments and will do our best to address your concerns.

This district also has rapid tests available for our families. If you would like a test kit, please call one of the LCSD health offices at:

- LES Health Office: 845-292-5400, ext. 2508
- LMS Health Office: 845-292-5400, ext. 2316
- LHS Health Office: 845-292-5400, ext. 2016

As always, thank you for your continued patience and support.

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## What we know so far:

### **How can families prepare their children for changes to the mask mandate?**

For two years, the importance of masks for protection against COVID-19 has been stressed, so some students may be worried about going to school without a mask or being around other people who are not wearing one.

Students can be reassured that in those two years, health experts have learned a great deal about how COVID-19 is transmitted and how we can protect one another. We also have effective vaccines, and infection rates have gone down, both locally and across New York State.

Of course, students still have the option to wear masks, either throughout the day or intermittently.

**Can my child continue to wear a mask in school?**

Anyone is welcome to wear a mask. This is a personal choice that will be respected.

**If my child won't be wearing a mask in school, do I need to inform anyone?**

No. Now that the mask mandate is lifted, students no longer need to wear one.

**Will students still have to wear masks on school buses?**

Yes. Masking on public transportation is a federal requirement and students and staff will still be required to continue to wear masks on school buses.

We would like to thank all of you for your on-going patience and support, and if there are any new developments, we will be sure to communicate them with our school community as soon as possible.