

Principal Briefing

January 21, 2022

Agenda

- Dr. Brabrand - Welcome
- Health Updates- Masks
- Additional Updates
- Discussion/Questions



Surge Plan Continues through January 28

- Demand for central office support is on a decline.
- Our substitute fill rates are improving.
- Current COVID surge appears to be leveling off.
- Given our current operational demands, we are going to continue with our surge plan to provide central office coverage to support schools for one additional week (**January 25-28**).

Face Mask Chronology: Federal, State, and Local Directives

January 29, 2021

CDC issues an order requiring universal masking required on public transportation

August 10-11, 2021

FCPS Superintendent announced universal masking would continue in schools

January 15, 2022

Executive Order 2 signed by the Governor providing parents the ability to opt-out of local face mask requirements for their child

March 2021

SB1303 requiring Virginia public schools to implement CDC mitigation strategies to the maximum extent practicable

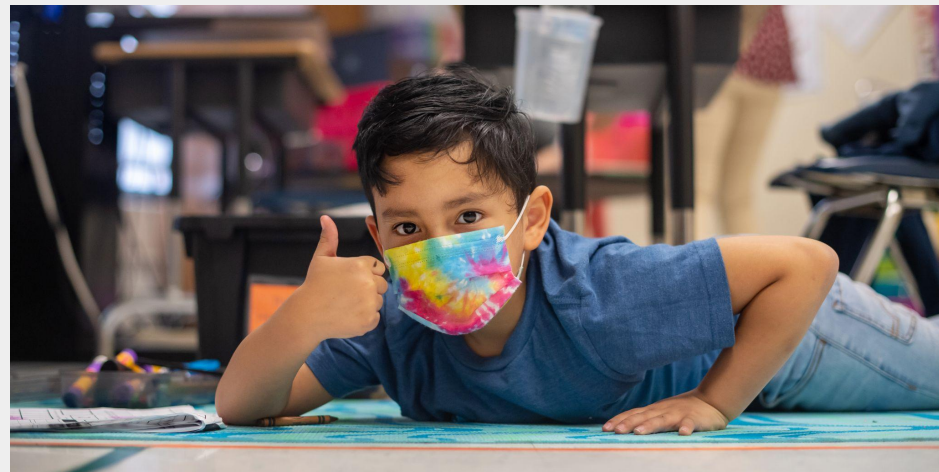
August 12, 2021

Governor's Order requiring universal masking in public and private K-12 schools in Virginia

January 21, 2022

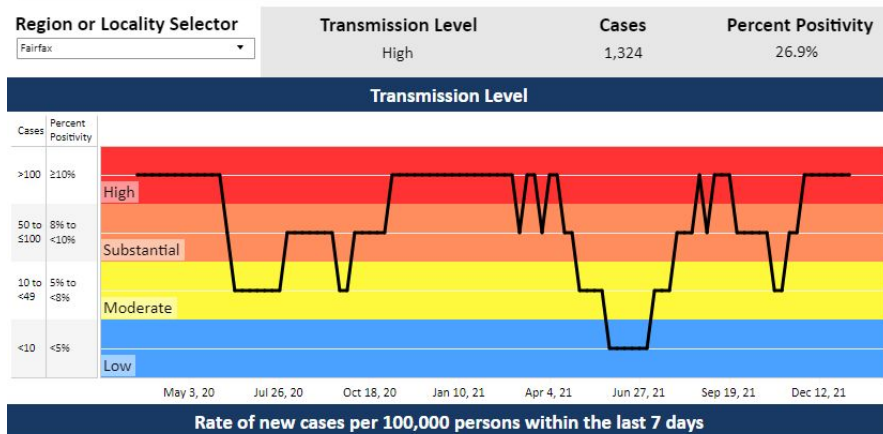
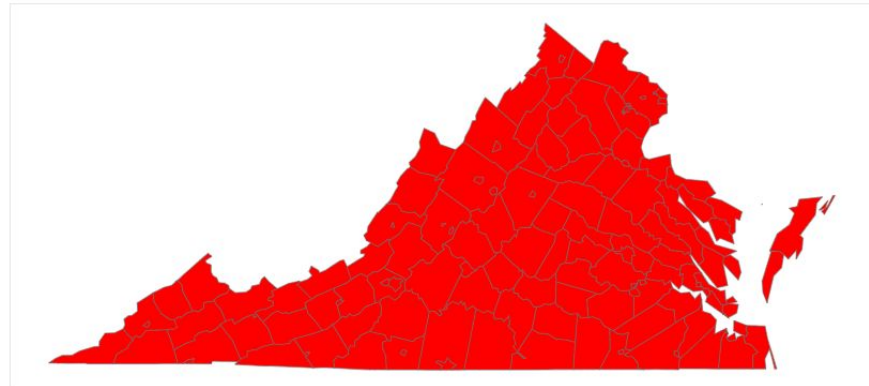
FCPS Superintendent shares with community and staff universal masking will continue in schools

