

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Jul. 26, 21 -- 2:15: PM	Cecilia	Scott	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	Please continue universal masking in elementary schools until children under 12 have had a chance to be fully vaccinated as strongly recommended by the VDH and VDOE. I ask this as a parent of two elementary students. I desire a return to normalcy as much as anyone else and in-person schooling is a step in that direction. Prematurely removing this barrier to spread, specifically masks, only risks setting us back and putting us back in remote/hybrid schooling. Thank you for your careful consideration.
Jul. 28, 21 -- 3:10: PM	Tiffany	Estes	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Mask wearing should be mandated at elementary schools since the majority of the students cannot be vaccinated yet. Please consider mandating mask wearing for elementary kids for extra safety reasons. With the new variants, it would be much safer for the children and teachers/administrators (vaccinated or not). Vaccines are great, but not breakthrough proof and we should teach kids to be extra careful and respectful of others. We do not know everyone's situation personally and if grandparents of kids or parents might be at high risk, etc... We should protect our kids as much as possible. Please highly consider mask wearing at schools.
Jul. 29, 21 -- 4:03: PM	Nicole	Powell	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I am disappointed and discouraged that HCPS asked us to make decisions about our children attending in person school with the express condition that they would follow CDC recommendations and guidelines. Allowing masking to be an individual decision is leaving the safety of our teachers and children in the hands of minors. Last year it was deemed that masks were part of the dress code. If you can enforce female students not wearing spaghetti strapped clothing and male students from wearing derogatory/curse words on their clothing then you can enforce students wearing a mask. Everyone in the building (especially when MOST inside are unvaccinated) should be wearing a mask. Since when was it an unpopular or bad thing to err on the side of caution? Please protect your staff and students and reconsider masking being optional. I am asking as a mother of 3 public school students (one vaccinated and the other two ineligible due to age). I am also a graduate of the HCPS system and beg you to remember we chose to live and be in this county for a reason, we are trusting you to help us raise the next generation with safety, consideration, and caution in mind.
Jul. 29, 21 -- 4:08: PM	Kyle	McCollum	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	As an educator in HCPS, I am calling on our school leadership team to follow CDC guidelines and require masking in schools for the safety all students, staff, and the community. Thank you.

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Jul. 29, 21 -- 4:20: PM	Ashley	Cullen	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Thank you for giving parents a choice on whether or not to have their child wear a mask or not wear a mask in the school buildings. It is a very individual decision.
Jul. 29, 21 -- 4:35: PM	Christine	Suders	Varina District - Alicia S. Atkins	Masks are not a “personal choice.” Ignoring AAP and CDC guidance in HCPS’s new mask guidelines is dangerous and foolish. Look at the rising pediatric cases across the country, including kids on ventilators and in the ICU in southern states. Do we want to be next? Last year, at least parents had the choice to keep their kids virtual if they felt school was unsafe. Now, since virtual academy deadlines have passed, parents don’t have a choice. If my child wears a mask but all her other classmates don’t, she’s still in danger— remember, the studies show wearing masks help protect OTHERS from YOU. Please follow the AAP guidelines. They are EXPERTS in children’s health. Let’s have SAFE in person learning by requiring masks. Otherwise, we will see kids miss out on learning when they catch and spread this highly contagious Delta variant with a significantly higher viral load. We will put our community in danger by not requiring masks. We can do better. Please, as the leaders we elected and trusted, do better.
Jul. 29, 21 -- 4:40: PM	Arlene	Bandas	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	Thank you for your support this past school year. We ask that you continue to support the faculty, staff and students of HCPS. In light of the new CDC guidelines, we request a mandatory face mask rule in our schools. Since showing proof of vaccination is not on place, and masks are required on school buses, why is the classroom different? There are 30 students presently enrolled in at least one of my classes. How is even 3 foot between students possible? Hand sanitizer and cleaning will not be enough and plexi shields are not as effective as you have stated. Please consider the health of all of us and mandate masks. Not to mention we haven't even reached cold and flu season Thank you for your consideration.

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Jul. 29, 21 -- 5:09: PM	Kelley	Hope	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I am very disappointed in HCPS's decision to make mask wearing optional in the 2021-2022 school year. I strongly disagree with this decision for the following reasons: 1) This goes against CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics guidance for schools. 2) Henrico County's transmission status changed from moderate to substantial today (July 29). 3) Also today, only 20 percent (1:5) of county residents are fully vaccinated; the percent goes up just three points by excluding kids under 12. At a minimum, when announcing your choice to make masks optional, your message should have included information about the re-opening of enrollment for the new virtual academy. Looks like the safest option for my 11 year old will be home school. Why must I choose to educate my child personally at home in order to keep him safe? Shouldn't the people who don't care about public health be the ones opting out of public education?
Jul. 29, 21 -- 7:02: PM	Audra	Vanderland	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	Please update your mask policy to require masks in school buildings, regardless of vaccination status. This is the right thing to do if we are to follow the science and focus on the health and safety of our students, especially with more students closer together with higher viral loads this year than they ever were last year. It will keep our community safer, our schools safer, our classrooms safer. Students cannot learn and teachers cannot teach if they feel unsafe, are in quarantine, are sick, or are in the PICU. On top of this, many vulnerable students, especially students with chronic health conditions or disabilities, will be placed at risk with any optional masking policy, limiting their access to an appropriate education. Friends of ours who had chosen in person schooling now are stuck wondering if their vulnerable child is risking their life every day for their education. Henrico has prided itself on making science-driven decisions that respected the needs of the community while providing a top notch education. We can educate in masks. We can learn in masks. And we will all be safer for it.
Jul. 29, 21 -- 7:20: PM	Ashley	Voltz	Employee in the Brookland District	I am a teacher with a 6 month old baby at home who cannot be vaccinated. I am begging you to help me feel more comfortable doing my job and coming home to her every night PLEASE MAKE EVERYONE WEAR A MASK THIS YEAR REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS. I plan on wearing 2 masks to help protect my family but everyone needs to do their part and mask up as this variant takes hold. Please do your part to keep us safe and require everyone to mask up.

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Jul. 29, 21 -- 7:33: PM	Nicole	Jorgensen	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	As we prepare for schools to reopen I was surprised and disappointed that masking would be "optional". No students at the elementary level are eligible for vaccination at this time. With the rising cases of the delta variant the CDC recommends that all students and staff wear masks regardless of vaccination status. Not only is it irresponsible to not follow the guidance of the CDC, but a law was passed that states schools need to follow any CDC mitigation strategies to the "fullest extent possible". Please protect our students, their families and staff by requiring masks in all schools.
Jul. 29, 21 -- 8:33: PM	Rachel	Druff	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	The Delta variant poses a greater health risk to those that are unvaccinated. Right now, none of our elementary students are able to be vaccinated. As a result, it is imperative that masks be required!
Jul. 29, 21 -- 8:58: PM	Kari	King	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I am a first grade teacher as well as a first grade parent. My son, who attended private K last year so I could successfully do my job, has been quarantined three times from school/camp for exposure. Each time he has stayed well, thank goodness. But all the kids have to wear masks indoors. It's a non-negotiable. And strictly enforced. I'm not afraid for me. I am vaccinated. But if I am around maskless, unvaccinated teachers and students all day, and he is as well, what are the chances that I DON'T bring Covid home to him or that he doesn't bring it home himself? Can we please respect the opinions of the CDC and the AAP on this one? They are the experts. Mask up.

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Jul. 29, 21 -- 11:05: PM	Stephanie	S.	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>After hearing the recommendations from the CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics, and several other medical and scientific organizations, please reconsider and require masks be worn for all students grades K - 12 and for all faculty working within those schools. At the very least, please require masks for elementary students in grades K - 5 (or any grades/schools where children have not had a chance to be vaccinated) and faculty in those schools. The children deserve an opportunity to go to school face to face in a safe environment. Not only is it not safe to allow masks to be optional, but it will create some division amongst students. I know as a parent I would want my child to be with other masked students since I am making the extra effort to keep them protected. What would happen in settings where masks are removed (lunch or recess) and the unmasked and masked are all together? My masked child would then be exposed to others who do not ever wear masks. In addition, at the moment, Henrico County is in the substantial spread zone on the CDC map. This causes another layer of concern. Please be proactive so that there is limited illness, less school interruptions with quarantines, and most importantly - so that all children who have not been vaccinated are kept safe to the best of Henrico County's ability. Thank you.</p>
Jul. 30, 21 -- 10:05: AM	Karla	Rice	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Masks should be required for ALL students and teachers in Henrico. Virtual schooling should be reopened to all since covid numbers have increased
Jul. 30, 21 -- 2:44: PM	Tiniko	Johnson	Varina District - Alicia S. Atkins	I would love to return in person, however, the rise in numbers due to the delta variant is unsafe.

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Jul. 30, 21 -- 8:19: PM	Jennifer	Harrell	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	The CDC has recommended masking for all K-12 students. Henrico needs to require masks for students to comply with this, Especially at the elementary level as no one under 12 can get the vaccine yet. We are so close to getting this group vaccinated, please require masking for this group. I have not spent 17 months being careful to throw my unvaccinated child into a vat of germs. I chose not to apply to the virtual academy because I thought HCPS would choose to keep our children and teachers safe. Per Senate bill 1303 that was passed to require in person learning it states school systems should comply w/ CDC guidance. the text is below: § 2. Each school board shall offer in-person instruction to each student enrolled in the local school division in a public elementary and secondary school for at least the minimum number of required instructional hours and to each student enrolled in the local school division in a public school-based early childhood care and education program for the entirety of the instructional time provided pursuant to such program. For the purposes of this act, each school board shall (i) adopt, implement, and, when appropriate, update specific parameters for the provision of in-person instruction and (ii) provide such in-person instruction in a manner in which it adheres, to the maximum extent practicable, to any currently applicable mitigation strategies for early childhood care and education programs and elementary and secondary schools to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 that have been provided by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
Jul. 31, 21 -- 7:44: PM	Sherrie	Jarvis	Fairfield District - Roscoe D. Cooper, III	Please insure that those of us who took the vaccination will have the choice to NOT WEAR A MASK! Please!
Aug. 1, 21 -- 8:35: PM	Emily	Kiser	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I think schools (especially elementary) need to mandate masks. My son's day camp had an outbreak their second week and had to close for 2 weeks. Delta is very, very contagious and we're not at the same place we were in early summer. It's essential we keep schools open and that means keeping kids and staff safe and for now that means masks.

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 5, 21 -- 10:06: AM	Jennifer	Middleton	employee	<p>I am imploring the board to require universal masking for the upcoming school year. I think I speak for most everyone, when I say how much hope we had to returning to a "mostly" normal school year this fall, however, the situation has changed drastically. The Delta variant that is now causing concern is 200x more transmissible than prior variants and results in 1000x the viral load we previously saw initially with this illness. Furthermore, we know that even vaccinated individuals can pass the virus onto others. With a significant portion of the general population remaining unvaccinated, and an especially large number of our school age kids who are unable to be vaccinated at this point, it is imperative that we, as their trusted adults and advocates, do everything possible to mitigate the damage of this illness. We use data and evidence to make decisions in their education; we should do the same as we strive to protect their health. The data and evidence clearly demonstrates that a layered approach with a variety of mitigation strategies, including masking, is effective in protecting the vast majority of people. The CDC and AAP strongly recommend that in order for schools to remain open, these strategies must be adhered to, including universal masking. We can do this....now is not the time to let our guard down. Please, please follow the evidence and require masks for the upcoming school year to protect our community, our staff, and our kids. Thank you.</p>
Aug. 5, 21 -- 10:07: AM	Sarah	Collier	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>Dr. Cashwell, members of the Division Leadership Team, and members of the School the Board: Governor Northam has empowered YOU to impose a mask mandate in our schools. The science is clear: masks work when everyone wears one correctly and universally. Please give my unvaccinated elementary-aged children a chance to attend school in-person by reducing their chances of contracting Covid through a universal mask mandate. The AAP, CDC, WHO, VDOE, VDH, and most other leading scientific bodies concur that universal masking is imperative to creating and maintaining a healthier school environment in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Please do as you said you always would: follow the science. Thank you for your courageous leadership.</p>
Aug. 5, 21 -- 10:40: AM	Laura	Thomson	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>Henrico has said that it follows CDC and VDH guidance. The guidelines now say even vaccinated people should wear a mask indoors. Until all children are eligible for a vaccine, it is reckless to expose young children to a virus.</p>
Aug. 5, 21 -- 11:40: AM	Denise	Collier	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>Please mandate masks for in person learning</p>

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Aug. 5, 21 -- 12:19: PM	Dominica	Campbell	Fairfield District - Roscoe D. Cooper, III	I am in favor of a universal mask mandate being put in place for in-person instruction for the 2021-2022 school year. This should apply to all staff, students, and visitors to schools on all grade levels. This should be applied to all time spent inside buildings, as per the current recommendations of the WHO, CDC, and Henrico County Department of Health. It also should be applied to outdoor activities in close quarters, where the youth and adults involved may not be able to maintain social distancing. My daughter does black belt Tae Kwon Do classes in a mask, so it's possible to do sports while masked. As to viewing masks as a "choice", they're just another clothing item. You already closely regulate what children of all ages wear to school. Simply include wearing a mask as part of the dress code, like Prince William County Schools have done. Masks will minimize outbreaks and enable our schools to remain "in-person". Please make the right call for the safety and stability of our schools. Please mandate that masks be worn inside, K-12.
Aug. 5, 21 -- 12:56: PM	Aryn	Carlson	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	We need a universal mask mandate in Henrico County Public Schools. My children are too young to be vaccinated and this is the best way to protect them and keep them safe for the coming school year. Vaccinated adults and other children can still spread covid-19. Please re-consider your mask policy and to protect all children under 12 years old.
Aug. 5, 21 -- 2:17: PM	Patty	LaFratta	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	Two of my 3 children are in HCPS system, and they are vaccinated. But I remain STRONGLY in favor of mandatory mask wearing in schools. I work in a local hospital, specifically in pediatrics. The past 1.5 years have had a devastating effect on our children's mental health. I would much rather have kids endure the "hassle" of wearing a mask, and be able to be IN SCHOOL with their peers, than have them at home, in virtual school, because covid numbers soared. Their health and well-being depend on getting back into school safely. The sharp rise in attempted suicides over the past year is no coincidence—these patients admit time and time again that being isolated, out of school and away from friends and their support systems, was part of the reason they tried to end their own life.
Aug. 5, 21 -- 2:30: PM	Sarah	Breedon	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I wanted to make a brief statement in support of the school board voting to mandate masks for the 2021 to 2022 school year. After listening to the governor's press conference about the state of Virginia and the COVID-19 pandemic, he made clear that schools must follow the law passed last year where five days of instruction must be offered while also following CDC mitigation measures. These measures are clear and include universal masking for schools. I trust you will not only follow best practice for safety during the pandemic, but also follow the law.

