

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORM RESPONSES
Thursday, February 24, 2022

Timestamp	First Name:	Last Name:	Magisterial District:	Your written comments for the February 24 monthly meeting:
Feb. 9, 22 -- 4:51: PM	Desiree	Hopkins	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please keep masks so students and staff can stay healthy the rest of the year. Keep masks to reduce the spread of Covid. Also please make a statement supporting teachers that may be targeted with Youngkin's tip line.
Feb. 9, 22 -- 8:48: PM	Rachel	Lawrence	Fairfield District - Roscoe D. Cooper, III	I find it outrageous that the School Board and Central Office are ignoring CDC guidelines and even considering lifting the mask mandate at this time. Please do not listen to the vocal minority that oppose masks. The majority of the school population wants to be in school, safely. The School Board should set clear guidelines of when masks can be optional and they should be based on facts - the infection rate, number of hospitalizations in our area. Take politics and emotions out of the issue and look to the numbers to make your decision. Layered mitigation measures only work if all layers are in place. One of the mitigation measures - the cleanliness of our schools - is not in place, due to understaffing of custodial crews. Please increase the hourly rate for these most valuable employees that we all depend upon, to make sure we can attract more folks to fill these positions.
Feb. 9, 22 -- 9:26: PM	Kerri	Rhodes	Work in Varina District at Mehfoud ES	Please do not lift the mask mandate. We are in small classrooms, with poor ventilation and too many students. You are putting staff and students at risk. The CDC still recommends masking in schools and indoor spaces. To pull masks away the minute the numbers start to come down is short sighted and premature. The mental health of children is dependent on the mental health of teachers. There is more than enough stress on teachers plates and this will only add to the disregard we feel for the safety of all involved. Thank you.
Feb. 9, 22 -- 9:33: PM	John	Christmas	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	Due to the new Unmasking VA Kids Law, when is the 1st day it will be enacted? You are unable to hide behind the CDC either. Parents Choice on masks.
Feb. 10, 22 -- 6:55: AM	Elizabeth	Compton	Employed at 5 west end schools	Please keep masking in place until numbers are way down consistently
Feb. 10, 22 -- 7:54: AM	Maggie	Harrington	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea	Please think about our children and not the politics. Keep our kids safe! That is your job!!!!

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Feb. 10, 22 -- 9:25: AM	Daryl	Weade	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	We homeschooled our daughter until all our kids were vaccinated. The mask mandate in her school is a major reason we were comfortable enough to return to in-person in January. Removing the mask while COVID rates remain near an all-time high risks more cases in our schools and communities. Please stop voting on whether to have a mask mandate and set a number for county positivity rates that decides whether students require masks. I fail to understand how school leadership continues to vote yay or nay, which politicizes the decision. Can we please set some numbers? Like if the daily count in the county is below 100 positives, schools can unmask? And if the number rise for five days in a row, they must return to masking? Please put something in place that removes these votes.
Feb. 10, 22 -- 1:37: PM	Lois	Hedberg	Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn	Please follow the science, not politics, in deciding about masks in schools. We are still at a very high level of Covid transmission. The recommendations for masking in indoor spaces is at a positivity rate above 8%. Thank you. Lois Hedberg RN, MSN
Feb. 10, 22 -- 4:33: PM	Kimberly	Bonner	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	I realize you'll be receiving tons of comments from individuals who are angry that their children have to wear masks and some from parents who fear their children will learn facts that might make their children feel embarrassed or guilty (though there's no reason they should), and I want to just let you know there are many other parents and community members who realize that schools have a duty to create a safe learning environment for ALL students and to prepare students to participate in society. If masks allow all students to participate in in-person education, they should remain in place, and all students should follow that rule without exception. If removing them means highly susceptible students can't attend school or that children can't learn because too many teachers are out sick and there is not enough substitute coverage, that means it is obviously not the time yet to make masks optional. As far as any objection to so-called "divisive" topics or curriculum is concerned, or the teaching of uncomfortable historical facts, HCPS would do our society a grave disservice and would fail our students by denying them the opportunity to grapple with controversial topics or by limiting the historical information that they are taught. Critical thinking and problem solving skills can not be developed in an information vacuum and with limited exposure to the viewpoints and experiences of others. To do that would be to hobble our students and fail to prepare them to participate in society. Please stick to your mission!

