



**DENNIS-YARMOUTH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
AGENDA**

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

**Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School Library
210 Station Avenue
South Yarmouth, Massachusetts 02664**

6:30 p.m.

THIS MEETING WILL ALSO BE ACCESSIBLE TO VIEW REMOTELY:

Channel 22 Live: <https://bit.ly/3IV5MVh>

YouTube Live: <https://bit.ly/3CGdOXR>

Members Present:

Ms. Jeni Landers, Chairperson
Mr. Joseph Tierney, Vice Chairperson
Ms. Jennifer Rose, Secretary
Mr. Phillip Morris, Treasurer
Mr. Joe Glynn
Ms. Marilyn Bemis
Mr. Tomas Tolentino

Administration

Mrs. Carol Woodbury, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. David Flynn, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations
Mrs. Maria Lopes, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services and Instruction
Grace LePain and Kristen Stagg, Student Representatives to the School Committee

- I. Open the Meeting (6:30 p.m.)**

- II. Superintendent/Nurse Leader
Review of Revised DESE Guidance (6:30-6:40)**
Superintendent Carol Woodbury
Nurse Leader Kristin Dwyer
Dr. Kenneth Colmer

- III. Public Comment (6:40-7:10 p.m.)**

- IV. School Committee Business
School Committee Discussion & Vote – Masks**

V. Adjournment

**The items listed to be discussed are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.*

***Please note: The timeframes listed above are intended to guide the School Committee in their work. It should be understood that the times are approximate, and therefore may occur earlier than noted; and may be taken out of order at the request of the Chair and a vote of the School Committee.*

Should there be a need for clarification on any of the aforementioned, please contact me prior to the meeting to allow sufficient time for further research if necessitated. Thank you. Carol A. Woodbury, Superintendent



Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District

Administration Center

296 Station Avenue

South Yarmouth, Massachusetts 02664-1898

Telephone (508) 398-7600

Fax (508) 398-7622

To: Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School Committee
From: Carol A. Woodbury, Superintendent *CAW*
Re: Masks
Date: February 16, 2022

I write to update you on masking in schools. As you may know, The Commissioner will end the mask mandate for schools on February 28th. Decisions can be made on a local level to continue a mask mandate. There will be a school committee meeting on Wednesday, February 16th at 6:30 p.m. at the high school library. This will be the only item on the agenda. There will be a half-hour for public comment followed by the school committee discussion and vote.

If the School Committee votes to end mandatory masking, masks will still be required on buses and in the health office. Bus drivers will have extra masks on hand as will the staff in the nurse's office.

The Commissioner recommends that we discuss this as less masking, not no masking, because masks will be required on buses and in the health office. It is also recommended that unvaccinated individuals and those under five years old continue to mask unless there is a reason they cannot. Even with this recommendation we cannot become the mask police.

Staff members who have tested positive have been asked to notify their school nurse. They should isolate for 5 days. If they do not have symptoms they can return on day six, however, they are required to mask for the next five days. This is the same for students. This is all on the honor system. If a staff member or a family does not tell us that their child was out with COVID we will have no way to "force" masking.

Our weekly testing option for staff members and students continues. Those who did not sign up originally can still opt-in to receive kits to test weekly.

In addition, we are allowed to offer test kits (with two tests) to all staff members for the February break as a one-time option without having to sign up to receive weekly kits in the future. It is recommended that everyone test after the February vacation, ideally Sunday night (2/27) or Monday morning (2/28). They should then follow up with the second test on Thursday (3/3) which is our weekly test date, especially if they travel over the break. Staff members do not need to opt in for this one-time, February vacation request.

The DESE continues to recommend that districts and schools adopt a layered approach to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in school settings. DESE and DPH continue to strongly urge all eligible individuals to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and booster and continue to support

schools with vaccination clinics. Other mitigations include participating in the statewide COVID-19 testing program, maintaining good hand hygiene practices, and staying home when sick. In addition, some students or staff may prefer to continue to mask. They should be allowed to do so without ridicule.