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 5, 21 -- 5:25: PM	Rebecca	Chipman	Fairfield District - Roscoe D. Cooper, III	Please mandate universal mask wearing in k-12 schools. Thank you
Aug. 5, 21 -- 10:32: PM	Dawn	Sherwood	Varina District - Alicia S. Atkins	Please make masks mandatory to protect all staff, students, siblings, and other family members. There are many multigenerational homes and immunocompromised individuals in Henrico- please help slow or prevent the spread of Delta esp as we still waiting for a vaccine for 2-12 year olds!!!
Aug. 6, 21 -- 7:53: AM	Polly	Dieter	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I am in favor of masks being a mandate at all schools especially in elementary schools. We do not know who is eligible to be vaccinated and yet are not. I am an IA in PEDD class. Last year my colleague had an accommodation, so I led the in person instruction for our students. These 4 year olds with Down Syndrome and Autism were able wear their masks with very little issues. They are not old enough to vaccinated. The Delta Variant is surging and children are being hospitalized. My colleague had an accommodation because of health issues in her household. That has not changed. I am vaccinated but I want to keep our students, their families, my family, my colleagues and everyone that I come into contact with safe.
Aug. 6, 21 -- 9:49: AM	Stephanie	Felder	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	For the fall of 2021, I'd like to learn more about the school board's plans and recommendations to schools regarding Covid cases arising and what will happen in regards to in person and virtual. How will quarantines be handled if cases arise in schools? What notification protocols are in place?
Aug. 6, 21 -- 5:33: PM	Kuntal	Shah	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	With Covid cases rising, is the school board looking into virtual learning as a backup just in case things go south?
Aug. 7, 21 -- 12:03: AM	Chanda	Ambrose	Glen Allen Elementary	We must follow CDC guidelines to protect our children. Why is this even a question??? This delta variant is much more virulent than the original Covid. This is NOT the same Covid we were dealing with last year. This variant affects kids much more; vaccinated adults are even getting sick and dying. How do you think these little innocent bodies will be able to handle it? It is detrimental to the health and safety of our kids that Henrico does everything they can to mitigate this virus within the school system. This can not be political. Who is paying Henrico to veer on the wreckless side? We moved to Henrico bc Henrico usually makes the safer choice. Who is being paid off here? As Northam stated there will be legality issues if Henrico does not comply with the CDC guidelines.
Aug. 8, 21 -- 8:36: PM	Tiniko	Johnson	Varina District - Alicia S. Atkins	I would love to return in person, however, the rise in numbers due to the delta variant is unsafe.

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Aug. 9, 21 -- 12:13: PM	Anna	Hebner	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	<p>School staff and students should be required to wear masks for in-person school. Vaccination also should be required for ages who have vaccines available. In-person learning is best for children educationally, socially, and emotionally. It should be offered in a way that is reasonably safe for all children, including children who are immunocompromised, or who live with people who are at high risk for covid. We know that covid is much more contagious than it was during the last school year. We know that even vaccinated people effectively transmit the delta variant. And, of course, young children cannot yet be vaccinated. That means the only reasonably safe way to conduct in-person schooling is with a mask mandate. If parents want to exercise a choice to keep their children unmasked, those children should have access to virtual learning. Some families' preference not to wear masks should not force other families into a choice between inferior education or increased covid danger. School buses are public transportation, and there is a federal mask mandate for public transportation. Disability laws also require that school buildings be accessible and that students and staff receive accommodations for disabilities, including immunocompromised status. Do Henrico County Public Schools want to gamble that courts will decide disabilities are adequately accommodated when the only in-person schooling available is mask-optional? I'm a former early childhood educator. I understand the importance of in person learning. I've also been disabled for 14 years, due to post-viral neurological symptoms similar to the "long covid" that thousands of patients have developed after even "mild" or "moderate" covid cases. Covid is a very serious illness, even for those who survive. Schools have a moral duty to limit the spread of this illness, and that means a mask mandate.</p>
Aug. 9, 21 -- 1:34: PM	nancy	adams	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	Please do the right thing and reinstate the mask mandate.
Aug. 9, 21 -- 2:22: PM	Mary	Negrey	Brookland Middle school	<p>With the new Delta variant numbers rising, I cannot understand why HCPS is acting like everything is fine and all kids are safe. There is currently NO vaccine for those under 12, middle schoolers and elementary school, and yet, there is no mention of a mandatory mask mandate as recommended by the health department and the CDC. It almost appears you are catering more to voters who will be carrying and transmitting this virus through their neglect and ignorance than to your students and staff. THIS IS NOT A JOKE. This is a serious crisis that you just seem to be trying to coast through. Have you not seen the results in areas that already returned to school? Kids are getting sick, possibly dying, and then spreading that illness to family, friends and teachers. At the very LEAST there should be a mask mandate. At the very least!</p>

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Aug. 9, 21 -- 3:11: PM	Cheronda	Carter	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Since there aren't enough teachers to accommodate both virtual and in person just keep the kids virtual like it was until they can get this virus under control. Going in person will only lead to more sick children bringing the virus home to family.
Aug. 9, 21 -- 4:19: PM	Crystal	Malik	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Your web announcement re: face masks wrongly claims that you are paying attention to medical guidance. Both the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics have recommended face masks for unvaccinated children and adults, especially where children are not eligible to be vaccinated including children under 12 years old. You closed the window for virtual learning months ago, waiting until both the CDC and AAP recommended face masks for all unvaccinated individuals in schools, and then announced a mask optional policy. This is absolutely unconscionable behavior for individuals caring for our children. This decision erodes a year of trust we placed in you to protect our children during a pandemic. The nation is seeing an uptick in cases and we are mere months from having a vaccine available to children under 12 and you choose this moment to "give up" and don't, even at the same time, ensure that (at a minimum) all unvaccinated teachers will be wearing masks. This is absolutely inexcusable. Optimally there should be a vaccine mandate for schools (especially for employees) and at a minimum a mask requirement for all unvaccinated individuals. It is absolutely your responsibility legally and ethically to protect the children in your care.
Aug. 9, 21 -- 7:19: PM	Meghan	McMahon	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Will you be officially changing the mask mandate after the governor's statement last week? This needs to be communicated clearly so families have time to plan, please. I urge you to protect our young learners and your young constituents. The virus is very real and already shutting down schools across the south. Masks work. Kids can wear them all day, just fine. Outbreaks have shut down camps in our area. The variant is here and we need to protect your children. Until all students have the option to get a vaccine, masks should be mandated. Thank you.

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 9, 21 -- 7:43: PM	Meghan	Ely	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>My son Oliver, age 8, is a rising third-grader in your district at Nuckols Farm Elementary School. Since early 2020, I have had him at home with virtual school, balancing my small business while essentially being his primary support for his ADHD (he has an IEP). My husband and I have sacrificed work and our own mental wellness to ensure he had a safe, productive (and even enjoyable!) second-grade year. I myself even had to start therapy so I could, in part, manage the stresses of virtual school as a working parent. As you can imagine, we are positively thrilled he is returning to our beloved NFES, but I implore you to consider a mask mandate, as long as children under 12 can not be vaccinated. The delta variant has changed everything and if there is anything I've learned in the last year, it's that we can't always expect everyone to do the right thing on their own. The statistics are clear- delta is more infectious, and a layered approach to prevention, including a mask mandate, reduces the risk considerably. These children are our responsibility- the idea of not doing everything we can to protect them is unfathomable to me. I beg of you, please consider a mask mandate. We, as families in your district, are depending on you and Dr. Cashwell.</p>
Aug. 9, 21 -- 8:55: PM	April	Bridges-Poquis	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>As a parent of an 11 year old rising 6th grader, I am very upset with Henrico County's decision to make masks optional. CDC guidance clearly states masks should be worn by every k-12 student. The delta variant has been proven to be as contagious as chicken pox, and our children under 12 are ineligible for the vaccine. In addition, the "15 minutes, within 6ft" CDC guidance of 2020 was based on the fact that the original covid virus was shown not to be transmitted unless you spent more than 15 minutes within 6 ft of an unmasked carrier. The new data on the delta variant, which is now the most common variant in Virginia, has shown that delta has been transmitted in far less than 15 minutes. Contact tracing of delta in Sydney Australia proved several people were infected in "fleeting" non-physical contact in a cafe and shopping mall. This contact was recorded on their CCTV, and genetic sequencing showed they tested positive for the same strain. The Queensland chief health officer, Dr Jeannette Young, was quoted saying "with the Delta variant, we're seeing very fleeting contact leading to transmission. At the start of this pandemic, I spoke about 15 minutes of close contact being a concern. Now it looks like it's five to 10 seconds that's a concern. The risk is so much higher now than it was only a year ago". Recently, in July 2021 in Massachusetts, contact tracing here in the USA showed that individuals infected with delta had 1000 times the amount of viral load in their upper airways, and were far more contagious than those infected with the original covid virus. In addition, fully vaccinated individuals were shown not only to become infected with delta, but were shown to be just as contagious as the non-vaccinated individuals. Yes, vaccinated individuals infected other vaccinated individuals. And they transmitted it to unvaccinated individuals who were then much more likely to need hospitalization. This was reported by the CDC in the MMWR (Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report), and was a primary reason that the CDC changed their guidance to recommend that even vaccinated individuals wear masks indoors. Our kids under 12 are ineligible for the vaccine. Wearing a cloth or standard paper mask helps prevent you from transmitting covid, but will not prevent you from catching an airborne virus. Our unvaccinated kids would need N95 respirators if those around them were not wearing masks. Please HCPS, do the right thing. Require masks and protect our kids.</p>

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 9, 21 -- 9:10: PM	Moriah	Atkinson	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	<p>I am writing in regards to the decision to not mandate masks for all children in attendance at HCPS, with an emphasis on elementary aged children. This past year and a half has been a trying time for both parents and students. As a parent of two elementary school children, one of which has a disability, I know the importance of children being physically in the school building this upcoming school year. I made the tough decision of allowing my disabled child to attend school last year in person because he was not doing well in the virtual environment. After much consultation with the school principal, reviewing mitigation measures that would be in place to ensure the safety of my son, I was comfortable with my decision, and believed that my son would be as safe as possible in the ever-changing environment of life during a pandemic. My daughter, who had to stay virtual all year, did well academically but struggled socially without having any crucial socialization with peers her own age. Needless to say, both of my children were very excited that they would both be able to attend class in person in the fall. And then it was announced that HCPS would be making masks optional for children. With all of the information that has been coming out with regards to new variants and transmission rates, it is HIGHLY irresponsible of HCPS to not mandate masks for children this year. Clearly, they work based alone on the lack of transmission that occurred during the few months that children were in person last year. The masks were mandatory for ALL children, and it was done with minimal issue, in particular for elementary children. If it could be done then, there is no reason that it can't be done now. The safety of our children should be paramount in all decisions by HCPS. Not politics, but safety. This is not a "personal choice" issue in particular for children that are too young to even receive the vaccine in the first place. It cannot be forgotten that the requirement for unvaccinated individuals has not changed. All children under the age of 12 are UNVACCINATED. As such, the policies that HCPS implements should reflect that fact. What parents choose to do outside of the four walls of the school building is their business. However, within that school building, ALL children, staff, teachers, etc should be wearing a mask. Should masks not be required, I have no choice but to pull them from HCPS and homeschool them for their safety. Do the right thing.</p>
Aug. 9, 21 -- 9:26: PM	Liana	madeline	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>I'm a rising 6th grader. Ima be honest with you. Before covid there would always be some kid coughing in the class. It made me feel uncomfortable and there was this one time only 8 people showed up to class because everyone else was sick and the day before they were just fine. Masks can prevent that. People are getting sick and that's the plain truth. I know you think i'm just a kid but my voice deserves to be heard to. Masks can prevent kids from getting sick and help everyone be so much safer. Safety should be the priority. Don't get my wrong i WANT to go to school but i would really appreciate it if masks would be required, so that the kid coughing can't hurt anyone. Thank you for reading.</p>
Aug. 9, 21 -- 11:04: PM	Hiyasmin	Zimmerman	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>I'm stressed and concerned of the safety of my unvaccinated child bringing home COVID and wish to use masks as a required mitigation strategy.</p>