Health Updates



Layered Prevention Strategies Ensure Continuity of In-Person Learning Despite the Surge

- Community transmission across the state, including our locality, remains high.
- Similar to cases in the community, there has been a significant increase in the number of school reported cases.
 - Approximately 1,160 cases reported in FCPS schools and offices Jan. 17th - 20th compared to 422 cases reported in FCPS Dec. 13th-16th.
- Layered prevention strategies, to include universal masking, have allowed us to maintain in-person learning and minimize spread in schools.
 - Zero outbreaks reported since the return from winter break.
 - 36 outbreak (155 cases) reported year-to-date across 200 schools and 206,111 students and staff.
 - Unlike other jurisdictions, FCPS has had zero schools that have had to go virtual.



Mask Guidance: Federal, State, and Local Health Authorities

- **CDC** guidance continues to recommend universal masking as a part of layered prevention strategies in schools at this time.
 - *CDC continues to recommend indoor masking in K-12 schools for all individuals ages 2 years and older, including students, teachers, staff, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status. [Jan.14, 2022](#)*
- **VDH** recommends universal mask wearing in public indoor settings during substantial and high community transmission.
 - *Masks help offer protection against variants. If fully vaccinated, VDH recommends following [CDC guidance](#) to wear a mask indoors when in [areas with substantial to high transmission](#). If not fully vaccinated, you should continue to wear a mask indoors and also while in outdoor crowded settings.*
- **FCHD** continues to recommend universal masking in public indoors settings given the high transmission in the area.
 - *Based on guidance released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), **we recommend that everyone, including individuals fully vaccinated against COVID-19, wear a mask in public indoor settings** and continue to take other precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. [Jan. 19, 2022](#)*

Mask Guidance: Federal, State, and Local Health Authorities

- **Other Health Experts**

- December 30, 2021- **Northern Virginia Health Directors** message to all Northern Virginia School Superintendents stressing the importance of maintaining universal indoor masking in schools at this time.
- January 17, 2022 Statement from **VA Chapter of the American Academy** of Pediatrics strongly recommending children continue to wear masks in schools while rates of COVID infection remain high.

FCPS Mask Regulation Remains Unchanged

Our overarching goal is to work with students and families in a collaborative manner, to keep the focus on teaching and learning while ensuring the safety and security of all students and staff. As a caring culture, we work to inform and educate rather than engage in confrontation.

- No change to existing FCPS mask requirements as outlined in [R2109](#) (put into effect in August 2021).
- Face masks are included in the student dress code and failure to comply remains an SR&R violation.
- All students and parents were provided access to the SR&R and were expected to sign acknowledgement of the SR&R expectations at the beginning of the school year.
- Administrators will continue to address students individually upon arrival to school who have boarded the bus refusing to wear a mask.

Student Mask Exemptions



Medical Mask Exemptions

Continuing Exemptions: Any student granted a medical mask exception for the 2020-21 SY is granted an exception for this school year without additional documentation.

Automatic Exemptions: Students under the age of 2 and students who are unable to remove their face covering without assistance are exempted from the face covering requirement without a physician's note.

New Medical Exemption Requests: Must include a written statement of the student's physician confirming that not wearing a face covering is necessary **due to a health condition, communication impairment, or disability**. The statement need not specify the underlying medical condition or diagnosis.

[Checklist for Additional Layered Prevention Strategies for Students with Approved Face Mask Exemptions](#)

Religious Mask Exemptions

Schools are to submit religious mask exemption requests to their region office.

Students are expected to come to school wearing a face mask, in accordance with R2109, while the region office is reviewing the request.

R2109 Regarding Mask Refusal



Just a reminder...

Continue to follow existing regulations and practices.

Any student who refuses to wear a face covering while indoors on school property or during FCPS-provided transportation, and who is not otherwise exempt will be precluded access to face-to-face instructional programming until they comply with the requirements of this regulation.