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Feb. 11, 22 -- 4:41: PM	Jason	Gregory	Don't know. Twin Hickory Elementary	Removing mask mandates is ignorant. There's no way to put it more nicely. There is no body of evidence for this and the last two years of living through this and frankly common sense shows that relaxing the already lax nationwide mitigation measures is always followed by more waves. The current predominant strains are becoming increasingly better at evading antibodies from previous infection and immunization. This isn't just about going to the ICU/dying - covid is a multi-system disease and the longterm fallout from infection(s) are still unknown (what we know now is worrisome). Our country has been a disgrace in its response as one of the worst if not the worst epicenter of preventable covid deaths and infections. Can't wait for my daughter's children to learn in school how callous, corrupt, and weak leadership nationally and locally were during this time.
Feb. 19, 22 -- 7:35: AM	Karina	Bolster	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella, Fairfield District - Roscoe D. Cooper, III, Three Chopt District - Michelle F. Ogburn, Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea, Varina District - Alicia S. Atkins	Pleaser reconsider your plan to require COVID-vaccination and/or weekly testing of spring athletes. In November, you announced you were requiring these for winter sports because "When we look at the winter sports you're talking about coming inside, you're talking about folks being in much closer contact (John Carroll, Specialist for Student Activities, HCPS 11/12/2021)." Spring sports do not occur indoors, they are located outside. You did not require them for fall sports, which also take place outside. Maintaining the requirement for vaccination and/or testing for outdoor sports only serves to discriminate against student athletes who for a variety of defensible reasons are not vaccinated and do not consent to testing in the school setting.
Feb. 19, 22 -- 11:15: AM	Kimberly	Didra	Fairfield District - Roscoe D. Cooper, III	I'd like to express gratitude to the HCPS Transportation drivers and staff who have served during the ongoing driver shortage. In September, the 2nd run pickup times were described as temporary, but we are now well into the second semester. My 2nd run bus riders consistently miss most of their Advisory block. While I realize the great deal of logistics involved in pursuing such a transition, I am hoping HCPS will consider switching 1st and 2nd run routes, particularly at the middle & high school levels.

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Feb. 21, 22 -- 9:04: AM	David	Bender	Tuckahoe District - Marcie F. Shea, My ex-wife is in Tuckahoe	I find half days particularly useless. Very little actually gets accomplished. That Henrico County was the ONLY county in the entire Commonwealth to have school on President's Day is patently ridiculous. The fact that it was a half day makes it even more so. Please eliminate half days entirely. If you find that you are unable to do this, at least limit half days to Fridays, and consider delaying the start time by an hour or two.
Feb. 22, 22 -- 9:17: AM	Jessica	Snodgrass	Brookland District - Kristi B. Kinsella	In regards to the "federal law" that you continue to reference when it comes to requiring masks on school buses, that "law" exempts school buses and intra-city bus services. Executive Order 13998 Sec.2 (a) Mask Requirement (v) intercity bus services; and (vi) all forms of public transportation as defined in section 5302 of title 49, United States Code. US Code title 49 section 5302 (15) The term "public transportation" (b) does not include— (iv) school bus service. I expect the mask requirement for bus riders to be removed from all policies no later than March 1, 2022. For reference: https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/01/26/2021-01859/promoting-covid-19-safety-in-domestic-and-international-travel ; https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title49-section5302&num=0&edition=prelim
Feb. 23, 22 -- 2:11: PM	Nicole	Short	Varina District - Alicia S. Atkins	My request is that we strongly consider instituting the flexible learning days on a weekly or bi-weekly basis - effective immediately. Our students have struggled ALL YEAR with communication and social skills. Instead of conflict resolution and teamwork, our students choose anger, irritation, and extremely aggressive behaviors - all day, every day. MOST schools across the county are experiencing increased rates of physical violence and verbal altercations. And while students are busy fighting and arguing, staff must WORK IN CHAOS and it is EXHAUSTING - physically and emotionally. While it was expected that students would be academically delayed from two years of non-normal schooling, there does not seem to be any recognition of the emotional and social delays that are currently PREVENTING academic enrichment. Where is the plan that speaks toward the mental distress of students, staff and faculty? I would LOVE for HCPS to get back to being the MOST INNOVATIVE county in the area. This MAY be an opportunity.