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Aug. 9, 21 -- 8:50: AM	Katherine	Hancock	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	<p>My son is Autistic and will not wear a mask. I know I can send him to school but I would have to have him in a room with 9 other kids that most likely will also be unable to wear a mask. Some of this money should be used to add extra layers of protection to his classroom and others like it. You could hire more teachers to make these classes smaller or you could use the money to make info regarding precautions y'all are taking for children unable to comply available to parents. I have search the website for information and either it's not there or buried. My child's education is just as important as any other child's but I have to reach out to get information and all the normal kids parents get an email. How much of this money goes to protect my kid... are y'all taking the needs of autistic children seriously? The fact that information is not conveyed says to me that my family is not a concern.</p>
Aug. 9, 21 -- 10:18: AM	Erik	Walton	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>I have two children that we have kept in remote school, and as many other children under 12 years old they are ineligible for Covid-19 vaccines. We decided to not pursue the remote school option for the 2021-22 school year because it looked too similar to the way that Hanover County ran their OWL school during the 2020-21 year, which was frankly a disaster that poorly served its students. Not wanting our students to be a part of a similar situation, and assuming that the school board would follow sound scientific evidence about masking and safety procedures, we assumed that our unvaccinated children would be safe to return to face-to-face learning. But with apparent disregard for CDC guidance and what the governor is suggesting for schools, Henrico county sounds like they will not be enforcing masks inside of school buildings. I am deeply concerned by this, not only because masking contagious people is far more effective (and during this time we need to assume that everyone is potentially contagious for public safety), but because of the potential incidents of bullying that can occur in light of this. What is going to stop aggressive children from picking on those that are wearing masks, away from supervisory eyes? How can the schools legitimately pretend to be able to police this when it's already difficult to limit bullying? Especially with the sort of political charge that masks have associated with them, what is going to dissuade bullying when there are adults willing to bully other adults over this? Why do the schools feel it is appropriate to allow the opportunity for children to be at risk to this as well? Mandate that masks must be worn inside the schools. Do not let the angry "squeaky wheels," who have no business influencing policies about which they have no understanding based in fact, risk the health and well-being of our children. Henrico did an excellent job of weathering this pandemic compared to the surrounding counties. Do not disappoint us here while our childrens' lives are still at risk.</p>

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 9, 21 -- 10:46: AM	Dr. S	Moore	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>Marcie, you campaigned hard to be on the school board to represent your area. I expect you to keep the promises you made and represent ALL of the families in your area and the only way to do that is to offer a choice to parents as to whether to mask our children or not. That is the only fair way to represent everyone. My child has asthma and therefore has an exemption to not wear a mask and he will not be forced to! Anyone within this school system that attempts to mask my child better be prepared to deal with the consequences of the ADA. There is a compulsory duty for HCPS to provide my child an education and I expect that to occur with optional masking. If we are truly looking at the science, influenza kills 30 times more children each year than Covid and we don't wear masks for influenza. The politics have to stop and our kids need to be educated, not suffocated and forced to breathe in dangerous CO2 while trying to learn. Please stand up for us Marcie and stop just going along with what everyone else does/says.</p>
Aug. 9, 21 -- 11:52: AM	Nancy	Frowert	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>Please mandate masks. Children under 12 haven't been vaccinated and the Delta variant is a major concern for public health. 'Optional' masking will not work in schools - you'll see increase in bullying and misuse. If we want to keep children and staff safe and have a successful, 5 day a week school year, we must start the school year with a mask mandate. Please do the right thing - mandate masks and put the health of students and staff first. Thank you.</p>
Aug. 9, 21 -- 12:15: PM	Kelly	Tull	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>I think it would be the wisest decision and in the best interest of our children (especially the ones under 12 who do not have access to the vaccine) that masks be required at HCPS in the fall. The law mandates we follow CDC guidelines and the American Academy of Pediatrics is recommending masks as well for school children. Very few children have problems wearing masks when their peers wear masks. Having a policy where it is completely optional defeats the purpose of mask wearing because we know that I wear a mask to protect you and vice versa. The mitigation strategies we put in place last year worked! We are still in a pandemic. Lastly who are we as lay citizens to say we know more than the scientists and doctors at the CDC & the AAP? Please keep our children safe and require masks at least for under 12!</p>

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 9, 21 -- 12:40: PM	Shannon	Winston	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>Dear HCPS Board Members, I am writing to you as a parent of an incoming kindergartener who will be starting at Pemberton Elementary School this fall. I know that the current recommendation from HCPS is that masks will be optional for the coming year. Of course that announcement was made prior to the CDC guidance that “due to the circulating and highly contagious Delta variant, CDC recommends universal indoor masking by all students (age 2 and older), staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status” And now of course the American Academy of Pediatrics is also recommending masks in schools (this from the VA chapter today: "The Virginia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (VA-AAP) strongly recommends that all school aged children in every school division in the Commonwealth be masked for school this fall regardless of vaccine status." I understand you all are meeting this week to review the recommendation again, and I would like to strongly encourage HCPS to change course in light of the CDC and AAP recommendations. Last year, HCPS schools did not experience large outbreaks of Covid 19 (thank goodness!!), and I am confident that is due to the excellent mitigation efforts you all had in place. Why change what was already working? I hope that HCPS will follow the science and help to protect our youngest and most vulnerable students, who of course do not have the opportunity to get vaccinated at this time. I understand the hesitancy to mandate masks, as I know there is a contingency of parents and staff who do not wish for it. That said, we are still in the middle of a pandemic and experiencing a surge in cases. We want our children to be in schools, but we also need them to be safe!! Finally, I think we underestimate our young people -- they are capable of doing so much. They have shown us this throughout the pandemic. If they know that their parents, teachers, and fellow students have their safety and best interests at heart, they will follow the guidance. Thank you for your time, Shannon Winston Tuckahoe District Resident & Parent</p>
Aug. 9, 21 -- 7:23: PM	Kristen	Baker	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	<p>Has Contingency planning been made in the event that schools need to shut down and go virtual again? Or said another way if rhe CDC or the school bored deem it necessary to close school down again will we be able to quickly pivot to complete virtual teacher lead learning rather than going to asynchronous like in the spring of 2020?</p>

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Aug. 9, 21 -- 9:04: PM	L.Frances	Brown	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	I am formerly a School Psychologist in the Psychological Services department in Henrico County Public Schools. As a result of a car accident, I retired in 2020 but remained engaged with my previously assigned schools Brookland Middle and Highland Springs High School. My thirty years of experience in the field of School Psychology have been diverse as I have served in both urban and suburban communities such as in the District of Columbia; Chesterfield County; and Dallas Independent School District in Texas. In particular, during this last year I have given much thought and consideration that the impact the COVID-19 Pandemic has had on students, families, and communities in Henrico County. What HCPS School Board policies are being enacted to encourage the support and participation of stakeholders to address HCPS students' learning loss?
Aug. 10, 21 -- 6:54: AM	Sue	Devine	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please take into consideration the following recommendations from the expert organizations below regarding mask policy at HCPS for the upcoming school year. Center for Disease Control: "Due to the circulating and highly contagious Delta variant, CDC recommends universal indoor masking by all students (age 2 and older), staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status." Virginia Department of Health: "As of August 5, 2021, consistent with CDC guidance, VDH and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) strongly recommend that all K-12 schools (including PreK classrooms) implement a requirement that students, teachers, and staff wear masks indoors, regardless of vaccination status." American Academy of Pediatrics: "All students older than 2 years and all school staff should wear face masks at school (unless medical or developmental conditions prohibit use)." Mandatory masking for all indoors, regardless of vaccination status, in HCPS should be required until all school-age children have the opportunity to become fully vaccinated. This simple measure, which was successfully implemented and enforced for in-person learning for the 20-21 school year, will help protect our children and reduce the risk of outbreaks that force them to quarantine or again revert to virtual learning. Please do the right thing and keep our children safe and in school by requiring masks.

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Aug. 10, 21 -- 8:23: AM	Lisa	Dyer	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I'm extremely worried about the effect of the "optional " masks on the teachers. We are so looking forward to being back with our students, but this optional mask policy puts teachers at odds not only with our students but also the families with whom we so desperately need to cultivate relationships. I advocate for required masks until cases in the county dip below 30 per day. I also advocate for the vaccination status of students participating in vhsI and extracurricular activities be shared with coaches and sponsors so we can be better-informed and conduct our work more safely. Additionally, a clear and practical quarantine and contact tracing procedure needs to be clearly communicated directly with teachers and staff ASAP. Things are all so nebulous right now, and that is not only upsetting but also disrespectful to the very people the county needs so much from right now. Thank you.
Aug. 10, 21 -- 8:29: AM	Crystal	Lee	Fairfield District - Roscoe D. Cooper, III	Due to the unforeseen Delta variant, virtual learning should be an option for all elementary students who are not eligible for for COVID-19 vaccinations.
Aug. 10, 21 -- 9:22: AM	Meaghan	Collins	Three Chopt District - M	Please do your due diligence and revise your masking policy for the upcoming school year. Your families were forced to decide in May about virtual learning and were assured you would follow the most recent cdc guidelines. Since that time everything has changed. I have three students in your schools and while I had the foresight to remove my youngest whom is not eligible for vaccinations I trusted you to keep my junior and senior safe at school. By giving people the choice to mask you are not keeping my family or anyone else safe. My second grader is at risk and cannot be protected from this via a vaccine. His family has done their part to protect him by vaccinating as soon as it was possible. By allowing students and staff to come to school in the middle of a pandemic without the simple protection of masks you endanger not only my son but countless others. If for some reason you cannot implement the mask requirements as you stated you would then you must allow a virtual option for those families that took you at your word. HVA is full. What are you doing for the families that cannot go to school without protections in place? "Freedom" does not include willful harm of others. Please for the sake of literally saving lives adjust your masking policy. Thank you

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 10, 21 -- 10:10: AM	Karen	Kusterer	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>I write today to quite literally BEG you to keep our children safe and support a mask mandate for all schools. As a former elementary teacher, I am always reminded of the words of my first principal as she addressed us to go over last minute schedules and routines before the first day of school. She told us our only job on day 1 was to safely get the children in the building, feed them, and get them on the right bus home. If we squeezed in a read-aloud or a lesson it would just be a pleasant bonus for the day. I cannot help but think of my principal's words as I consider the risks I am taking in sending my three unvaccinated children into their school buildings this year. Yes, teachers have tremendous ground to cover to make up for lost instructional time. Yes, we are doing so in a climate of frayed nerves and anxiety and mistrust and fear. But still, our greatest charge is still grounded in the basic need to keep these children safe first. My children remained virtual last year, and we are all cautiously eager to return to school for the first time in so long. I very respectfully ask you to consider what our greatest priorities should be, and require masks for as long as the CDC states is beneficial. Thank you for your dedication in these unprecedented days. Sincerely, Karen Kusterer</p>
Aug. 10, 21 -- 10:40: AM	Erin	Downs	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>As a teacher and resident of the Tuckahoe District, I hope Marcie Shea, Dr. Cashwell, and the Henrico School Board make decisions with the health and safety of our community as the first and primary motivation. Governor Northam has confirmed that Henrico County Public Schools and the Henrico School Board have the legal authority to mandate masks in schools in accordance with the bipartisan law introduced by Senator Dunnavant and Delegate VanValkenburg (SB 1303) that requires adherence to CDC guidelines for schools to return to 5 days in person. The CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. We elected you to lead, and make the hard choices. Marcie Shea, I am urging you to vote to mandate masks in our schools.</p>
Aug. 10, 21 -- 11:15: AM	Rebecca	Cabonor	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>If a mask mandate is passed for students, please consider approving the use of face shields for younger learners and those with speech and processing disorders. For children with speech clarity issues, the mask hinders this further and children can not learn to the best of their abilities if they can not be understood by their teacher or others. Same with sensory overload getting in the way. It would be nice to have this as an option without each and every parent having to request an IEP meeting, which takes up already overtaxed resources from the school system. Many private and preschools allowed face shields for young children without any detriment to the health and safety of others while having many benefits for the student. Thank you.</p>

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Aug. 10, 21 -- 11:54: AM	Erin	Hare	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	I'm deeply troubled that HCPS is not requiring masks for the upcoming school year, especially since the CDC and AAP are recommending the exact opposite. Please consider reversing this policy for the safety of both the kids and staff. Masks should not be a political issue or a matter of personal choice. Masks are a demonstrably effective, perfectly safe public health measure and we must make them mandatory indoors. This is the simplest, cheapest COVID mitigation strategy you have at your disposal. Why wouldn't you use it?
Aug. 10, 21 -- 12:38: PM	Jennifer	Bowles	Varina District - Alicia S. Atkins	What is the plan of action once school opens and there's a positive Covid case that effects my child and they have to quarantine? How will the schools ensure that they are not missing instruction time due to quarantine? I have a child that is on the spectrum and doesn't do well with Change, how will we ensure that he doesn't get lost in the mix when we are dealing with quarantine issues? Also, I've already dealt with a positive case within summer school and was advised that all contact tracing had been completed, after speaking with medical professionals, due to the fact that my child had covid symptoms at the same time, they fully agreed that unless the school can truly validate that said positive child never went anywhere that my child went, cafeteria,, bathroom, hallway, classroom, etc, there is no way to validate that said child didn't potentially infect others. So what is the process going to be for schools when they open with positive cases rising in our area?
Aug. 10, 21 -- 2:35: PM	Elizabeth	Thurman	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I have spent a year and a half keeping my elementary-aged kids out of situations where they would be among maskless people. We sacrificed holidays, socializing, activities, and a full year of in-person school in order to keep them safer. I assumed I would be continuing this in the fall by sending them back in person to HCPS. I made this assumption based on the previous caution with which the school system had approach the pandemic, but also on the email that I received on April 24 saying that facemasks were planned for the 2021-2022 school year. I was then, understandably, shocked to learn that masks would be optional. This complete reversal, in a time of explosive viral spread, flies in the face of logic and safety. Facemasks are a scientifically tested and inexpensive mitigation strategy that can help keep kids healthy, *** put of quarantine,*** and in school full-time. The school has not outlined any plan to educate students in quarantine, and given the patterns we are already seeing across the country, we will clearly have a large percentage of the students being quarantined at any given time. The decision not to require masks in a building where no child is vaccinated is dangerous to students and the larger community, and contradicts recommendations from the CDC and VDH. I don't need to requote this guidance to you. Use this opportunity to do the right thing and protect the kids of our county.