- **Intentional Removal / Refusal to Wear Face Covering:** Intentional removal of or refusal to wear a face covering during the times face coverings are required by all students will be treated as a violation of the Regulation 2613 (Student Dress Code). This includes indoors on school property and transportation.
 - SRR Violation of BSO7 (Dress Code)
 - *BSO3 (Refusal to comply with staff requests...) may be used as a secondary infraction code to document refusal despite redirection from staff.*
 - Response - 1 day OSS for an infraction using the new SUS-M suspension code (this process will enable staff to monitor data regarding this unique situation and gives students the ability to return the next day to comply with the regulation).



Face Mask Non-Compliance: Mask Refusal



WHO: Student without significant cognitive, sensory, and/or medical needs who refuses to wear a face mask as required by R2109

Action Plan:

1. School staff will redirect the student by reminding the student of the requirement to wear a face mask indoors while at school (unless given a face mask exemption or temporary face mask exemption from staff).
2. Staff will seek support from available student services personnel (e.g. school counselor, social worker, psychologist, behavior intervention teacher, other staff member) to provide additional education and support regarding the expectation for universal masking and the possible ramifications of not complying with R2109.
3. If the student continues to refuse to comply with R2109, school staff will contact the parent/guardian for support in redirecting the student to comply. School staff will also ensure the student's parent/guardian understands the process and criteria for requesting a face mask exemption.
4. If following contact with the parent/guardian the student continues to refuse to comply with R2109, the school will inform the parent/guardian that the student will be excluded from in-person instruction until such time that the student complies with R2109 in accordance with R2109.
5. Students excluded from school due to face mask refusal will have access to learning through the provision of teacher provided asynchronous work that can be accessed from the Learning Management System (e.g. Schoology)

Face Mask Non-Compliance: Mask Tolerance Due to Impact of Disability



WHO: Students not wearing face masks in accordance with R2109 due to difficulty tolerating face masks as a result of their disability and/or medical condition (e.g. significant cognitive, sensory, and/or medical needs)

Action Plan:

1. School staff will ensure the student's parent/guardian understands the process and criteria for requesting a face mask exemption.
2. If the student does not qualify for a face mask exemption, the school staff will develop a plan to assist in building the student's face mask tolerance while the student receives in-person instruction. School staff will plan to include as much physical distance from the student and other students to the extent possible given existing resources.
3. Should extreme circumstances arise that create significant risks for the student or other students/staff, the IEP team may need to convene to determine if additional or differentiated supports or services are required.

Attendance Reminders

Absence due to Refusal to Wear a Face Covering

- **Students who refuse to attend school due to refusal to wear a face covering**, and who are not otherwise exempt from the requirements of this regulation, will receive an unexcused absence for the day. Attendance procedures for addressing unexcused absences outlined in [Regulation 2234](#) will be implemented.
- **Students who are suspended as a result of mask non-compliance** will be counted as excused, in accordance with the SR&R.
- In accordance with the attendance requirements outlined in [Regulation 2234](#) and state attendance requirements, students shall be withdrawn from FCPS student membership rolls after 15 consecutive days of absence regardless of whether their absences are excused or unexcused.

Discipline Procedure Reminders

Discipline due to Refusal to Wear a Face Covering

Suspension Appeal - Exceptions to Reinstatement Pending the Appeal Decision

When notified of an appeal by the parent, the principal shall not reinstate the student in school until the appeal has been decided except under one of the following conditions:

(a) The principal determines that the reinstatement of the student would pose a danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption of the school's educational program.

(b) The suspension is pursuant to a referral to the Division Superintendent, in which case, the student's suspension may be extended until the decision to long-term suspend, reassign, or to expel has been determined (subject to the principal's discretion to permit a suspended student to attend school or any designated portion of the school program in accordance with Chapter II.C.1.f. "Disciplinary Procedures and Interventions").

Face Mask Refusal: Exceptions to Reinstatement Pending the Appeal Decision Considerations

- *Pose a danger to persons or property*
 - Potential increase in COVID transmission in schools (increased exposure)
 - Impact increased exposure could potentially have on the health and safety of other students and staff
- *Ongoing threat of disruption of the school's educational program*
 - Students, staff, and/or families could be fearful for their health and safety due to others not wearing the required face masks
 - Instructional time may be significantly interrupted while instructional / support staff address ongoing refusal to comply with the face mask requirement

Special Education Discipline Procedure Reminders

Discipline due to Refusal to Wear a Face Covering

IEP Team to Consider the Need for IEP Goals and/or FBA/BIP - In the event that the child's behavior impedes the child's learning or that of others, the IEP team shall consider the use of positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports to address the behavior. The IEP team shall consider the need for:

- Developing goals and services specific to the child's behavioral needs; or
- Conducting a functional behavioral assessment and determining the need for a behavioral intervention plan to address the child's behavioral needs.

Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) - The conditions for when to conduct an MDR have not changed and would apply if discipline resulting from face mask refusal could constitute a **change in placement**.


- Manifestation determination is required if the local educational agency is contemplating a removal that constitutes a change in placement for a child with a disability who has violated a code of student conduct of the local educational agency that applies to all students.

Provision of Services by Day 11 - FCPS must provide services to the extent determined necessary to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward meeting the goals of the student's IEP.

Face Mask Non-Compliance Considerations for Students with Disabilities

- Is the student ...
 - refusing to wear the face mask; **OR**
 - having difficulty tolerating the face mask as a result of their disability and/or medical condition (e.g. significant cognitive, sensory, and/or medical needs)
- To what degree was the student able to wear a face mask prior to January 24, 2022?
 - If the ability to wear a face mask has changed, is there a documented medical reason for the change?

Mask Refusal and Instruction During Suspension

- Students suspended for mask refusal will have access to asynchronous work provided by their teachers, consistent with any other SR&R violation.
- Utilize Schoology for posting materials
- Centrally created/provided Asynchronous Resources Available for Teachers:
 - Imagine Learning, ST Math
 - [PreK-6 Asynchronous Page](#)
 - Secondary [Curriculum Hub](#)
 - This [icon](#)  is used to highlight asynchronous resources



Stream In Check in remains limited to those students who have been directed to isolate or quarantine for COVID related reasons.

Staff Expectations

- **There is no change to the expectation that staff wear a face covering while indoors on school property (to include buildings, school buses, and division vehicles).** Please reference [FCPS Regulation 2109](#)
- Staff requesting a medical or religious exemption from this requirement shall be directed to submit an accommodation request through EER. See the [EER page](#) for additional details
 - [Request for Religious Accommodations Form](#)
 - [Request for Reasonable Accommodations \(Medical\) Form](#)
- Employees without an approved accommodation who refuse to wear a mask should be:
 1. Asked to share their concerns; reminded of the requirement and the rationale; and asked to comply
 2. Directed to the accommodation process, if needed
 3. Employees who refuse to comply with Regulation 2109 need to be informed about the consequences of their actions by their manager:
 - a. Noncompliance creates an unacceptable health risk to students and employees
 - b. Noncompliance is insubordination
 - c. Employee will be sent home and charged Leave without Pay
 - d. Employee may return only if they comply with Reg 2109
 - e. Continued noncompliance will result in recommendation for further discipline up to and including dismissal
 4. EER will provide written guidance and language. Contact your EER Specialist for support.

Staff should remain focused on operating our school division in a non-partisan manner by following CDC guidance and local school policies.

Social Media Guidance for Staff

Review the [Social Media Guidelines for Staff](#) on the FCPS website.

- What you say or show on social media becomes part of your digital footprint. While your posts may intend no harm, the wrong one can put you in the center of controversy.
- As an FCPS employee, your posts—**whether personal or professional**—reflect not only upon you, but also upon the school division. The content of your posts should not impair your capacity to maintain the respect of students and parents, nor impair your ability to effectively perform your job. Posts that impair your ability to effectively work with your students may be addressed through either performance or disciplinary follow up.
- Establishing appropriate privacy settings to limit access to personal information on your social media account(s) is a good idea. But that's no guarantee that the photo you send on your private Facebook account won't end up being shared by one of your friends.

Mask Policy Updates- Communication Plan (tentative)

- Initial Letter to Families- January 21
- Second Family Letter with Additional Details- January 24
- Staff Town Hall- January 24: 11:30 am
- Family Town Hall (English)- January 24: 7:00 pm
- Family Town Hall (Spanish)- January 25: 7:00 pm
- Talking points and resources for principals
- Additional information and resources on the FCPS HUB for Staff
- Additional information on public site for families

Media Requests and Demonstrators

- If media show up at your school, please contact OCCR by emailing mediarelations@fcps.edu or calling Julie Moulton at 571-395-7398.
- Please direct any media to remain on the public sidewalk and if they don't leave your property when asked, call school security (571-423-2000).
- Do not respond to emails, phone calls or in-person media requests. Please take the name and phone number of any member of the media who shares it with you and immediately contact the OCCR media relations team.
- If non-student demonstrators appear on school property, principals should respectfully request they move the demonstration off of school grounds and onto public property. Principals should contact school security for noncompliance with this request. OSS will determine if FCPD presence is warranted.

