

Flemington-Raritan School District Parent & Community Newsletter

February, 2022 Edition 7

Editor in Chief: Dr. Kari McGann, Superintendent of Schools kmcgann@frsd.k12.nj.us
Co-Editor: Mrs. Laura Bruhn, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent lbruhn@frsd.k12.nj.us

FAREWELL TO FEBRUARY

February in our schools focused on celebrating kindness, respect, and friendship. Schools dedicated time to highlight quality character traits such as being compassionate and caring.

Guidance counselors worked hand-in-hand with building leadership to empower students to create a culture of kindness. Students heard from adults in their school that it doesn't take much to lift someone up—a few words of inspiration, an encouraging compliment, or simply recognizing someone's presence are ways to provide a bit of inspiration to others.



The Board of Education uses the month of February to recognize our Educators of the Year. Our educators give so much to our students and our district. Their acts of kindness to our students, families, and each other demonstrate daily why Flemingington-Raritan Regional School District is one of the best school districts for a child to learn and grown. The District Board of Education News & Notes [S'more](#) provides details about our wonderful educators and the support they provide to our students every day at every opportunity.



COVID-19 AND EXECUTIVE ORDERS

The Executive Order for masks on buses and mask in schools is reflective of the improving situation in New Jersey with COVID-19 case counts. Due to the lifting of the mask mandate, Flemingington-Raritan students and staff members are no longer required to wear masks indoors beginning March 7, 2022. As of March 7, masks will no longer be required but may be worn optionally. The NJDOH is updating guidance for K-12 schools with the consideration of situations where

masking would continue to be recommended, such as when there are high-levels of COVID-19 activity and/or isolation and quarantine scenarios.

TRANSPORTATION ON SCHOOL BUSES

As of February 25, the CDC lifted the requirement for wearing masks on buses or vans operated by public or private school systems ([see this link](#)). At this time, our District will no longer require masks to be worn on buses.



February is the month when bus drivers are recognized and appreciated. February 22nd marked School Bus Driver Appreciation Day. Our bus drivers are one of the most important members of the Flemingington-Raritan team. Their role as a bus driver is bigger than just transporting students to and from school. They have an opportunity each day to have a positive impact on students. Sometimes it's easy for people to forget how much a bus driver contributes to the lives of students, parents, teachers, and community members. They are tasked with the critical responsibility of protecting our students each and every day. I am grateful for all our bus drivers' hard work, dedication and commitment to students and their safety.

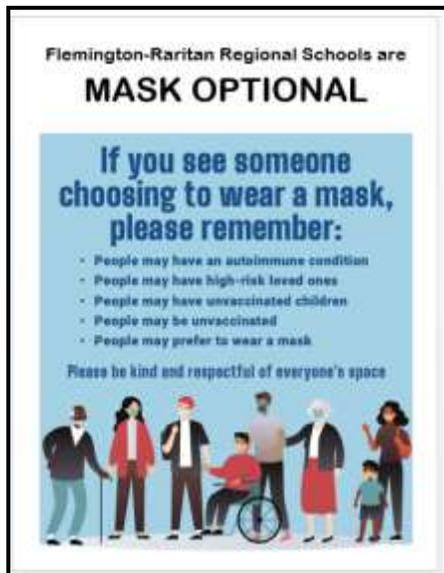
WHERE ARE WE IN OUR SCHOOLS CONCERNING COVID-19?

As of February 28, 2022, the District has had 76 positive cases reported to the District during the month of February, compared to 485 cases in January. Overall, we have had an 84.3% decrease in the number of cases reported to the District when comparing January to February. On February 28, 2022 we only had 18 students, or .5% of our students, quarantining due to exposure to COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19 and participating in virtual instruction, compared to on January 5th when we had 302 students!

Governor Murphy's announcement to lift the mask mandate in schools as of March 7 has placed decisions about masking in the hands of district leaders. Since that announcement, there has been additional guidance provided by the NJ Department of Health and, as noted above, the CDC has lifted the requirement for masks on school buses.

Effective March 7, the district will be mask optional for all students and staff members. As per Executive Order #253, district staff who are unvaccinated must continue to engage in weekly COVID testing.

We are working to print signs to hang in our schools to remind students, staff, faculty, and visitors that Flemington-Raritan Regional School District is a place where others' differences are accepted and we are especially kind to others whose opinions and choices may be different than our own. We foster respect, civility, and kindness.



We fully expect everyone to be respectful and understanding of each person's choice to wear or not wear a mask. Teasing and bullying will not be tolerated and will be handled in accordance with our district discipline policies.

We will continue to maintain three (3) feet of physical distancing within the school setting to the greatest extent possible and we will continue to reinforce handwashing and proper health practices.

UPCOMING MOANA, JR. MUSICAL

It is exciting to welcome back our middle school musical this coming weekend, March 4th, 5th, and 6th (snow date) at J.P. Case Middle School. Directors Ms. Colette Baills, Ms. Megan Krukowski and Mrs. Rose Nagy have been working with performers for months to prepare for the opening this weekend. Like many of you, I am eager for the performance of Moana, Jr. at J.P. Case Middle School. I am thrilled to see our students back on stage as they've been working so hard to prepare for this year's musical production. Our performers may select to be maskless during the performance. Theater goers are required to wear a mask as masks are required indoors until March 7.



SCHOOL CALENDARS: 2021-2022 (REVISED) AND UPCOMING SCHOOL YEAR, 2022-2023

Please [click here](#) to view a revised calendar as school will now be in session on April 25 to make up the February 25 school closing. In addition, please [click here](#) to view next year's

school calendar. Both calendars were approved by the Board on February 28.



STEM RECOGNITIONS

The national economy continues to need students that are dedicated to college and career choices in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), as well as students who possess skills in 21st-century skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration.

Our very own Supervisor of Technology, Ralph Losanno, has been recognized by the President of Research & Development Council of New Jersey and Manager of New Jersey STEM Pathways Network as an inductee of the 2022 New Jersey Class of I CAN STEM Role Models. On behalf of the New Jersey STEM Pathways Network (NJSPN), Mr. Losanno was selected and nominated for this honor from a highly competitive pool of applicants. Congratulations!

Launched in 2020, the NJSPN's I CAN STEM diversity and inclusion campaign aims to support an increase in the diversity of New Jersey's STEM workforce and academic pipelines. I CAN STEM highlights diverse STEM role models so that all students will be able to see themselves participating and succeeding in STEM courses and careers.

Throughout the year, the NJSPN will feature historical and famous I CAN STEM Role Models, such as physicist Shirley Ann Jackson and molecular biologist Flossie Wong-Staal, as well as I CAN STEM Role Model New Jersey Inductees representing people of color, LGBTQ+ community members and women who are STEM professionals here in New Jersey.

Mr. Losanno will serve as the New Jersey I CAN STEM Role Model representing January 2022. Please visit <https://njstempathways.org/i-can-stem/> to see more about this initiative. We are lucky and honored to have Mr. Losanno as part of the 2022 New Jersey Class of I CAN STEM Role Models. Congratulations!

Also in STEM news, our Math Supervisor and Co-STEM Ecosystem leader for HSMC, Kristen Wolff, was awarded a \$2,000 mini-grant on behalf of the New Jersey STEM Pathways Network (NJSPN). We congratulate her on being selected as a 2022 NJ STEM Month Mini-Grant recipient. The Hunterdon, Somerset, Mercer County STEM Consortium organization will be awarded a \$2,000 grant. These grant funds were generously provided to the NJSPN by the Overdeck Family Foundation. Congratulations, Mrs. Wolff! We are so proud of your hard work.