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 10, 21 -- 2:37: PM	Maria	Kirtley	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	As a teacher and a parent of Springfield Park Elementary, I want our students to have a safe and consistent school year! They deserve nothing less! I know that the biggest reason that in person learning worked and was successful last year was due to the following of recommended safety guidelines and measures put in place, including required masking for all. I can not imagine that this is the time to stop and risk our students going back to unsafe and inconsistent learning opportunities. I implore you to follow the law as stated in SB 1303 that would require us to continue following CDC guidelines with regards to safety protocols and universal masking and furthermore that students/staff requesting medical exemptions require proper medical documentation and protocols usually followed for such situations. I pray that your leadership on Thursday's vote leads our students, staff, and community to thrive safely during these difficult times. We have one opportunity to start this year off right and it is in your hands. Thank you for your time and leadership!
Aug. 10, 21 -- 3:06: PM	Melissa	Flynn	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	Please reconsider the mask optional policy for the start of the school year. With the delta variant driving high community transmission and breakthrough cases, and students under 12 ineligible for vaccines, masks are the only defense we have. I kept my children out of school for the past year and vaccinated them as soon as possible, and I am enraged by the idea that our schools would make a decision that didn't prioritize the safest possible return to in-person school for all of our students. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.
Aug. 10, 21 -- 3:28: PM	Kiran	Bommisetty	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please provide an update on school reopening and the increase in delta variant cases across US. We see that children are mostly affected because of this variant and would like to request an hybrid option till the number of cases reduced as we donot have any vaccines or medicine for the kids in elementary school.
Aug. 10, 21 -- 3:46: PM	Haila	Duncan	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please mandate universal masking in public schools to protect students, teachers, and support staff from COVID-19. Childen under 12 are not yet eligible for vaccination and deserve the opportunity to attend school safely until they are eligible for vaccination. Universal masking is recommended by the CDC and AAP and HCPS should adhere to the recommendations from these experts.
Aug. 10, 21 -- 3:58: PM	Kyla	Goldsmith-Ray	Pocahontas middle	Please mandate masks for all teachers and students. We have been vaccinated and wear masks and have suffered from Covid. There's no reason no to put the health of ALL children first.

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 10, 21 -- 4:20: PM	Janelle	Arias	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	As a mother and a physician, I recommend that the school district implement a mask mandate for schools this fall. The Delta variant is highly contagious and the under 11year old age group do not have the choice to be vaccinated yet. Masks do no harm. Vaccinated individuals can become infected and spread the disease to others. Children with covid may require hospitalization and there is risk for long term medical and psychological effects in children. Please listen to science, the CDC, AAP, and AACAP. Don't give up now. Thank you.
Aug. 10, 21 -- 4:41: PM	Rebecca	Bergman	Nuckols farm	We know masks work. Please make masks mandatory. My children are not eligible for the vaccine. Please follow the science. Our healthcare workers are required to wear masks daily and do not have adverse side effects. Again, please listen to our health care professionals and public health professionals, COVID is a greater risk than wearing a cloth mask all day. Thank you.
Aug. 10, 21 -- 5:01: PM	Amanda	Walker	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Please vote for optional masking. Nowhere else are my kids masked up. We go out to dinner, church, grocery store, play team sports, etc. Do not make them mask up in school. They haven't been masked up anywhere else all summer. Will Covid spread in the schools? Absolutely. It's going to spread with or without mask as even the most strident scientists say it's only slightly effective. The teachers have had plenty of time to be vaccinated and parents had the choice to go virtual. Give us the choice for optional masks. Those of us sending our kids to school want a normal year or as close to it as possible. Parents wanting masks are the minority- unfortunately the same few are the ones making the biggest fuss about wanting masks. We have to pivot and learn how to deal with this virus and live with it moving forward. Please vote for personal choice on masks.

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 10, 21 -- 5:14: PM	Nathaniel	Duncan	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>I am writing to you today because I just heard that Henrico County Public Schools is no longer going to require students and teachers to wear masks in school. I am hopeful that you will reconsider that position and follow with CDC guidelines and require masks. My wife and I have 3 children that we were planning on sending in to school at Nuckols Farm this fall. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html "CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to schools, regardless of vaccination status." As of August 1, Henrico county is in a "Substantial" risk. I would be less concerned about this if this change were happening after our children were able to receive the vaccine. While I would prefer a mask requirement after vaccination, I would better understand the change. However, it is my understanding that you are removing the mask requirement before the beginning of the school year. I am especially concerned because one of our children has asthma and is at high risk if he were to contract the corona virus. If you are unwilling to reinstate the mask requirement, I would like the option to be able to switch my children to the virtual academy and not just get added to a wait list When my wife and I made the decision for in-person or virtual, we made the decision in good faith based on the understanding that mask requirements would remain in place based on the email and website stating that all cdc and health guidance would be followed. It is really disheartening and frustrating for you to change requirements, completely disregarding CDC guidelines, VDH recommendations, and not enabling parents to change their decisions. So I implore you to reconsider your position and help ensure all our students are safe.</p>

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Aug. 10, 21 -- 6:35: PM	Jamie	Gibberman	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>I am requesting that the School Board support mandatory masks for students to start the 2021-2022 school year. Given that the major health regulatory agencies are now recommending all people wear masks indoors regardless of vaccination status, it seems reckless to not require children to wear masks in school when they are not eligible for vaccination. The county mentions the idea of “personal choice” in the communications about optional masking, but let’s be clear: Keeping children healthy and safe cannot always be left up to personal choice. If “personal choice” determined county school policies: Student A can bring a nut-based snack into a classroom with student B who has airborne anaphylactic nut allergies. Child B dies since “personal choice” allowed student A to bring the snack. Someone could carry a gun (or drugs, or anything else) onto school grounds because it is their “personal choice.” But these scenarios wouldn’t happen – because there are rules in place to keep all children safe, particularly in cases where there is a risk of death. Student health and safety is not a choice, it is a right. Children are being hospitalized and put on ventilators at an alarming rate compared to the start of the pandemic – even compared to last spring when masks were required. The Delta variant is 200% more transmissible than the strain present last spring, and a single person can infect 6-10 other people with ease. Why would the county willingly place its students and teachers in harm’s way? It is no longer personal choice when someone’s unmasked child gets another child sick. This child then becomes a vector for transmission within their school and elsewhere in the community. Each exposure will require quarantine time, where children will end up learning virtually again or, worse, not learning at all with no virtual provisions in place? How many weeks of quarantine will it take to realize the disruption to learning it causes? Will schools have to close again when the numbers are staggering enough that more children are quarantined than actually in class? Will it take a child ending up on a ventilator or dying for the county to see the error of its ways? Will the county foot the bill for doctor’s visits, hospital stays and, heaven forbid, funeral costs because a mandatory mask policy wasn’t in place? By not following evidence- and science-based policies in place, are you willing to take the blame? I don't think you want that blood on your hands.</p>
Aug. 10, 21 -- 6:50: PM	Travis	Ely	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>Due to the circulating and highly contagious Delta variant, the CDC recommends universal indoor masking by all students, staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of their vaccination status. This is taken verbatim from the website of the Centers for Disease Control, and I see no reason to second-guess the judgment of the doctors, scientists, and experts whose policies protect us and our children. Covid upended our lives last year, but thanks to the resourcefulness and dedication of Henrico's teachers, staff, and administrators we made the best of a trying situation while keeping our children safe from harm. It simply couldn't have happened without everyone's efforts, and I thank you. Just like last year, hospitals are filling all over the country. Unlike last year, children are a growing percentage of the affected. All you have to do is follow the CDC guidelines. Listen to the doctors.</p>

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Aug. 10, 21 -- 7:26: PM	Erica	Nurse-Connell	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I hope that the Board will vote to have masks worn by everyone in HCPS schools as recommended by the CDC and AAP now that the highly transmissible Delta variant is surging and Henrico County has high transmission. We need to protect everyone, especially those children who aren't yet eligible for the vaccines. It's the right thing to do!
Aug. 10, 21 -- 8:21: PM	Megan	Murphey	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea, Crestview	Please make a universal mask policy. We currently have no better way to protect our children from Covid than this and hand washing. For those of us who only have children who are not vaccine eligible it is our best defense. We know kids do not generally do as well with virtual school and if we can allow them to be as safe as possible to learn in person we should do that.
Aug. 10, 21 -- 10:31: PM	Hilary	Delman	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Masks MUST be required. My 9YO son has Chron's Disease; an autoimmune disease. He is on Humira; an immunosuppressant drug. He has to deal with this lifelong illness. If he were to get COVID, no one knows if it would cause long term complications with Chron's. He suffered academically, socially and emotionally staying virtual last year. He NEEDS to be in school SAFELY. He WILL wear a mask, but that protects others more than it protects himself. Many kids are in the same position...higher risk for COVID for whatever reason. Requiring masks WILL help reduce the risk of my son and other kids getting COVID. Please...REQUIRE MASKS.
Aug. 10, 21 -- 10:37: PM	Andrea	Haas	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	If families do not feel comfortable with masks being an optional, then they have the choice to enlist their children in virtual learning. Our children deserve to be given a choice whether they want to wear a mask or not and should not be used as political pawns.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:13: AM	Jocelyn	Hufnell	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Universal masking should be mandatory for all Henrico students K-12. As a fourth grade teacher and mother to 3 students in the county this is the only way to protect students and families.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:27: AM	Jessica	Corbett	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please mask up! Our students need to be in school, full time and getting a true education. Masks protect all until the vaccine is available for most of our kids.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:34: AM	Kelly	Brooks	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	I am respectfully (but desperately) requesting that Henrico County make masks mandatory this coming school year, at least until students under 12 can be vaccinated, per the CDC's guidance. I have a medically complex daughter, and contracting COVID-19 will literally kill her. For her sake, and for the sake of all of the children who are at such high risk for contracting this virus at the moment, please please PLEASE require masks. Thank you.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 10:01: AM	Christine	Coffey	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I'll keep this simple. Being the law or not, masks must be mandated at the very least until our kids have the choice to be vaccinated. Parents were told in the Fall that students would return with masks and to make our choices based on that information. This is a bait and switch. In February last year, when Covid numbers were better than they are now, in Henrico County 40.5% of elementary school students, 34% of middle school students and 29% of high school students planned to return in person (Henrico Citizen). What parents are you catering to and why? Because it's not the majority of your constituents, that's for sure. Follow the law. Follow your constituents. Masking is not a personal choice, it's a community health measure supported by the nation's leading health authority.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 10:16: AM	Andrea	Almoite	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please implement a mask mandate in elementary schools until all students have the opportunity to get vaccinated.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 10:24: AM	Michael	Leopold	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I am not sure I understand the decision to not require masks. What is the FACT that this policy is based on? It isn't community spread, because that is high (CDC officially classified Henrico County as an official area of high spread), it isn't that we have a vaccinated population we are talking about (certainly not children under 12), it isn't because of a test case that is going well (Florida's PICUs are FULL even before most kids have gone back to school)....it isn't because this version of the virus is less contagious (this is clearly not the case) - any interpretation of disease transmission in schools from the spring semester being extrapolated to the upcoming year would simply be ignorant to the fact that this is a different variant. So exactly what factual evidence leads us to this policy? HCPS needs to own this....if the decision has been made that the wealthy want no masks and that there is no rate of infection that would warrant masks - own that. State that. If the decision has been made that was sufficient to save old people and allow children to get sick and die - own that. State that. Is the optional mask policy in Henrico the pay off for administrators getting a pay raise? At this point, in light of the actual facts and science, it would be the only thing that makes sense. One would think that with the news that children may be able to get vaccinated next month, HCPS would feel compelled to try to control an outbreak while wearing masks until more kids can get vaccinated....As of now, this policy seems to invite a problem and THEN react...rather than preventing the problem to begin with. And when that problem involves sick or dying children....I hope you are all prepared to live with that in your souls. We are talking about a piece of cloth across one's face in exchange for the best chance to have IN PERSON learning AND the best chance to not allow another mutation of this virus and a never-ending cycle of this type of lifestyle.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 11:25: AM	McLin	Choate III	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>Passed in Special Session I of the VA GA, Chapter 456 mandates that local school boards abide by mitigation strategies set forth by the CDC! Chapter 456 includes language that "each school board shall (i) adopt, implement, and, when appropriate, update specific parameters for the provision of in-person instruction and (ii) provide such in-person instruction in a manner in which it adheres, to the maximum extent practicable, to any currently applicable mitigation strategies for early childhood care and education programs and elementary and secondary schools to reduce the transmission of Covid-19 that have been provided by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention." Governor Northam has highlighted his expectation that local school divisions abide by this bi-partisan action of the GA. I believe this makes it clear that the Henrico School Board is called to bring its school opening policy regarding mask mandates in line not only with the CDC recommendations, but with the recommendations of the VDOE, VDH and AAP. On 8/10, CCPS SB member Debbie Bailey summarized what I believe is the charge of every school board member quite well before casting her vote requiring masks for the opening of the 2001-'22 school year. "I was not elected to do make decisions for one child. I was elected to do what is best for [all] children! In this scenario, there is no scenario where one family's decision does not impact others!!" I hope that you will vote accordingly!</p>