Student Participation in Political Activities



- We respect students' rights to participate in walkouts especially during non-instructional time such as lunch, in hallways, during activities, etc., as long as they meet their educational and administrative obligations. They may wear t-shirts and other insignia advertising related messages as long as those clothes are not obscene, vulgar, or otherwise in violation of the SR&R.
- Students are allowed to leave classrooms and their buildings, although they are encouraged to remain on school property for safety reasons. If the temperature is extremely cold or there is precipitation principals should make every reasonable effort, if possible, to offer a large indoor space to the students.
- Students participating in marches or walkouts are expected to participate in class and to respond to administrative questions and directives in the same way as all other students.
- Per SR&R, "An unexcused absence from school or from class is one for which the student does not have a legitimate reason, in the opinion of the principal. When a student is absent without prior communication between the parent and the school, school personnel will notify the parent and take appropriate action based on the individual circumstances."
- Harassment of participants should not be tolerated at any school.
- Our Student Rights and Responsibilities document states: "Students may exercise the right to freedom of expression through speech, assembly, petition, and other lawful means and have the right to advocate change of any law, policy, or regulation. The exercise of this of this right may not interfere with the rights of others..."

Problem Solving Possible Scenarios

Our overarching goal is to work with students and families in a collaborative manner, to keep the focus on teaching and learning while ensuring the safety and security of all students and staff. As a caring culture, we work to inform and educate rather than engage in confrontation.

How do we coach children whose parents have advised them not to wear masks?

I respect your parents' perspective. School rules and home rules can be in conflict but when we are at school we follow school rules. At home we follow home rules. We want to keep our schools open and safe. The rules in our SR&R mandate that we all wear our masks on school property. Please put on your mask and If you do not have one I will provide one for you and I will contact your parent.

How do we handle parents of elementary students who show up at school to ensure their child is able to attend without a mask?

If possible, it would be recommended to meet with the parent without the student. You respect the parent's perspective but school rules and home rules can be in conflict. When we are at school we follow school rules. At home we follow home rules. FCPS always prioritizes the health and safety of our students, staff, families, and community above everything else. We want to keep our schools open and safe. I need to follow FCPS policy as set by our School Board and the directives of our Superintendent. (Refer to OCCR communication to parents)

Problem Solving Possible Scenarios

How should schools handle students who get onto the bus without a mask, won't wear a mask at school, and parent refusing to pick them up?

Children refusing to wear masks will be allowed to board FCPS buses. Administrators will address this situation with the student and, if no compliance, parent will be contacted to pick up their student. If a parent or emergency contact is unable or unwilling to pick the student up, the student should wait in a room with the appropriate level of supervision.

A space, outside of the Care room, should be used. If no spaces are available, the Care Room can be used so long as symptomatic and asymptomatic children are not combined. Children who are refusing to wear masks can be kept in the same room, socially distanced, while waiting to be picked up.

At the end of the day, if the student has not been picked up, the student will be returned home on the bus (the same process we have been following). Administrators will document the noncompliance and continue to work with families on an individual basis to resolve the issue. Should they not reach resolution and the student remains noncompliant for **three consecutive days**, the region and Special Services (for students with disabilities) should be consulted.

Problem Solving Possible Scenarios

How do we handle individuals who want to video or audio tape mask compliance discussions at school?

If you are in a meeting, you never have to permit a parent to record a discussion (outside of special education meetings) - it is not illegal, but the administrator is permitted to set the “rules” for a school meeting.

If an individual starts recording spontaneously at school, ask the individual to please stop the recording, particularly if students are present, as their parents may prefer that they not be recorded while attending school. If individual refuses or becomes loud and disruptive, direct them to remain calm and appropriate in presence of students in order to foster a safe educational environment. If disruption continues, individual should be directed to leave the building or school grounds.

How do we handle students who leave the office and go to class and/or go to class and remove their mask?

