



Mountainside School District

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Mrs. Janet Walling – Superintendent of Schools

June 7, 2021

Mountainside Parents/Guardians & Staff:

I hope that everyone is well as we enter these final two weeks of school. I am writing with important information regarding recent changes received from the state. As many of you are aware, Governor Murphy recently announced a number of changes regarding the current state of emergency. I have received a number of questions about this and would like to clarify how the use of masks, social distancing, and other aspects apply within the school day and at other activities for the remainder of this school year:

- **The removal of the mask mandate that went into effect on May 28th DOES NOT apply to public schools and any of their activities which take place during regular school hours. As such, students, staff, and any visitors are still required to wear face masks and maintain appropriate social distancing (6 feet) when on school property during the regular school day.**
 - The District will take into consideration any extreme heat concerns that may arise if students are outdoors during the final two weeks of school. Should the temperature and humidity levels rise to a level of concern, students will be allowed to participate in outdoor activities without masks as long as they are able to maintain social distancing.
 - Please note that ALL classroom spaces are air conditioned, therefore we do not anticipate any extreme heat concerns when students are inside the classrooms.
- **After School Activities:** The latest Executive Order removes masking and social distancing requirements for certain events that take place outside of the school day, such as graduations and other end of year activities. Additionally, gathering and capacity limits surrounding these events have also been removed. Specifically, this would apply to a variety of upcoming 8th grade activities. Mrs. Richards will be sharing further information as it pertains to those specific events within the next day or so.
 - **Per CDC guidance, individuals who are not fully vaccinated - *defined as two weeks after receiving the second shot of a two-dose vaccination or two weeks after receiving a single-dose vaccination* - are strongly encouraged to continue masking and social distancing at these events.**
 - All students and parents are encouraged to maintain social distancing protocols whenever possible.
 - Further information specific to graduations and other events can be found on the following NJDOE site: <https://www.nj.gov/education/covid19/boardops/commencement.shtml>

I would like to thank many of you for your thoughtful comments and input on the Parent Survey that was sent out last week. We have already received over 250 responses and the administrators and I have spent time reading the many different ideas and thoughts that have been shared regarding this past year and our reopening for September. We will take your thoughts into consideration as we prepare our reopening plan for September.

- Please be aware that we currently HAVE NOT received specific guidance or recommendations for any changes related to September. As such, the required reopening plan, which must be submitted to the NJDOE by June 24th, will reflect many of the current protocols that are in place. The District will continue to adjust our plan throughout the summer in order to address any changes or additional flexibility that may be allowed. It is our goal to provide all students and staff with as “normal” of a school day as possible while maintaining and prioritizing everyone’s health and safety.
- If you have not had the chance to complete your survey, it will remain open until Friday, June 11th, and can be accessed here: Parent Survey - [School Year in Review and 2021 Reopening](#)

I truly appreciate everyone’s support, flexibility, and willingness to adjust to the changing situations in order to **always** keep the health and safety of our entire school community at the forefront of every decision. It is only through our work TOGETHER that we continue to be successful!