

COVID-19 Response Team Meeting Minutes
February 24, 2022

Members Present: Sue Rubbe, RN, Tim Paquette, Kelly Avery, Police Chief Will Ulwick, Fire Chief Steve Heath, Jacqui McGettigan

- **Review of February 18, 2022 minutes:** No changes noted
- **Decision Making Tool:** AES continues to have NO new cases of COVID-19. Based on the Technical Advisory issued by the Commissioner of Education on February 23, 2022, the COVID-19 Response Team has changed the COVID Mitigation Response Level at Ashland Elementary School from Yellow to Blue, resulting in a mask optional policy.
- **Correspondence to Families:** The COVID-19 Response Team reviewed correspondence sent from the Inter-Lakes School District to families regarding the shift to masks optional in the building. Mrs. Avery and Mrs. McGettigan will work on a draft of the AES correspondence and will send to Superintendent Moriarty for approval. Parents will be notified before the end of the day.
- **Next Meeting:** The next COVID-19 Response Team meeting will take place on Friday, March 11, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqui McGettigan
Office Manager

**COVID-19 Decision Making Tool
Ashland Elementary School**

Current Mitigation Response Level as of February 18, 2022	Blue—Low transmission	Yellow—Moderate Transmission	Orange-- Substantial Transmission	Red High Transmission
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Date: February 24, 2022

Local & Statewide COVID - 19 Data Review

Active Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 in School	0
Active Cluster of Cases in School	0
Active Outbreak of Cases in School	0
Number of Pending Known COVID-19 Tests	0
Number of Quarantines	0
Number of Isolations	0
Number of Active Cases in Ashland Last Week	1-4 Active Cases as of 2/15/2022
Number of Active Cases in Ashland	No data available
Grafton County Transmission Level	Data Inconsistent
Data Summary	AES is doing very well leading up to the February break.

Decision Point:
Does the data review warrant a change in response level?
Yes, the COVID-19 Mitigation Response Level will change from yellow to blue, making masks optional effective 2/25/2022.
All in agreement.

Attendance Are staff absences impacting the ability to effectively supervise students? Are staff absences impacting the ability to effectively provide learning opportunities? Are student absences impacting the ability to learn effectively?	
Staff	No
Students	No
Decision Point: Does the data/information on absences warrant a change in response level? No—all in agreement	
Cleaning Supplies	
Status of availability of materials & staff to clean for the next two weeks	Good
Status of availability of materials & staff to clean for the next 2 weeks (or 4 weeks out)	Good
Disposable Masks, Gloves, Disposable Shields/Drapes	Good
Decision Point: Do the current conditions for cleaning warrant a change in response level? No—all in agreement	
Mitigation Efforts	
Face Coverings	Optional as of February 25, 2022
Physical Distancing	Physical Distancing will be encouraged
Hand Washing	Good
Limited Illness at School	Good
Decision Point: Does the level of compliance with mitigation efforts warrant a change in response level? No—all in agreement	

Mitigation Response Level based on transmission levels in the community and the county

Recommended Decision Date: February 24, 2022

Anticipated Recommended Response Level for Next Week

Blue/Masks Optional

Anticipated Recommended Response Level for Next Four Weeks

TBA

<p><i>Subject:</i></p> <p><i>Regarding face coverings in schools</i></p>	<p><i>Legal Reference—Ed 306.04</i></p>
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This Technical Advisory continues the New Hampshire Department of Education’s communication regarding the use of face coverings in schools.

The New Hampshire Division of Public Health updated its recommendations for the use of face coverings on February 23, 2022. This new guidance no longer recommends universal face mask use, in either indoor or outdoor settings, including specifically in school settings.

Prior to the issuance of this new health guidance and since the onset of the pandemic, the Department had maintained that school districts had the authority to require students to wear masks under their own school health and safety policies. See Ed 306.04(a)(2) and (22). Given the new public health guidance released today, however, mask requirements in school policies are inconsistent with the Ed 306 rules. A mask requirement may violate the district’s obligation to maintain policies that “Meet[] the instructional needs of each individual student,” Ed 306.04(a)(6), “[p]romot[e] a school environment that is conducive to learning,” Ed 306.04(11), and that “[m]eets the special physical health needs of students.” Ed 306.04(a)(22). Therefore, consistent with prior public health recommendations, schools should transition to adopt these new public health recommendations as quickly as possible.

For questions related to this Technical Advisory, please contact:

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Issued by:	Date Issued:	Supersedes issue dated:	Page 1 of 1
Frank Edelblut, Commissioner of Education	Feb. 23, 2022		

February 24, 2022

Greetings Ashland Elementary Families and Staff,

Re: Starting tomorrow, Friday, February 25, 2022 – Optional Mask Use

Masks are still required on school transportation as this is a federal mandate through March 18

Masks are still required for individuals returning on Day 6 from isolation due to COVID-19 and required through the completion of Day 10

On Wednesday afternoon, school districts were informed that the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services is no longer recommending universal masking in a school setting. Additionally, it was indicated that based on this new information from NH DHHS continuation of universal masking may violate education rules. Therefore, starting tomorrow February 25, 2022 the Ashland School District will move to optional mask use for individuals. Two exceptions apply:

- Masks are still required on School Transportation as this is a Federal mandate through March 18.
- Mask use will still be required for individuals returning on Day 6 from isolation due to COVID-19 and required through the completion of Day 10.

I understand this is a quick transition for some families. If you have a concern specific to your child's needs, please contact your child's Principal. As you prepare for the upcoming break, I wish your family well – rest, relax, rejuvenate, and read!

Respectfully,

Mary Moriarty, Superintendent