



Dear Lowell Families and Community,

The ending of the state mask mandates has created a lot of emotion for our students, staff, families, and community. For some, this is long-awaited, and they feel excited at the prospect of making masking decisions for themselves. For others, whether they are concerned because of their own health related issues, concerns for their friends, families or loved ones, or just because it is another change in an endless cycle of changes, they do not feel comfortable with mask wearing being optional or forgoing masking.

Knowing that we want to act in accordance with the needs and wishes of our staff, students, and families, we created surveys to get a clear understanding of the direction we should move when the state mandate ends, and masking rules are made at the local level. We are aware that any decision made will not be in accordance with the desires of every person. The survey for our staff indicated that 89.9% of those respondents feel that masking should be optional for our staff. A survey sent to our community and families indicated that 95.5% of respondents feel that masking should be optional for students. These are overwhelming numbers and have given us clear direction.

With that being said, on March 12, 2022, masking will be optional for the staff, students, and visitors of Lowell School District. They will no longer be required, outdoors, indoors or on busses. Those students and staff that wish to continue to wear masks are welcome and encouraged to do so. No explanations are needed, and all considerations will be made to ensure that the person wishing to wear a mask is able to do so.

We will continue to make the health and safety of our staff, students, and community a priority.

- We will continue to sanitize our schools and workspaces.
- We will continue to offer COVID testing.
- We will continue to require our staff and our students to monitor their health and to stay home if they exhibit signs or symptoms of illness.
- For those who contract Covid, we will continue to follow the guidelines provided by Lane County Public Health for quarantine requirements.

Per Oregon Department of Education, we will no longer need to quarantine if exposure occurs as long as the exposed person remains asymptomatic. Also due to the rapid transmission of the Omicron variant, contact tracing is no longer practical or necessary.

If you have any additional comments or questions, please feel free to email [info@lowell.k12.or.us](mailto:info@lowell.k12.or.us).

Sincerely,

Johnie Matthews  
Superintendent of Lowell School District