

Flemington-Raritan Regional School District
Dr. Kari McGann
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June 10, 2021

Dear Flemington-Raritan Regional School District Parents and Community Members,

After Governor Murphy's Tweet on Monday which was referenced [in my letter to the community on Monday](#) afternoon, June 7, 2021, school district leaders received clarifying guidance the next afternoon, on Tuesday, June 8, 2021. The guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education made it clear that masks indoors, where there is not an extreme heat situation, are still required under the Governor's Executive Order 175. Below is the clarification that we received today from the Department of Education with regard to mask-wearing:

"Masking protocols outlined in Executive Order No. 175, which are aligned with current CDC recommendations, remain in place. The Order includes an exception to masking requirements outdoors during periods of extreme heat. Additionally, the Order includes an exception to masking protocols in situations where wearing a mask would inhibit an individual's health. Please be advised that the Governor has clarified that this indoor masking exception could reasonably be applied to situations in which a district determines, at its discretion and based on its assessment of the individual circumstances, that a period of extreme heat warrants students and staff to remove their masks while indoors to protect individual health. As always, unvaccinated individuals are strongly encouraged to continue wearing masks while participating in activities that include sustained contact with others, or when in a crowded setting."

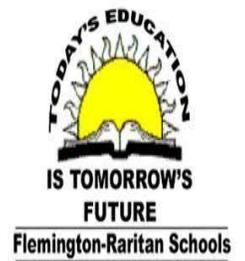
Masks while indoors, in air-conditioned spaces, still remain the directive of the Governor and the Department of Education. Only one of our buildings was not included in the 2019 HVAC referendum; J.P. Case Middle School. This is the only building where students, staff, and faculty must continue to wear their masks while inside the building. All other schools, with the exception of J.P. Case, were included in the 2019 referendum to install HVAC or repair HVAC install HVAC dehumidification.

Therefore, the following information applies:

- Outdoor recess and outdoor PE classes: just as with past guidance, students will not be required to wear masks, but will still need to maintain social distancing.
- School busses: in response to the heat and humidity, for the remainder of the school year, masks are optional when riding the bus.
- In areas where there is no air-conditioning: masks are optional. Non-air-conditioned buildings are Barley Sheaf School, Francis A. Desmares School, Robert Hunter School, and Reading-Fleming Intermediate School.
- In areas of our buildings where there is intermittent HVAC: masks are optional, such as in the case of Copper Hill School where high levels of humidity are often present in the building.
- At J.P. Case Middle School, which is completely air-conditioned: masks are required. If air-conditioning service malfunctions or becomes intermittent, mask breaks are permitted. If breathing is impaired or is difficult, individuals may remove their masks.

Next week's weather forecast predicts temperatures to be in the low 80's with tomorrow's temperatures predicted to be a bit cooler than today. The humidity level, or the amount of moisture in the air, tends to run high in our non-air-conditioned buildings which is why we use dehumidifiers placed around the building in an attempt to decrease the humidity. The higher humidity level makes it feel warmer than the actual temperature. Therefore, our non-air-conditioned buildings feel warmer than the outside temperature. Teachers are taking steps to keep students cool such as keeping the lights dim or completely off in classrooms, making sure students are hydrated, and keeping the fans on in classrooms. We thank our voters for passing the November 5, 2019 referendum so that all our students can have air-conditioned buildings by September 2021.

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COVID-19 Update:

Our Central West region continues to improve. Each week, the Department of Health provides information on the COVID-19 transmission at the regional level published through the CALI report. This week's COVID-19 report shows our Central West region remains in the "yellow." All indicators; Case Rate and Percent Positivity, and Percent CLI decreased again. We are very close to moving into the low or "green" activity level. The [Hunterdon County COVID-19 Dashboard](#) reports countywide daily increases. Our levels in Hunterdon County are the lowest the levels have been since last June. This is promising news! The Southeast region of our state remains in the "green." The Southeast region includes Atlantic, Cape May, and Cumberland counties. The state's COVID-19 Activity Level Index Weekly Reports are all linked [here](#). This week's activity level report is [here](#).

No new positive COVID-19 cases were reported in the District this week. A current count of reported COVID-19 cases is posted on the [District website](#). To find the current count of reported COVID-19 cases visit the district homepage and click on the headline that reads Current COVID-19 count. The chart is updated by the end of each day in which a case is reported to the Superintendent.

Please take note of [the symptoms of COVID-19](#). If any student experiences these symptoms, or if they have been identified as a close contact of someone who is ill with COVID-19, parents should keep the student home and report the situation immediately to your child's school nurse.

Today's letter will serve as the weekly letter to parents and our community. A letter will not be distributed tomorrow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kari McGann".

Dr. Kari McGann
Superintendent of Schools