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 11:29: AM	Steven	Newman	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>I ask that you support a requirement for all Henrico students and staff to wear masks. My child is not yet old enough to be vaccinated, but he will be attending middle school with students of varying ages. Masks are much more effective when everyone wears them, and the dangerous Delta variant means we need the easy safety precaution of masks. It cannot be fairly called a parent's "choice" when one person's "choice" to go without a mask affects the innocent people around her or him. Wearing a mask is not a burden. Wearing a mask does not affect anyone's "freedom," as the individual can still go wherever they please. However, when people choose not to wear masks indoors, it takes away a significant amount of my child's safety. It takes away our basic right to protect our child. It limits where a child can safely go. Doesn't our freedom matter? It's really simple. A mask requirement infringes on no person's freedom to go and come as they please. It is no burden. Making it a so-called "choice" does infringe on where we can go and what we can do, simply because we want our child to be safe from a virus that could cause long-term damage to a child's heart or lungs. I was lucky and able to take a year off to keep my child safe in 2020-2021. I cannot afford to take another year off. All I want is to keep my child as safe as possible in school. Please don't allow a few self-centered individuals to take away my child's basic safety. Let's reinstate the mask requirement for all K-12 students, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Please help us keep our children safe and in school. A mask is no real burden. Feeling our child is not as safe as he could be is a great burden.</p>
Aug. 11, 21 -- 11:41: AM	Laura	Cribbs	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>As a resident of Henrico County and a retired 42 year Henrico educator I am strongly in support of a mask mandate for school year 2021-22. This and other measures to curtail the spread of COVID as recommended by the CDC and Governor of Virginia should stay in place until the threat is abated. It is our public duty to protect the children and employees of Henrico during this pandemic.</p>

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 12:00: PM	Michelle	Walton	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please mandate masks in Henrico schools for K-12. I have two children who are not old enough to be vaccinated. I am scared for their safety after we have been so careful for the past year and a half. I am trying not to panic about the idea that they will be leaving my sight, for hours at a time, for five days a week, to return to school. Mandating masks will make it somewhat easier. I know my kids will wear their masks, it is the new normal for them, but I don't want there to be any question whether their friends, teachers, and other school employees will be wearing them. I have always worn a mask while shopping and am now beginning to wear a mask indoors anywhere in public again, even though I am fully vaccinated. I do not want to bring the Delta variant into our home. I wish we could have kept the Wellness Wednesdays from last year, I am anxious about how long in-person learning will last in Virginia due to a rise in cases, and I feel like the least we can do is require masks. Hopefully all teachers/staff have been fully vaccinated. Please don't cave in to anger and ignorance the way Hanover County has. I am from Hanover and graduated from those schools, and I have been extremely happy with Henrico County's system for my own children. Please, follow the science. Please, for the health of our children, require masks. Follow the other local counties that have also done so: https://www.wric.com/news/education/list-where-central-virginia-school-districts-stand-when-it-comes-to-mask-wearing/ If Amelia, Louisa, and others can require masks, so can Henrico County. We will stand with you.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 12:10: PM	Michael	Otley	Work in Varina District at HSHS, but live outside of county.	In order to protect our vulnerable children and community, especially those under 12 or immuno-compromised, I ask that you require all possible mitigation strategies including requiring vaccines for staff (w ADA exceptions where needed) and required masks (w required medical documentation for exceptions) for all who enter HCPS buildings. Please also extend the deadline for HVA and expand the program to make this an option for all parents as circumstances have changed since the original deadline. Thank you for keeping our community safe by requiring these easy-to-comply-with strategies. This is NOT a political virus and parents do NOT have the right to put others at risk just because of their political beliefs, the threat of COVID is a HEALTH issue, not a political issue, and should be treated seriously. Thank you for your consideration.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 12:22: PM	Eliane	Dotson	Pocahontas Middle School	It is unconscionable to put our children's health at risk by not mandating masks, especially in elementary and middle schools when so many are too young to get vaccinated. Kids were required to wear masks in the spring and there weren't any issues or a major uproar from non-maskers. If the school is able to enforce the dress code, then it can also enforce masks.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 12:34: PM	Erin	Pittman	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	We must have masks as a requirement for the upcoming school year. As adults, it's our responsibility to do all we can to protect our children, stop the spread of this virus and help bring an end to the pandemic, and help prevent the development of increasingly more dangerous variants that will disrupt future schooling and health and safety even more. Leaving the decision up to parents puts the health of so many at risk and opens the doors for a new and serious opportunity for bullying. We have seen how this issue has torn adults apart. Do not let school be the setting in which this happens among children.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 12:57: PM	Julie	Atlas	Varina District - Alicia S. Atkins	Please vote to keep mask mandates in our schools following the cdc guidelines. We can't teach dead students and teachers can't teach from the grave.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 1:00: PM	Erin	Sorkin	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Like many other parents, my husband and I made choices for next school year based on the assumption that HCPS would continue to follow the guidance of the CDC and health experts. It appears HCPS has decided to do their own thing and go against that guidance and the decisions of other similar districts like RPS and CCPS. Personal freedoms should not come before public health and safety! What are we teaching our children about community when we refuse to take the most basic measures to keep them safe? As a mother of three children, all attending Henrico schools and all under 12, I am disgusted and furious with this district's decision to effectively put my children in danger. You've put me and other parents in yet another impossible situation. We desperately want our children back in school, but we also need to feel that our district is fighting hard and doing everything they can to keep them safe. Your number one priority should be to keep your students, teachers, and staff safe. By not following the guidance of the CDC, you strip them of that safety. I appreciate the weight of the decisions you have to make and the impossible, no-win situations you must be facing this year. However, I feel the decision to continue to mandate mask-wearing to be a no-brainer. Now is the time to be cautious and to take any measures we can to stop a larger outbreak in unvaccinated kids. They can't get the vaccine to protect them from this virus, so it's our job to do the protecting. When we chose for our children to return to in-person learning, we did so with the expectation that HCPS would continue to consider their health and safety when making decisions. Please advise me of the options we have now that you have abandoned that mission.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 1:01: PM	Lisa	Palen	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	How can we model and teach caring, compassion and empathy and yet allow school community members to demonstrate their selfishness and disregard for others in such a blatant way? Please reinstate a mask mandate for the physical and emotional safety of all.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES
Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 1:14: PM	Brian	Coffey	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I fully support following cdc guidelines and requiring masking in schools, ESPECIALLY at levels where vaccines are not an option. Making masks optional would be a huge mistake that would endanger our childrens' lives and make it very likely we have to return to virtual learning in the winter.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 1:25: PM	D. Michelle	Sprouse	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I feel masks should be optional for students. I have a son who will be in 5th grade this year. He has played youth sports (indoors and outdoors) this whole time MASKLESS. He has been around a bunch of kids and maskless just being a regular kid doing youth sports. Please keep masks optional for this school year. The children have already been through enough for over a year now.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 1:37: PM	Rachel	Lawrence	Fairfield District - Roscoe D. Cooper, III	I respectfully ask that you require masks for all as we return to school this year. As a teacher, I want the support of the school board to make sure all stay healthy and are able to stay in school. I know we all do not want to have a surge that will shut down in person learning. The best way to prevent it is that we all wear masks, vaccinated or not. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 1:38: PM	Kathi	Harris	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I urgently request that mandated masks, as recommended by the CDC be implemented in all school buildings. I teach at Ridge Elementary and my elderly mother who battles Parkinsons Disease lives with me. We can no longer stay at home due to mental health concerns. We are fully vaccinated and ready to re-enter society, however, we still wish to exercise the caution that is recommended by our best and wisest scientists and doctors. Therefore, I ask that there be NO SLOPPY rules issued by my county. Please be VERY CLEAR. Masks must be mandated, especially in elementary schools where our most precious humans are not vaccinated and the thriving Delta variant could take hold. If we can enforce "no short shorts and spaghetti strap"s, then we can also enforce mandated masks. Thank you for doing the right thing.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 2:09: PM	Kimberly	Uccellini	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	I would like to ask HCPS to reconsider making masks optional, especially for elementary children who aren't eligible for vaccines yet. Breakthrough infections in VACCINATED people are becoming the norm. I will be ensuring my daughter wears a mask when she starts school, but I am fully anticipating she is going to get COVID when she starts elementary school. I am immunocompromised. Masks won't fully protect the kids, or anyone, but is another mitigating strategy. Many private schools and childcare facilities have been able to control COVID spread by requiring kids to wear masks. COMPLETELY IRRESPONSIBLE for the School Board to shrug shoulders and say "eh, personal choice". Good luck with that.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 2:27: PM	Jen	Tsimpris	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	<p>I am writing to implore everyone involved in this decision to please make masks mandatory until our youngest children can get vaccinated. It is unconscionable to think that all of the unvaccinated elementary school students should be subjected to those without masks simply due to "personal choice." It is selfish and irresponsible to allow personal choice to override public health and safety. There are those that will say "statistically speaking" our children are not at risk; however, what those people don't realize is that we're dealing with the Delta variant, which is highly transmissible even in vaccinated people, and our children can not only convey the virus to those most vulnerable in our community who are as yet unvaccinated, thereby causing a outbreak, but they can also become ill themselves. We do not know the extent to which the Delta variant and other later variants can cause in our children. That is a scientific fact. It is too new. Why take a risk when all it would take would be to mandate that a simple piece of cloth or paper be worn over every child's face to protect everyone? I never thought that sending my children to Henrico County Public schools would make me feel so irresponsible, reckless, and helpless. Please don't let this be the new normal for those of your constituents who expect that you would treat the children in your professional care like you would treat the ones in your home. When we decided to send our children back to school this fall we had to make that decision back in the spring. We never dreamed that you would take away a mask mandate since that period in time. That was a betrayal of the sacred trust we placed in you to protect our children's safety and well-being. Please make this right. Please follow the guidance from the CDC and the imploration of Gov. Northam and mandate masks be worn until our youngest students can get vaccinated. You have the authority to do the right thing. Please do it, for the sake of our entire community, especially our youngest ones. Thank you! I would like to thank Ms. Kinsella, Ms. Shea, and Ms. Whitaker for their personal contacts after my first letter was sent. I feel that you each truly hear and value what I have to say.</p>
Aug. 11, 21 -- 2:36: PM	Tamsyn	Stewart	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>Please consider mandating masks for all staff and students regardless of vaccination status. The delta variant is surging in our country right now, and it is highly contagious. Please keep our students and staff members safe. I am a parent and a teacher. Thank you.</p>

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 2:43: PM	Brittany	Rose	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>Please reconsider the policy of allowing vaccinated teachers, staff, and students to be unmasked as we begin the 2021-2022 school year. The Henrico Health District of the Virginia Department of Health now recommends that everyone wear a mask indoors while around others who are not a part of their household, regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status (https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/richmond-city/current-mask-guidance/). Per their announcement, new data suggest that being vaccinated may not stop someone from spreading COVID-19 caused by the Delta variant. The CDC now recommends that people living in areas with high or substantial community transmission wear masks indoors. At this time, Henrico County is experiencing a high level of community transmission. Additionally, the bill related to a return to in person learning for the 2021-2022 school year that was introduced by Henrico Senator Dr. Siobhan Dunnavant (SB1303), and supported by HCPS teacher Delegate Schuyler VanValkenburg, was passed by the General Assembly earlier this year. It states: "For the purposes of this act, each school board shall (i) adopt, implement, and, when appropriate, update specific parameters for the provision of in-person instruction and (ii) provide such in-person instruction in a manner in which it adheres, to the maximum extent practicable, to any currently applicable mitigation strategies for early childhood care and education programs and elementary and secondary schools to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 that have been provided by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention." The CDC updated its guidance several weeks ago such that it "recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. Children should return to full-time in-person learning in the fall with layered prevention strategies in place." (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html). Universal masking while in the school building is an practicable and effective mitigation strategy and would keep HCPS in compliance with state law.</p>

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 2:49: PM	Carolyn	Brosnihan	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I am writing in to strongly urge the county to require masks for K-12 return to school. I want and need in person instruction for my children. I opted for in person instruction back in the spring with the expectation that the county would continue to implement the mitigation measures that were in place when in person instruction resumed last spring. As a parent of 3 children under the age of 12, thus too young to be vaccinated, I am extremely concerned at the current planned policy to encourage masks but not require them. By not mandating masks, reducing spacing within the classroom to 3 feet and removing plexiglass barriers, the county has essentially undone its entire COVID mitigation plan. My unvaccinated children will be comingling in classrooms with other unvaccinated children who are outside of our "bubble" - putting themselves, us as their parents, and their elderly grandfather who lives with us at risk for contracting this new and more contagious COVID variant. Masks should not be a political forum - this is a basic, medically proven safety measure that has been shown to reduce risk of both spreading and contracting this virus. The CDC recommends it, the AAP recommends it. Virtually every reputable virologist, pediatrician and doctor with any common sense recommends it. We trusted you - in your leadership roles - to do what is right for these kids and not what is politically convenient and easy. Do the right thing - the hard thing - and require masks in schools. Do what you promised and keep our children safe - mitigate the spread and mitigate the risk - require masks in schools.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 3:13: PM	Blakelyn	Tindall	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please protect our children by requiring masks indoors at school **at least** until they are eligible to be vaccinated.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 3:23: PM	Neha	Bhatnagar	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	With the rise of the Delta variant, please mandate masks for everyone, no matter their vaccination status. I have to wear a mask at work, and I am vaccinated. It should be required for everyone, especially with children who do not have the opportunity to be vaccinated.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 3:38: PM	Jackie	Fuller	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I am the mom of a rising 1st grader. Please follow CDC recommendations and require masks for all students not eligible for the vaccine yet. This should not be optional until everyone has the choice to be vaccinated or not, we need to do our best to protect each other.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 3:41: PM	Angela	Taylor	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	If the CDC has recommended masking and doors then I'm not sure why our schools would not recommend the same thing. While I understand that some parents do not like this option, when we're dealing with children it's already hard enough to have them comply with guidelines. For the safety of teachers staff administrators and other students masks should be required indoors. Not only will this help protect our students at school, but also those loved ones at home. For those districts that have already returned to school, we have seen an outbreak and a rise in Covid cases already. Please do the right thing and don't bend to the pressure of the minority and have the mask mandate in place for our schools.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 3:49: PM	Donna	Taylor	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	We all *want* the pandemic to be over. We all *want* a normal year for our kids and teachers. But wanting something doesn't make it right. We need to adhere to the CDC guidelines and keep everyone safe. Make the decision to require masks be warn. Even though nobody "wants" to wear a mask.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 3:58: PM	Tamica	Goode	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Please mandate masks in school. This is the best option to keep our children safe until they all are able to receive a vaccination. Once the children are allowed to be fully vaccinated, I think then this topic can be revisited.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 4:01: PM	Lisa	Langberg	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please consider the fact that personal liberties do not extend to putting others in danger. Masks keep others safe; conversely, not wearing a mask potentially risks others' lives, without their consent. If we ever want to get back to "normal," we must be willing to honor the responsibilities that come with being part of a community (such as a school).

