



WARE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Ware Families,

Good afternoon! As I'm sure you are aware on February 9, 2022, DESE Commissioner Jeff Riley announced that he will be lifting the mask mandate as of February 28th. With the Commissioner's announcement, masking policies will now revert to local control. Last evening, the Ware Public Schools School Committee voted to keep the mask mandate in place until March 7th, at which time they will strongly recommend wearing masks when in the school buildings.

Even with the lifting of the mask mandate, there are times when the mask requirement is still in place which is as follows:

- **Students and staff returning from a 5-day quarantine following a positive COVID test must follow mask use through day 10 of exposure.**
- **Masks will be required in all school health offices.**
- **By federal public health order, all students and staff are required to wear a mask on school buses.**

Knowing that vaccinations are one mitigating strategy that lessens the severity of the virus, WPS will be holding another vaccination clinic on March 14th. The clinic will run from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at SMK. Pre-registration for the clinic can be made at <https://bit.ly/stanleyvax>.

If you have been monitoring our COVID-19 Data Dashboard you would have noticed that positive cases have gone down significantly over the past couple of weeks. With the change in testing protocol, we no longer monitor the close contacts within our buildings. With the decline in cases within the schools the town's positivity rate has also noted a decrease from 19.11% on February 2nd to 15.75% on February 9th.

Remember we now have two initiatives that students and staff can take part in, Safety Check Testing (Pooled Testing) or/& the At-Home Test Kits. You can take part in both initiatives or take part in only one, your choice of which one. You can view more information on each initiative and sign up on our website at http://www.wareps.org/news/whats_new/covid_test_options.

With school being out of session for Winter Break for the week of February 21st, families taking part in the at-home testing should test on Sunday, February 27th.

We hope everyone has a relaxing and enjoyable break!

Stay well,

Dr. Marlene A. DiLeo
Superintendent

Jennifer Knight
School Nurse Leader