



DESERT SANDS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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BOARD OF EDUCATION: Jacob Alvarez, Ana M. Conover, Wendy Jonathan, Tricia Pearce, Linda Porras
SUPERINTENDENT: Scott L. Bailey

March 10, 2022

Desert Sands Educational Community:

With less than 56 days remaining in the school calendar for the 2021-22 school year, and as we approach the first day of spring, change is in the air.

Specifically, on February 28, 2022, Governor Newsom [announced](#) that after March 11 masks will not be required but will be strongly recommended in schools and child care facilities, including school buses. On March 01, 2022, the Desert Sands Board of Education unanimously approved alignment with the revised masking guidance. Therefore, beginning Monday, March 14, 2022, masks will become strongly recommended for Desert Sands students and staff. The revised CDPH guidance for use of face masks in California can be accessed at [this](#) link.

Almost two years to the day after the emergency school closures of March 2020, the changes in mask guidance and general public health rules will be met with relief by some, yet cause anxiety for others. As seen through the eyes of our students, the change in mask guidelines may prove significant. Let's work together to encourage a safe and risk-free learning environment for our 27,000 students, whereas we support and respect personal choice to wear or not wear a mask in school settings. Parents are encouraged to preempt the March 14, 2022 transition with discussions regarding personal choice, and respect for the choice of others. As a reminder, you can access a wealth of social and emotional wellness resources on the District's website at [this](#) link.

The COVID-19 mitigation strategies included in the District's COVID-19 Safety Plan (e.g. cleaning, self-health checks, increased ventilation and filtration, etc.) remain in effect. The COVID-19 Safety Plan continues to be updated and can be accessed at [this](#) link. You can access COVID-19 testing and vaccination schedules at [this](#) link.

Parallel to the change in mask guidance, and based on the low COVID-19 case rate data in the District, [volunteers](#) (subject to CDPH public health [orders](#)) may begin the application process, and field trips will resume effective March 14, 2022. You can keep apprised of COVID-19 related information by monitoring the Super Seconds section of the District's website at [this](#) link. Note that the District is subject to prevailing public health guidelines and orders at any given time.

Your collective effort and determination continue to provide safe, in-person learning experiences for our students. With high school graduations now in sight, let's continue walking forward together as we take the next steps toward the endemic phase of the pandemic.

Sincerely,

Scott L. Bailey
Superintendent of Schools
Desert Sands Unified School District