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 4:18: PM	C	N	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>I do not understand why HCPS is going against current CDC recommendations for children under 12, who are unable to be vaccinated, wear masks while indoors. Social distancing may not be able to be implemented and although masks are not foolproof, masks are their only defense against COVID-19 and the current spread of the Delta Variant. They are required on transportation, but not inside the school buildings? This seems inconsistent. Current numbers are saying that Henrico is the "high" transmission rate and more children are testing positive. On top of this, our teachers who are returning in-person to educate our most vulnerable are also putting themselves at risk, even if they are vaccinated because of the current "mask optional" policy. To say that "masks are strongly encouraged for the unvaccinated" and the county "respects everyone's decision to not wear a mask" simply falls short. Private schools in central Virginia and other type of educational institutions have mask policies in place both last year and this summer to allow kids to continue learning and doing extra-curricular activities (summer camps, music school, indoor sport facilities) without incidence, while giving kids masks breaks and opportunities to be outdoors for lessons or recess time. CCPS and RPS voted for masks to be required. Also, Henrico is choosing to continue be a "mask optional" district, it is not fair to have closed the window to virtual schooling options. Many parents opted to keep their children in their boundaries school to go in-person hoping the numbers would be better by September and without the knowledge of the new dangers of this Delta-variant. Had this knowledge been known when the virtual deadline option was still possible, I know that we would have chosen that option for our children and I am certain that many other families would have chosen that route as well. It seems very devious for HCPS to urge for masks initially, close any opportunities for families to make a choice that is best for them and their children, and then turn around and change the rules on them. Please think of our children and reconsider HCPS's policy on masks. If you do not, coupled with this knowledge and your history of ignorant and racist comments, we will work to vote you out of office</p>
Aug. 11, 21 -- 4:36: PM	Cathleen	Grzesiek	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>Given the alarming rise in COVID-19 infections due to the Delta variant, and the fact that a vaccine will not be available for children under 12 until after the school year starts, I strongly support requiring masks in schools for the upcoming school year. The health and safety of staff and students is paramount, and universal and correct mask wearing is #1 on the list of CDC's mitigation strategies. I know in person learning is important to so many parents in Henrico County, and requiring masks in schools is the best way to ensure that can hapen.</p>

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 4:44: PM	Tamara	Leopold	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I am writing in support of a mask mandate for at least elementary school students. Those who are currently ineligible for vaccination. It seems to be the most proactive to mandate masking, reduce exposure if not permanently, at least until vaccination is an option. Then those who chose to risk it sans masks are less likely to to cause grave harm to others. There has been no scientific explanation for not mandating masks. Just hurt feelings (I don't want someone telling me what to do). There are other precautions that are mandated: seatbelts, car seats, vaccines (MMR, tetanus, chicken pox, etc). We are not talking about forcing vaccine here. It's not approved and that frightens some people, fine. Not talking about that. Talking about a piece of cloth over the face until vaccine is an option for those that choose it. There is no danger to masking (speak to any surgeon who performs a 14 hr procedure) only an inconvenience. Please mandate masking. You are risking our children's lives. They can't get vaccinated. There is no option to protect them from aerosols. Their own mask isn't enough. All need to wear it. Please mandate masks. It's a public health issue. Not a political one.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 4:46: PM	Kim	Cochran	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please require masks for all HCPS students and staff. This is the ONE mitigation strategy of any significance available to them. As we all know "3 ft" distancing is NOT adequate or probably even possible. How many HVAC systems of schools have been upgraded to decrease transmission of airborne viruses? Masks are the ONE measure that can actually reduce transmission, keep kids from as many quarantines, heck keep them healthy! Along with their families and others in the community. It's time to be part of the solution instead of furthering the problem. Look at this as an opportunity to reduce community transmission of the virus instead of spreading it. We entrust the care of our children to you. Do everything you can to keep them safe, which should be your goal too. Thank you for your time.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 5:07: PM	Abby	Ward	Springfield Park Elementary	I strongly support mandatory masks in schools at this time. I also want to encourage the board to recommend lunch be outdoors whenever the weather permits. Both of my opinions are based on the best scientific recommendations at this time for curbing the spread of COVID.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 5:15: PM	Carrie	McCauley	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	My rising 6th and 4th grader's have not attended in person school since March 2020. My husband and I are medical professionals working in direct contact with COVID-19 patients. Last year, we didn't send our kids to school because we were scared of contracting the virus. We were very careful to make sure our kids and our community stayed safe. It is very important for our kids to return to in person learning safely this school year and for that to happen masks should be required. We thank the teachers for their hard work and dedication and hope their safety it taken into consideration as well.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 5:18: PM	Devi	Balagopal	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn, Nuckols farm elementary school	Hello..thank you for a ur efforts to reopen schools safely for our kids.i have a concern with HCPS making masking optional for the elementary school kids. We had decided to move our child to in person learning bcoz we were assured that the CDC recommendations wud be followed by the school board. Now ,with no concrete answer from the school board on the masking policy ,making it optional even though elementary kids have not been vaccinated,and the deadline for the virtual academy over, I am deeply concerned about the health of my daughter who would be going to school in September. We are in the midst of a global pandemic and the entire world is suffering from it. And I am deeply disappointed that masking policy is being optional for students who don't have a vaccine yet! I understand there are parents who want to own the decision and make that choice for their kids . But ,what do we parents do now,when v don't want to send our kids to school where others are not masked and we don't have an option of virtual academy as well! I would like to request the board to take heed of the CDC RECOMMENDATIONS and implement them and become a even better role model for our kids! Reopening schools are a big step,when the almost entire world is still on virtual schooling ,and what more can be better than having it done safely for all our beloved kids out there.Thank u!
Aug. 11, 21 -- 5:29: PM	Tori	Filas	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Protect our teachers, students, and families-Masks must be mandatory for all!
Aug. 11, 21 -- 5:40: PM	Sara	Small	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	Please mandate masks in schools. The children should be kept safe and masks are the simplest way to do that. We were told school would be in person with masks and didn't even try to apply to virtual school. AAP and CDC says masks in schools are a must, why are you giving in to bullies and going against the science?

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 5:50: PM	Mrs	Tyler	Fairfield District - Roscoe D. Cooper, III	<p>As a parent with a student attending middle school in Henrico County, I am requesting that you please reconsider the voluntary mask mandate for the return of school 2021. It is imperative that we consider those students who attend school with compromised systems, as well consider those students who are healthy and want to avoid the chance of getting an awful case of the virus. Can you please tell me what measures are in place to know that “all” students and staff coming in the building with no masks will be “fully” vaccinated?? If there is no set measures in place, you are opening the doors to those who are not vaccinated to enter classrooms with no mask with other students for over 6 hours a day, 5 days a week. Wouldn't you prefer to be proactive instead of being reactive?? Masks have been shown to slow down the spread of the awful virus, so why wouldn't you require the mask at the start of school and not wait until kids get sick leading to loss of instruction time, the requirement of make up time all due to quarantining for typically 2 weeks. Should kids have to suffer from an illness that could have had a strong chance of being avoided had a mask mandate been in place? Use Hopewell School Systems' first week to two weeks as an indicator of what may happen and put the mask mandate in place for all students and staff at the start of school. Personally, knowing a parent in the Hopewell school system who's child caught the virus within 2 days of being in school, I was able to see how it was a very difficult time for the family and household. The parents had to deal with their child's sickness along with having to care for the child, meanwhile trying to figure out how to protect themselves and not to mention the child is getting behind from missing their classroom instruction. Please do know that this does seriously effect families when you're not putting a mask mandate in place and you are deciding to work on a honor system. I truly hope you change the current decision before the start of the 2021 school year.</p>

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 6:12: PM	Emily	Tate	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	As a parent and employee, I implore you to mandate masks for all students and staff. I cannot fathom being inside a building, much less an elementary school where none of the kids can be vaccinated yet and masks are optional. This virus will decimate classes, especially this new variant. We know that delta is thousands more times communicable than the regular old Covid, and affects kids. Kids are dying from it, albeit in less numbers than adults, but when this virus mutates again as it will if we don't stop it, the next variant could be worse. We need to do all we can do to show kids that we all need to work together to stop this thing, and we do that by covering our nose and mouth and getting the vaccine if we can. We need to lead by example, and showing kids that if they don't want to wear a mask, they don't have to is showing them that it's ok to be selfish and we don't need to take care of each other. It's incredibly irresponsible to fully open schools without every single thing we can do to open them safely. Requiring masks is literally the bare minimum we should be doing and to call this a personal choice is catering to the most selfish, most ignorant of us. Those of us who have been responsible this entire pandemic should not be forced to put ourselves at grave risk to placate the anti-maskers and science deniers. We should not have to live in fear every time we step into school because the school board doesn't want to stand up those who endanger us all. It's time to step up and stand up for our kids and families and keep us all safe. Thank you.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 6:13: PM	Brian	Bilyeu	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I support the decision that Henrico County has made regarding masks. I feel like it should be optional. If families or staff members want to wear the mask to protect themselves, they have a choice. If I want my kids to experience school as normal as possible, I have that choice too. In my opinion, everyone wins because it's a choice. The county opened a completely virtual school for families that needed to remain virtual. Maybe the county needs to consider opening up the option for additional students to enroll at the virtual academy if uncomfortable with the decision that was made regarding masks. Thank you!!
Aug. 11, 21 -- 6:30: PM	Rebecca	Clevenger	Springfield Park Elementary	Please vote to protect all our kids and follow the CDC guidelines for wearing masks in schools.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 6:36: PM	Meghan	Hyatt	Fairfield District - Roscoe D. Cooper, III	I would first like to thank the board for all of their hard work over the tumultuous year and a half we have had. I know that your jobs are not easy and they have been made more difficult by the day. I am writing a comment today hoping beyond hope that you will do the right thing and require masking, in the least, at the elementary school level. My students, who are a part of the K-5 AIS program, were rockstars over the course of the last year. They worked hard during virtual learning and transitioned well into in person learning upon our return. Last year, as there was so much uncertainty, my parents and I made the decision to have them attend inclusion virtually. Inclusion is a vital part of my program and my students learn so much from their time with typically developing peers. This year, a virtual inclusion path is no longer an option. I was already worried about how this would impact their health, but was comforted by the knowledge that all of the students would at least be wearing masks to offer a level of protection. When it was released that masks would be optional, the fear crept in again. I am happy this is now up for review because, if you decide to make masking optional, it will be robbing my students of either their right to be with their age appropriate peers or their right to health; maybe even both. The delta variant is rampant and puts younger kids at an even higher risk of contracting and having lasting effects from covid. We are just now hearing about lambda and the clincher? Vaccinations have a varying breakthrough rate and even asymptomatic vaccinated people can pass the virus to those who are unvaccinated. I know it can be tempting to let your guard down now, but this is not the time for that. It's the time to stand your ground and be even more vigilant. I beg you to mandate masks for the 2021-2022 school year until all who are able to vaccinated can be. Require a legitimate medical exemption in order to not wear a mask at school. Please protect those who are more vulnerable to COVID-19 the best you can. This isn't about politics, it's science.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 6:42: PM	Sheri	Carlyle	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Strongly urge School Board to mandate masks for Students, teachers, and staff. Health and safety of all is paramount.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 6:55: PM	Valerie	Nohl	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please honor the CDC's guidance and mandate masks for the start of the school year until the kids are vaccinated. Wearing a mask offers protection from a dangerous virus. There is NO downside!!! The upside is that the kids are safe!!!!

