

# Henrico County Public Schools

## HEALTH COMMITTEE

### Meeting Notes

7/26/2021

**This was a called meeting to discuss VDH and VDOE information related to face coverings/ masks before the DLT (Division Leadership Team) meeting.**

1. **Welcome** – committee members who were present were welcomed. Most committee members were present for the meeting. All members present gave input.
2. **Discussion-** More information has come out surrounding mask/face coverings in schools. The mask mandate expired on 7/25/2021. Although there are recommendations, there is no longer a mask mandate except for transportation. Students will be required per the mandate to wear masks on school buses. The meeting was called to discuss how to navigate once a decision is made about mask requirements for students and staff for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year.

#### Topics that were discussed:

1. Should masks/face coverings be required for all or some students and staff?
2. Will mask wearing be written into the HCPS Code of Conduct?
3. If masks are required, and a student or staff member doesn't wear it, what are, if any, consequences?
4. Giving parents/guardians the power to make decisions about when and where masks will be worn for their students.
5. Mask requirement for COVID vaccinated vs non-vaccinated students and staff.
6. System in place to tell who is vaccinated does not seem likely in the school setting.
7. How will the vulnerable be protected when it comes to masks? Under 12 years old are not eligible for the COVID vaccine.
8. Some were motivated to get the COVID vaccine so requirements such as mask wearing were no longer necessary.
9. Masks help to prevent other illnesses such as the flu or asthma exacerbations.
10. Students receiving childhood vaccinations has declined. The impact on other communicable diseases related to this may be a consideration.
11. Weighing the public good vs personal choice when it comes to wearing masks.
12. What motivates parents/students to stay in person learning should be considered.
13. Working together instead of against one another so school can remain open for in person learning.

14. Staff may have concerns and may want different options. HCPS ability to support these options.
15. Other preventative strategies such as barriers, handwashing, social distancing will still be in place.
16. Screening testing for COVID is another preventative option if feasible.
17. It may be hard for some staff if there are different requirements for masks in different HCPS buildings.
18. What happens when a student is ill or must quarantine? How will assignments get caught up if there is not a virtual option?
19. Will the Henrico Virtual Academy open to students if parents want this option after hearing if masks will be universal for everyone or a choice?
20. Contact tracing will be difficult if some are wearing masks, and some are not.
21. Social/emotional development is important. Concern for how teenagers are reacting to wearing masks and whether to get the COVID vaccine. The pressure to fit in.
22. Importance of getting good nutrition for students. Will meals be provided?
23. Transmission rate in the community as a measure for increasing preventative measures such as masks. If not required during periods of low transmission, then may be required if moderate or high transmission.
24. Communication to parents/guardians, students, and staff if changes are made after decision is made.
25. Maintaining equity in instruction.

All committee members feel that clear, consistent information and education is important. Education of parents and staff of the requirements for masks and options available if parent/guardian does not agree with HCPS. This communication should come in all forms available such as videos, town hall meetings, school computer devices for email and other communication.

All items discussed will be taken to the DLT this week for discussion and recommendations.

Regularly scheduled Health Committee meeting will take place on Monday 8/2/2021.