If a student refuses to comply with the directive of an adult regarding mask compliance, the administrator should follow the same protocol that is used when a student refuses to comply with the directive of an adult in the building. Consider engaging a trusted adult to attempt to persuade the student to comply. If that does not work, and the student continues to defy directives, use your security staff to escort the student from the classroom to another area. This should be the last result after employing multiple problem solving strategies.

Additional Information



Delayed COVID-19 Testing Results and Updated Close Contact Communication

Due to the volume of COVID-19 testing, test results are frequently being delayed multiple days from laboratories. In some cases, positive test results for the index case may delay our notification to potential close contacts.

As a result of the varying times for notification of positive cases, we have created two differentiated Student Pause Letters which are included in the [COVID-19 Flowcharts and Letters SY 2021-2022](#):

1. Student Pause Letter When Last Date of Exposure Was 0 to four (4) Days Ago (**traditional letter**)
2. Student Pause Letter When Last Date of Exposure Was five (5) to 10 Days Ago (**new letter**)

Exposure DAY 0-4 Student Potential Close Contact Letter

Use when the last date of exposure to the index case has been 0-4 days ago

Exposure DAY 5-10 Student Potential Close Contact Letter



ONLY use when the last date of exposure to the index case is 5 DAYS or more ago

Individuals Exempt from Quarantine (UPDATE)

Individuals Exempt from Quarantine	Persons 18 Years or Older	5-17 Year Olds	Previously COVID-19 Positive
	<p>Received all recommended vaccine doses, including boosters and additional primary shots for some immunocompromised people.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Received Johnson & Johnson within the last two (2) months, second dose of Pfizer or Moderna within the last five (5) months</p>	Completed the primary series of COVID vaccines	Confirmed COVID positive with a viral test within the last 90 days
	<p>Exempt individuals should wear a well-fitting mask around others for 10 days from the date of their last contact with someone with COVID-19 (the date of last close contact is considered day 0) and Get tested at least 5 days after they last had close contact with someone with COVID-19.</p>		

Individuals who meet the criteria listed above for their respective age range are exempt from quarantine **if** they are asymptomatic.

This information is being provided to principals for information purposes only. **The FCHD will continue make the determination, via the vaccination survey response, as to whether a student meets the criteria to be exempt from quarantine.**

Vaccine/Screening Testing Requirement for Staff Remains Unchanged

FCPS employees who have been identified to submit to weekly screening testing due to vaccination status are expected to meet that requirement or face disciplinary action.

- The January 13, 2022, U.S. Supreme Court ruling on vaccine mandates was specific to the legality of pending OSHA guidelines which would have mandated certain employers to implement vaccine mandates with a testing option
- The ruling did not prohibit employers from implementing vaccine mandates
- The FCPS vaccine mandate for staff was instituted independent of and prior to OSHA guidance as a measure to keep our schools, and everyone within them, safe

Response that may be used if staff reach out with questions:

The January 13, 2022, U.S. Supreme Court ruling in National Federation of Independent Business v. Dept. of Labor was specific to the legality of pending OSHA guidelines which would have mandated certain employers to implement a vaccine mandate/testing option, and did not prohibit employers from doing so. The FCPS staff vaccination requirement with an alternative screening testing option was instated independent of and prior to OSHA guidance as an added measure to keep our schools, and everyone within them, safe. FCPS employees who are not fully vaccinated are expected to submit to weekly screening testing or face disciplinary action.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question	Answer
Is a principal/program manager authorized to approve admin leave for quarantine/isolation?	<p>Yes, if <u>all</u> of the following conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The employee is fully vaccinated (currently using old definition of 2 Pfizer or 2 Moderna or 1 J&J) or have an approved exemption• The employee was directed to quarantine or isolate by the Health Department or physician because either COVID positive or symptomatic close contact• Employee is unable to telework because employee is too ill to work or nature of job doesn't allow for telework

January 24th Staff Development Day — Update

January 24th has been designated as a “work from alternative location day” with the following goals:

½ day

- Completion of required winter division-wide PD, PK-12 for select teachers as noted in [MyPDE](#)
- Completion of optional winter division-wide PD, PK-12 for teachers as noted in [MyPDE](#)
- Individual and Team planning of classroom activities and instruction to support student learning

½ day

- Participation in Principal directed activities that support the unique goals and varied needs of their school

Reminder: Per Superintendent’s message to all staff on October 19th: “In order to provide additional flexibility, school-based staff will be allowed to work from an alternate work location for the remaining designated Teacher Workdays during the 2021-2022 school year. These days include January 21, April 1 and June 13.”





Questions?