

GRAND ISLE SUPERVISORY UNION

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16 February 2022

Dear Parents, Guardians & Community members,

Yesterday, Governor Scott announced he will not delay the guidance produced by the Agency of Education and Department of Health several months ago. The guidance states that as of February 28, any school with 80% or more of students vaccinated no longer need to require masking. This is exciting news because it is a clear indication that the COVID-19 conditions in Vermont are improving greatly. This signals the beginning of our transition away from some of our mitigation efforts and is a step toward normalcy and learning to live with COVID-19. At the same time we recognize it can be concerning for some.

Similar to other COVID-19 guidance changes, this announcement requires every school district to consider its local context, review the written guidance, and then provide stakeholders with more detailed information as to how the change will be implemented. As you know, we are on winter break from February 21-28. The governor indicated schools throughout Vermont will likely receive official vaccination rates from the State over the next week. Upon receipt of this data, leaders in the GISU will make a plan for when and how to move forward with expectations for masking. If we receive this data in this timeframe, I anticipate being able to share our plan soon after we return from February break. I am cautiously optimistic that making masks optional could begin soon after we receive data from the state for our schools which have a vaccination rate of more than 80%.

As we have since the beginning of the pandemic, the Champlain Valley Superintendents Association is working collaboratively to think through the many factors that must be considered collectively and independently in order to operationalize this guidance in a thoughtful and sensible way.

The Vermont Department of Health [makes these recommendations](#), regardless of vaccination status. We anticipate that many GISU students and employees will continue to wear masks; and as a community we respect each individual's choice regarding mask wearing. We hope that when the mask mandate for each building is lifted that each individual's decision to wear a mask or not will be supported.

We have lived with shifting COVID safety guidance for the past two years, and as a Supervisory Union, we have done an amazing job keeping each other safe. We are hopeful that this next phase of COVID recovery will allow for more joy and connection while we continue to build a culture of respect and kindness in our buildings. **We will continue with masking at all schools until a new plan is put into place.** I remain grateful for the support you have provided throughout the pandemic and appreciate your patience as we continue forward. Thank you for all you do to continue to make the Islands a wonderful place to live and to learn.

Please see the information from the Covid Dashboard for the last week on the final page.

Community Meeting on February 16, 2022

The access to the Superintendent's weekly Community Meeting is available below. I'm looking forward to talking about the changing masking guidance and celebrating the upcoming break. As always, questions are welcome!

Wednesday, **February 16, 2022**, 6:00 p.m

Join with Google Meet meet.google.com/yzd-szwo-tqi

Join by phone (US) +1 573-349-3062 PIN: 810 989 343#

***Next Community Letter and Meeting will be March 2, 2022 - Happy February Break!**

Thank you for helping to ensure that all members of the GISU learning community are curious, creative, courageous, and capable of pursuing their aspirations in a diverse and ever changing world.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Clark

Grand Isle Supervisory Union, Superintendent

[Grand Isle Supervisory Union Covid Dashboard](#) 2-9-2022 through 2-15-2022

Daily GISU Positive Cases											
School	Date	Pre-k	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th
ACEC	2/15/2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Hero	2/15/2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Grand Isle	2/15/2022		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Folsom	2/15/2022		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ACEC	2/14/2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Hero	2/14/2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Grand Isle	2/14/2022		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Folsom	2/14/2022		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ACEC	2/12 & 2/13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
North Hero	2/12 & 2/13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Grand Isle	2/12 & 2/13		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Folsom	2/12 & 2/13		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ACEC	2/11/2022	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
North Hero	2/11/2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Grand Isle	2/11/2022		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Folsom	2/11/2022		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
ACEC	2/10/2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Hero	2/10/2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Grand Isle	2/10/2022		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Folsom	2/10/2022		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ACEC	2/9/2022	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Hero	2/9/2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Grand Isle	2/9/2022		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Folsom	2/9/2022		0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0