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Divisions
Behavioral Health Services
Primary Health
Public Health
Departmental Administration

County of Sacramento

DATE: March 7, 2022
TO: School Superintendents and School Leaders
FROM: Olivia Kasirye, MD, MS, Public Health Officer *Olivia Kasirye MD*
SUBJECT: Strong Recommendation for Mask Wearing in K-12 Schools after March 11th

COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in California and in Sacramento County have declined significantly since the Omicron surge peaked in early January and the California Department of Public Health projects they will continue to decline. Due to the improved projections, the State of California updated the masking guidance on February 28th to a strong recommendation for everyone, except in certain settings such as public transportation, healthcare, congregate settings and schools (where it remained a universal requirement).

Effective March 12th, the State of California universal masking requirements in K-12 and Childcare settings will transition to a **strong recommendation**. Schools and districts may choose to continue to require masks after March 11th however there will be no statewide or local mandate requiring them. Even though masks will be strongly recommended, some individuals may choose not to wear one and it is important for us to respect each person's decision about wearing or not wearing a mask.

Masks have been our primary COVID-19 mitigation tool in schools this year and they have helped California schools remain open, even when we experienced surges. While masks will no longer be required with this change, please remember that they continue to be **strongly recommended** and I urge you to message your support for this strong recommendation with your students, staff, and parents. Doing so decreases the potential for outbreaks in your schools, limits the likelihood of disruptions to in-person instruction, and most importantly, helps keep members of your school community healthy and safe.

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