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 7:04: PM	Susan	Boling	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Our family urges you to require that all students, teachers, administrators, staff and visitors permitted into school facilities wear masks. The current rise in COVID cases, especially with the Delta variant that is spreading more quickly than the original virus puts everyone at greater risk. This variant is predominately impacting unvaccinated people which includes our son due to his age. We also encourage you to follow ALL mitigation recommendations provided by the CDC for schools. We do not want to look back and regret irreversible consequences of a bad decision.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 7:18: PM	Bonnie	Harvell	Teacher in Varina District	I know you have received many comments regarding mask policies for the upcoming school year. I am an early childhood special education teacher at Baker. When deciding on your facial covering policies for the upcoming school year, please consider the needs of our special needs population. My students generally have few to no spoken words. They need to be able to see my face, hear my unmuffled words and see my facial expressions so that they can learn everything I can possibly pour into them in my short time with them. Even if you do require facial coverings, I ask you to considering allowing face shields instead of masks for those in my position. The masks with the clear section just fog up (we tried them last year). I am fine with switching to a mask while in the hall or doing afternoon duty...if we could just have the freedom to teach with a face shield (or no covering at all), I would be most appreciative. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 7:31: PM	Rachel	Bruni	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	For the health and protection of our children, their teachers and classmates, my husband and I desperately encourage that you vote to require masks for all while on school grounds (and on all forms of transportation) and take advantage of all opportunities to practice social distancing. Last year, you built a plan to welcome children and staff back into your school buildings. You cautiously planned and implemented safety practices for the limited audience involved then. Now the risk is higher, and you are preparing to welcome more people back into the school buildings. We plead that you follow your previously executed safety measures and given our current environmental standing, enhance your protocols wherever possible. As leaders, you have a critical role and responsibility to take action and aid in the protection of our school communities and our overall public health.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 7:40: PM	Brad	Thurman	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please require masks for all. This will keep kids out of quarantine, which helps keep parents able to work.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 7:45: PM	Dionne	Kumpe	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>I am asking Henrico County Public School Board to reconsider its current position of optional masking based on the latest recommendations of the CDC, AAP, VDH, and VEA to move to universal masking to protect our children in school settings. The limitations on HCPS to close schools due to outbreaks plus optional masking is a recipe for disaster with the Delta variant. How will the school district handle all the 7- to 10-day student quarantines? The absences of teachers, staff, and students due to illness? How will HCPS handle the requests to change to online learning when the Virtual Academy is a separate program? Given new evidence on the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant, CDC has updated the guidance for fully vaccinated people. CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. Children should return to full-time in-person learning in the fall with layered prevention strategies in place. VDH and AAP support this guidance. So does the Virginia Education Association. Please take a stand for the safety of our children in HCPS like other leading school districts in Virginia have already done. Do not ignore the urging of respected and trained medical professionals to more effectively adopt all of the safety measures available to us during this pandemic. Optional masking doesn't provide protection, but universal masking does. My school-age children were both virtual all last year and were vaccinated as soon as they became eligible. Like the majority of the district, we signed up for in-person learning in 2021-2022. However, without a universal mask mandate in our schools this Fall, I am very concerned about my children and their classmates safely returning to the classroom while the highly-contagious Delta variant is spreading across the Commonwealth and nation. If you ignore CDC recommendations for universal masking, I will be asking for a virtual option again, as many parents already are. It's time to rethink HCPS's plan based on the science of how to keep students, teachers, and staff of all ages and medical situations safe. When it comes to schools, public health should NOT be a parental decision. Parents abide by required vaccines for school registration and follow clothing guidelines. Requiring face masks during a pandemic is much, much more important than monitoring skirt length. Please stay focused on what really matters and respect the CDC guidance for schools.</p>
Aug. 11, 21 -- 7:51: PM	Allison	Hearn	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>I want to write to express my concern for the coming year as it relates to contact tracing. My 2 high school students are vaccinated, and are looking forward to in-person schooling this year. Last year, my then middle school student returned to in-person school in March but was then contact traced twice, and missed 3 weeks of school. He was able to attend class virtually in the hybrid environment. What will happen this year? If students are wearing masks and vaccinated, can we eliminate the requirement to quarantine due to close contact? I am assuming a virtual option is not available to in-person students in quarantine. Please clarify the plans for contact tracing amongst vaccinated students. Thank you!</p>

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 7:57: PM	Bonnie	Harvell	Teacher in Varina District	I know you have received many comments regarding mask policies for the upcoming school year. I am an early childhood special education teacher at Baker. When deciding on your facial covering policies for the upcoming school year, please consider the needs of our special needs population. My students generally have few to no spoken words. They need to be able to see my face, hear my unmuffled words and see my facial expressions so that they can learn everything I can possibly pour into them in my short time with them. Even if you do require facial coverings, I ask you to considering allowing face shields instead of masks for those in my position. The masks with the clear section just fog up (we tried them last year). I am fine with switching to a mask while in the hall or doing afternoon duty...if we could just have the freedom to teach with a face shield (or no covering at all), I would be most appreciative. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 8:07: PM	Trez	Winn	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Mandate masks!
Aug. 11, 21 -- 8:42: PM	Vickie	Crumpton	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	All school board members please vote to mandate masks for the 2021-2022 school year. It would keep a lot of students & faculty members safe from the delta variant. The numbers are higher now than a year ago of those with Covid.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 8:58: PM	Susan	A.	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Masks should NOT be mandatory.. My child cannot function in a mask during the school day. Kids do not spread this virus and there is no actual scientific evidence to prove otherwise. Please give parents a choice, Masks should be optional NOT mandatory.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:01: PM	Tamica	Goode	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Please mandate masks in school. This is the best option to keep our children safe until they all are able to receive a vaccination. Once the children are allowed to be fully vaccinated, I think then this topic can be revisited.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:03: PM	Jia	Geng	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Mask mandatory please.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:07: PM	Courtney	Gibbons Plowcha	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	<p>I am a parent of a second grader and am in favor of universal masking in schools for all students, staff, volunteers, and visitors (with exceptions only granted by medical necessity or IEP/504). By now, you know that the CDC, VDOE, VDH, and AAP also highly recommend universal masking as one of the best mitigation strategies we have in the fight against COVID and its ever-changing variants. You are already removing the 6-foot physical distance recommendation, so to consider removing another of the mitigation strategies that has kept our children safe since the return to in-person learning in February is negligent and endangers student, staff, and their families. Masks might not be comfortable or fun, but neither are emergency drills, SOL prep, or dress codes, and yet you mandate those. If the scientific data is not convincing enough, please consider the amount of students that will have to quarantine every time there is a positive case in a classroom, especially if not everyone is masked. Consider the instructional time lost for students out sick and the burden on families when a classroom or school is shut down due to outbreaks. Please learn from the mistakes of other school districts who put the discomfort of a few families above the health and safety of their students and staff and are now looking at dozens of students in quarantine during the first two weeks of school. In addition to universal masking, I'm also asking you to consider limiting visitors to the building, field trips, indoor sports/music practices, and large in-person gatherings at schools, especially at the elementary level where none of the students are eligible to be vaccinated. Back to school nights and orientations typically draw hundreds of people to crowded, poorly ventilated gyms and classrooms for extended periods of time. This scenario is a super-spreader event waiting to happen, even if everyone were masked and spaced at 3 feet. Do not let politics and pandemic fatigue enter into your decisions about the health and safety of our children. Please listen to guidance from health professionals and choose to do the right thing: mandate masks for all persons in the school buildings.</p>
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:16: PM	Christina	Sitterson	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>Please require mask wearing for all students. Mask wearing is not a personal choice. The actions of others impact us all. I cannot control if my son's classmate participates in high risk activities but we can minimize exposure with a simple mask. My husband has received a kidney transplant and therefore his two COVID vaccines were not effective (this has shown to be very common with transplant patients). His risk of severe disease is also increased if he does get COVID which obviously will a major impact on our family's emotional state. Our family does everything within our power to stay safe and when we made the choice to send our child to in person school, we were told masks would be required. Please stand by this to protect our children and our community. We need to take this time to do the right thing, care about others, and not be influenced by politics. Henrico did a good job last year always choosing safety even when it wasn't the popular choice. Please continue to do so. Keep our kids and our high risk community in the forefront. Mask wearing is not a personal choice. It needs to be done for the good of everyone.</p>

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:16: PM	Sara	Wright	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I am concerned about a mask optional status for the school year given delta variant cases on the rise as well as covid cases in children on the rise. While I respect a parent's choice as to the decisions for their children, this is not the time for individual choice. Masks on around masks off negates the entire purpose of protection that the mask affords. A decision to require masks is a decision toward protecting all of our teachers and children, especially those in elementary school who are unable to be vaccinated. As the mother of two elementary school children who attended in person school the second half of last year, I can tell you there was not a single complaint from my children about the masks. And my children are complainers. Even they understood it's a simple step toward protection.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:17: PM	Lu	Tan	Henrico	Mask mandatory
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:18: PM	Merrill	Milani	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I fully support establishing a mask mandate to at least start the school year and am quite concerned that HCPS would say it's an individual choice. I hope that HCPS makes the right decision and requires everybody in school to wear mask. If masks are not required I will be concerned each day for my own child attending school and worry if she will get sick, but I am even more nervous for our community (And my daughter is completely vaccinated). What I predict will happen is we will have outbreaks, kids will then be sent home and our children will miss another year of school. I would love my kid to finish out her senior year in school with teachers and classmates. There is still so much unknown about this virus. We learn new things each day and it's completely reckless not to require masks. It's a mask and does not take away ones freedom. It's just a mask and we should not be making this a bigger deal than it needs to be.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:20: PM	Toni	Rivera	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I would love for the mask requirements to remain optional. Especially for those of us that are vaccinated. Thank you.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:33: PM	Whitney	Fogg	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	I will expect Henrico County Public Schools to adhere to the CDC guidelines as required by Virginia state law. Governor Northam has made it clear that this is what all Virginia state schools are to do. Not requiring masks would be extremely dangerous for our children and staff. Depaite how much we all want it to be, the pandemic is not over yet. We must act responsibly so our children can have as normal a year as possible. Without masking, we'll certainly have large numbers of quarantined students. Masking is simple and effective and there is no reason HCPS should not require it.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:34: PM	Marcos	Romero	Hungary Creek Middle School	Please, please mandate masks for school. My wife is recovering from cancer treatment, and I'm in Stage 5 Kidney failure. We are at deadly risk if we don't treat this seriously.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:37: PM	Jen	Perkins	Short Pump Elementary, Pocahontas Middle and Tuckahoe Montessori School	Hello, I am writing as both a mom and a teacher. My kids are in elementary and middle school and I work at a school that starts at the toddler level and goes through elementary aged children. I am pleading with you to mandate mask wearing indoors for all children, staff and employees in the school setting, regardless of vaccination status. Our children and our community are too important to risk something so easily mitigated and preventable. Thank you.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:47: PM	Luival	Mulder	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please make masks mandatory for all teachers, consider them for eligible children, as well as physical space dividers, 6 feet distancing whenever possible for both indoor or outdoor spaces, not the three feet that was previously recommended. The school nurse should have sole discretion to send children home who are exhibiting physical signs of sickness and fever.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 9:49: PM	Ryan	Burgess	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Mandate masks, continue mitigation strategies, conscientiously manage and meticulously carry out contact tracing, when boosters become available provide them to staff, and please don't allow loopholes and exemptions for people to avoid wearing masks.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 10:12: PM	Geraldine	Oliver	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I ask that masks be mandated in schools at this time. There are several good studies including one in NC studying 1 million students that show mandated masks keep Covid spread at 1% or lower and students can move freely about with little fear of transmission. If masks are optional transmission rate climbs. We know Delta variant spreads like chicken pox and impacts children much more than other variants. In the uncertain time with Delta and cooler weather coming I feel strongly that mandated masks are needed.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 10:42: PM	Brian	McCauley	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>I am the parent of a rising 4th grader and a rising 6th grader for the 2021 school year. After the difficulty and social isolation of all virtual school last year, our children have been so looking forward to going back to in person school with interpersonal connection and interaction. We have worked so hard over the past 2 years to keep them safe, both to reduce the risk of them getting COVID as well as reduce the risk of them contracting COVID and potentially exposing others. Your decision to make masks in school optional instead of mandatory, means that in order for them to get back what they have missed so much and deserve to experience, they must choose and we must choose to knowingly put them at higher risk of getting sick. This is unacceptable and wildly irresponsible. COVID cases are again on the rise, new more contagious variant strains have developed, and in order for our children to attend school we must put them into this environment when they are not even old enough to be vaccinated. The downside of not wearing masks is significant and dangerous. The downside of wearing masks is nothing more than discomfort, and with the clear upside of an increased level of safety for our children, your decision to make them optional is entirely confusing. I do not feel comfortable sending our children into that environment without doing everything possible to keep them safe. It is not fair to them. They and we should not be put in this position. I urge you to reconsider and make masks mandatory for all students and all staff for the 2021 school year. Thank you for your consideration.</p>
Aug. 11, 21 -- 11:00: PM	Shannon	Brown	Henrico County Employee	<p>Good morning! My name is Shannon Brown. I have been a teacher in Henrico County for 24 years. I would like to offer my input regarding the potential mask policy for the 2021-2022 school year. I along with many other teachers and faculty members worked tirelessly to offer students the best education possible the past year and a half. We were forced to provide “ parallel learning”, pick up extra duties , wear a mask and teach for 6-7 hours a day to students both in class and virtual. Students often were unable to hear us due to the masks that covered our faces and the 3 foot partitions that blocked their view (those students who were in person). I ask that the school board consider making the mask mandate OPTIONAL for teachers and students who have been vaccinated. I along with many other teachers , staff and faculty members have done their part and feel as though it is a slap in the face to require us to continue to wear a mask. Have any of you ever had to teach/ speak for 6-7 hours straight wearing a mask while also trying to ensure that students were abiding by mask rules? PLEASE consider giving students , teachers and staff who have been vaccinated a CHOICE on whether or not they wear a mask. Thank you.</p>

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 11:08: PM	Laura	Goradia	Glen Allen	<p>Hello. I am a board certified pediatrician practicing I'm a private clinic in Glen Allen. We mostly serve families in the Henrico County school district. I am very concerned about the rapid spread of the delta variant of COVID in the state of Virginia. Children are unvaccinated people over the age of 12 are the primary sources of spread currently. We have seen a huge uptick in children who are testing positive recently. My partners and I are gravely concerned that this will significantly worsen with children back in school if masks are not mandatory. We all back in person school and feel this is in the best interest of children's learning amd their mental health however having masks optional will further promote spread of this deadly virus. Please consider making masks mandatory for all children regardless of their vaccine status or age. I promise you that most if not all Henrico county pediatricians feel the same way. Thank you for your consideration.</p>
Aug. 12, 21 -- 12:28: AM	Brittany	Rose	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>Subject: input regarding use of ESSER III funds As outlined in the presentation by CFO, John Wack, a primary purpose of the ESSER funds is to utilize emergency relief funds with the intent of addressing the impact of COVID-19 on elementary and secondary schools. As we all know, this past 18 months have been very hard on students and staff alike. The mental health of many students has been negatively affected by the pandemic and its impacts including the death of loved ones, caregivers losing jobs/income, and - for some - the loss of learning and connection during virtual learning. I was very pleased to see that HCPS proposes funding to provide for an additional 15 elementary reading specialists, 30 school counselors, and 13 elementary library assistants to help address the emotional and social needs of our students. I was dismayed to see that this is proposed for FY2024 versus the first or second year of the plan. In 2019 the Virginia Department of Education reviewed and published a standards of quality (SOQ) review specifically related to instructional quality, student support, and supporting vulnerable populations. The presentation from 1/23/19 included October 2016 recommendations from the Board of Education for the following staffing requirements: 1 full-time (FT) school counselor per 250 students, 1 FT school psychologist per 1,000 students, 1 FT social worker per 1,000 students, and 1 FT school nurse per 550 students. Looking at just one of these, research has shown that high-poverty schools meeting the 1:250 counselor:student ratio have better graduation and school attendance rates and lower disciplinary incidents. Further, reducing the student:counselor ration would predict a decrease in the probability of a disciplinary recurrence by 9.4% for Black students, 10.8% for Black males, and 9.6% for students eligible for free or reduced lunch. Research supporting the other SOQs offer similarly significant impacts of implementation. We cannot wait until 2024 to provide additional mental health and social services support to our students. I ask the board to prioritize meeting the Board of Education's recommended SOQs for school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, and school nurse ratios in year one and two.</p>

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 12, 21 -- 2:46: AM	Michael	Leopold	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Some new headlines...soon to be Virginia? 5th graders at Georgia school are sent home due to Covid-19 By Shawn Nottingham, CNN Updated 3:05 PM ET, Wed August 11, 2021 The Board of Education in Williamson County, just south of Nashville, approved the mask requirement for elementary school students, staff and visitors inside all buildings and on buses beginning Thursday and ending September 21, according to information from the school district. Jennifer King, a parent and pediatric intensive care physician, said, "As a pediatric ICU physician, we are seeing more younger previously healthy children admitted with respiratory failure and acute respiratory distress syndrome than we have in prior strains, as cases in children are on the rise. This trend will only worsen if we don't act now."
Aug. 12, 21 -- 4:05: AM	Tracey	Douglas	Work within Three Chopt District	I am an Integrated Services teacher, boy we worked hard to get the students to wear masks last school year, but we did it, and they kept them on. I was so glad they did. With 4 grade levels within one Integrated Service classroom and every one of these children accessing some type of inclusion with their grade level peers, these children are open to 4 times the exposure of any other child in the school. If you then add in the rotating instructional assistants and related service providers; OT, PT, speech, the coordinator, and of course admin, the possibility of these children being exposed to someone who is sick is so much higher than any other child in the school. Yet, these are the children who are more likely to have underlying health conditions. Teachers did such a great job last year, virtual teaching was difficult, and as things calmed down and the thought shifted to "in person is better," we moved to hybrid teaching and that was even more difficult. But we got through it, everyone wore masks, and for the most part there was minimal exposure. We did the best we could, and it paid off. So, let's focus on that. It is possible to do the best we can for teaching and learning by schooling in person, and we can do this while doing the best we can to protect those that rely on us for protection. My students are elementary age, too young for a vaccine, yet they will be exposed to classes full of unvaccinated peers. There is no vaccination available for them, so let us do the best we can with what we have available to us now to protect them, by having them all wear masks; after all sparkling unicorns and dinosaur mouths can make it fun. Please do not let our children be exposed needlessly. Staff have been given a choice about the vaccine and to retain anonymity about their vaccine status. Let staff retain that anonymity if they wish, while also protecting everyone against breakthrough cases, by having all staff wear masks, all the time.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 12, 21 -- 5:46: AM	Sheryl	Feggans	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>Please consider requiring that all teachers, staff, bus drivers and all K-12 students (vaccinated or unvaccinated) wear masks at all times. Please consider the recommendations and abide by the CDC to protect everyone, especially all children. I chose bringing my children back in-person this fall thinking that masks would still be required and/or Covid numbers would be lower. Covid cases are still rising and people are dying. In the past, flu cases would be high through schools, just imagine what would happen with Covid cases spread throughout the schools. There are several schools experiencing this since schools have reopened in other areas. If you consider the unvaccinated to mask, will the vaccinated students have to provide documentation of being vaccinated? How would teachers and staff keep up with which students are vaccinated or not and make sure the unvaccinated are being compliant with masking? Teachers would have to be mask patrols, which would interrupt teaching. There would be a lot of peer pressure from those unvaccinated not to wear a mask to be like the vaccinated student. If there is NOT a requirement for everyone to mask, what is the plan for the hundreds of students on the waitlist for virtual schools? Thanks!</p>
Aug. 12, 21 -- 5:50: AM	Brian	Haddix	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>How can unvaccinated children be herded into schools with a variant more deadly and the numbers as high as was seen during winter? Masks or no masks, the Delta variant does not care unless you are vaxed. If flu were this bad, schools would temporarily shut down for this. Other school districts have started already, and we are seeing whole grades being sent home, not even 5 days in. Luckily, Henrico Co. schools start later, so we can observe these experiments. The nation tried to reopen and failed. Other schools across the country are opening and failing immediately. This current virus is MORE COMMUNICABLE than the flu or cold, combined. Anyone under 12 is not vaxed, The state of Texas is flying children out of state because the pediatric units at hospitals are full. I will be honored to cite these facts, as published by multiple verified, accredited, Pulitzer Prize winning, and professional national news sources, as well as the official CDC website and official state websites. Thank you in advance for your time and thoughtful consideration of these comments and verifiable facts.</p>

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 12, 21 -- 6:58: AM	Eleina	Espigh	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	<p>When considering the mask, I do hope that we can take out all politics because, regardless of political affiliations, all people can see the numbers and invoke some common sense. I would ask that the board keep masks optional. With the varying ages, the available vaccines, "virtual academy", and option to mask children whose parents would feel more comfortable doing so, it would seem that "optional" could provide the safety and comfort that all families are seeking. Many different news outlets report the lowcovid numbers in children, but an obvious concern would be for the hospitalizations and deaths in children resulting from this virus. Most adults can understand that there may very likely be no way to eradicate coronavirus, but we must instead learn to live with it (as flus, HIV, etc). The numbers published regarding children in relation to hospitalizations and death from covid do not warrant the extreme measures being sought by some. Parents alone have the best interests of their children and, more importantly: parents have the right to make those choices for their children. CDC and AAP --since the start of this virus, it is reported that 0.008% of infected children have died (roughly 371) --approx 0.4% of children who have been infected require hospitalization --some states have seen ZERO covid deaths in children under 20; Washington Post ran an article reporting that children are more likely to die from homicides, drowning, or fires/burns --it has been reported that the largest percentage of hospitalizations with covid occurred among children aged 0-4 years (NOT school aged) A study found that no increase in covid hospitalization rates were associated with in-person learning. In England, researchers found that between March 2020 and February 2021, covid was responsible for 25 deaths in people under age 18 years--HALF of the deaths were individuals with and underlying condition (including tube feeding or breathing assistance before covid). Beyond there being no reason to mandate the masks, there has been discussion regarding the detriment of the mask in a school setting: a petri dish of bacteria, fungi, parasites; feelings of anxiety; delayed development for the younger set, and so on.</p>
Aug. 12, 21 -- 7:28: AM	Tabetha	Anthony	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	<p>Please give us the option to mask our children. If someone has a concern for risk of covid please allow them to mask their child. Or allow them to go virtual. Hanover along with other surrounding areas are making it optional. Which I feel is best for everyone.</p>
Aug. 12, 21 -- 7:38: AM	Noelle	Quade	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	<p>Masks should 100% be optional for everyone with no conceqnrnces either choice. Ignoring ones medical and religious options and choices violates the state's Constitution as well as the National Constitution, not to mention our basic human rights! If a person is sick, they need to stay home, plain and simple (without conceqnrnces). (Too bad you didn't imply that ideology more strictly during regular "flu seasons" in the past. Too many went to school sick, masked by Tylenol because of the pressed conceqnrnces by your county.) My children are medically unable to wear a face covering and are treated worse than third class citizens because of it. It's disgusting. It shows true colors and intent. It shows your priorities ignore their scholastic and physical health.</p>

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 12, 21 -- 7:56: AM	Cliff	Serwe	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	We strongly oppose that our kids have to wear masks in school.
Aug. 12, 21 -- 8:06: AM	Bridget	Napp	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella, Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Masks must be optional for all students in school. Parents and families should have the choice to send their own children to school with masks. Provide n95 mask for teachers/staff who would like access to them if that is the issue. Otherwise, stop using our children as leverage for politics. Let them breathe, let's families choose for their own children, and get back to educating our students. Extend enrollment for virtual academy for families who would like to opt out for in person school.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 3:46: PM	Andrea	Lee	Unsure	We are new to this school district with 4th and 5th grader. We DONT WANT TO MASK OUR CHILDREN. They re not registered in their new school yet as we are awaiting your vote on this issue. If there is masks mandate next school year we will homeschool. Mask don't work, and I know this from my personal experience. For a mask mandate to work everyone will need to wear N95. And we all know that will not happen. Parents like us don't ask for a millions of tax dollars to be spent on "special" accommodations like small classes, plexiglass, ventilation systems, etc. We don't want to see another school picture on social media where all the children are masked! That is true abuse. We gave you a year to try this experiment and we say NO MORE! We are ready to be as before this virus appeared and kills less children than suicide, car crashes or cancer. We applaud Hanover and Culpeper Co in VA, we applaud Pennsylvania, Florida, Texas, South Carolina and other states. They truly understand what freedom of choice means. Keep the mask choice in our county as well!
Aug. 11, 21 -- 4:50: PM	Dana	Carter	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please do not require our children to wear a mask.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 5:23: PM	Alison	Neviaser	Deep run HS area	I'm writing to recommend keeping masks in school optional. It should be the decision of the parents - not the government. People that want to wear a mask can - that's not a problem. But why can't I have a choice too? Go to Breathe Va Facebook page and you will see how many people are for masks optional. I think we are the majority but unfortunately the pro-maskers are much louder than us. Masks optional!!

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 11, 21 -- 6:13: PM	Sherry	B.	Varina District - Alicia S. Atkins	I am a retired Henrico Clinic Att. Every year, it took only 10 days upon the return to school of the children in Sept. , to spread colds, respiratory viruses, stomach virus, rsv, etc. The entire school population was affected. Some parents sent their children to school sick or not. If you don't take a hard stand and require masks, I fear that within 10 days, the school population might just be positive. Don't let others decide this for you. Listen to the science. Some of these Henrico children are immune compromised. Many will disagree, however, the children need to be protected by any means necessary. This decision could become your grave error in judgment.
Aug. 11, 21 -- 6:39: PM	Vishala	Shah	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	We want the virtual option back for the school year 2021 and 2022. Currently HVA is closed and there is a long wait list. What are you all doing to keep kids safe and offer the virtual option
Aug. 12, 21 -- 12:35: AM	Heather	Dawson	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	Hello! As I have already written my school board rep, I will keep this short! Please require universal masking for all, despite vaccination status and without loopholes, for the start of the 2021-2022 school year. Please keep this intact until we see real long term results, where transmission is low. The only way we can ever get rid of this and go back to normalcy is to make sure we are listening to science and forgoing politics. Please keep our students, our staff and our community safe. Please. On another note: It would be wonderful if air purifiers could be issued for all classrooms in HCPS. This is a mitigation strategy that is much more effective than plexiglass, which was futile. Please use money for the school year to provide this layer of protection for our students and staff. This is something that will be a useful tool for a long time, not just a short term solution. We know that there are some things that just can't be done to be able to have in-person school, like social distancing, but these two mitigation strategies would give peace of mind to many. We all want to be back, to not be quarantined, and to have the most normal year we can for our students! Thank you for your time and your service!
Aug. 12, 21 -- 6:58: AM	John	Bowen Jr	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	Please follow the science to keep our kids safe. My sons 9 & 6 are not eligible for the vaccine yet, so masks are their best and truly only defense. Please have the courage to do the right thing.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES

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Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the August 12 work session:
Aug. 12, 21 -- 7:34: AM	Tiffany	Kimbrough MD	Greenwood Elementary	I continue to advocate for Henrico County Public Schools to follow the guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Center for Disease control as it pertains to universal masking for K-12 in the face of rising covid-19 cases. As we have seen in other state, return to school brings individuals together indoors and leads to the spread of upper respiratory infections. One school district in Arkansas has 800 individuals in quarantine from a single school district. Our children have had untold educational, mental and behavioral impacts from interrupted in person education over the last year and a half. Our teachers have worked heroically to minimize these impacts but the challenges remain. Continuing evidenced based, layered protections will help us prioritize continuous in-person instruction for this school year. Many of our children do not have the ability to be vaccinated yet as there is no available product for their age. Lastly, I trust that the board will value the guidance and expertise from healthcare professionals over a vocal minority. It is important that we send the message to our children that education matters.
Aug. 12, 21 -- 8:01: AM	Gwen	Carlson	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	Masks dehumanize our children and adults. Teachers don't even recognize their students out in public. Children need social queues in order to learn. That is the reason they need to get back into the classroom. In addition, cloth and non-medical masks do not work to stop airborne illnesses. Those bought for our children to wear actually contain chemicals that can cause cancer. Studies have proven that levels of Co2 are higher than they should be. We should be more focused on getting the kids additional movement & activity while in school; ensure they are fed healthy breakfasts and lunches and that they learn how to build their own immunity. You are reverting backwards due to threats from our governor. Newly released study released in the journal of Amer Medical association pediatrics section, found that the wearing of nose and mouth coverings by children leads to increased levels of Co2. Findings suggest children should not wear these. published on July 1st.