Kristin Dwyer and I participated in the webinar held by DESE on Wednesday, February 9 where they explained the details of this decision and our responsibilities. After the webinar we discussed the details. Since the beginning of the pandemic, as a district, we have followed the DESE guidelines under your direction. It is ultimately a School Committee decision, but we are comfortable with continuing to follow the DESE guidelines as outlined by the Commissioner.

Carol Woodbury

From: Jamie Noone <jnoone@sturgischarterschool.org> on behalf of Jamie Noone
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 1:24 PM
To: woodburc@dy-regional.k12.ma.us
Subject: Mask Mandate

Dear Ms. Woodbury,

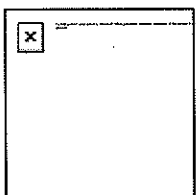
I am writing as a parent of two children in the DY school district to ask you to encourage the school committee members to lift the mask mandate in DY schools.

The threat to our district children's education, and behavioral and mental health far outweighs the threat of covid.

It is time to return to normal. Our children are depending on you to make the right decision.

Kindly, but firmly believing,
Jamie

Jamie Noone
Special Education Department
Sturgis Charter Public High School
East Campus
427 Main Street
Hyannis, MA
02601
508.778.1782 x222
jnoone@sturgischarterschool.org



Carol Woodbury

From: Sarah Conrad-Ferm <sarahconrad@gmail.com> on behalf of Sarah Conrad-Ferm
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 2:59 PM
To: jeni.landiers@dy-regional.k12.ma.us; cslack@yarmouth.ma.us; mbovino Mms; Carol Woodbury
Subject: Re: Ending of the mask mandate.

I would also hope that it would not be dependent on weekly testing or vaccination status.

On Wed, Feb 9, 2022 at 2:57 PM New User <sarahconrad@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear School Board, Board of Health Committee, School Super Intendant and Matacheese Principal,
I am voicing my support to end the mask mandate for schools. I hope logic will prevail over fear and that our children can breathe again and live normal lives again.
-Sarah Conrad-Ferm

Carol Woodbury

From: Raymond-Katie Castano <rkcastano@me.com> on behalf of Raymond-Katie Castano
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 4:49 PM
To: Carol Woodbury
Cc: whalene@dy-regional.k12.ma.us
Subject: End of the month

Good afternoon Carol,

I wanted to briefly communicate with you regarding today's announcement from Governor Baker and the DESE commissioner. As a non-union member teacher at Dennis-Yarmouth High School, I wanted to reach out with my voice which may differ from the DYEА and associated unions. It is well-past the time for unmasked learning in our district. As a parent in Yarmouth, I am part of the larger community of parents in our district who all feel the same way. With today's announcement, there are many sighs of relief that students will now see the faces of their instructors and see each others' faces. It is my belief that if the state believes it's time to unmask our schools, you can be sure it's well past time for it. Data to support this claim: my two Concert Band class meetings where students rehearse their instruments side by side has had 100% attendance for 5 weeks in a row and still counting! Yes, you read that right; two separate classes meeting 3 days a week. Students playing wind instruments in the same room unmasked have been successfully rehearsing for over a month and consequently, they sound amazing these days! ;) This is the sort of information the state has been seeing that has them dropping the mandate.

It's also my hope that our district will appropriately encourage the transition to an unmasked student body and unmasked teaching staff. This will be a difficult transition for some, for sure, but wisdom demands we take the right path. And under your leadership, I trust you will help lead the way.

Thank you,
Ray Castano
DY parent and educator
(508) 237-5914

Carol Woodbury

From: Kerry Cox <kval714@yahoo.com> on behalf of Kerry Cox
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2022 7:52 AM
To: Carol Woodbury
Subject: Mandate

Hi Carol, I'm writing to you as a parent and employee of the district. With the state dropping the mask mandate, I am urging DY follow the guidance of the state and make our mask policy optional. Let parents be parents and make the choice for our children. We have already done immeasurable damage to these kids in the name of fear. Enough is enough. Thank you

Kerry Cox

Sent from my iPhone

Carol Woodbury

From: Lori Dumont <lori.dumont@comcast.net> on behalf of Lori Dumont
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2022 10:46 AM
To: jeni.landiers@dy-regional.k12.ma.us; Carol Woodbury
Subject: Unmasking in DY District

Good Day!!

I'm writing to voice my extreme pleasure at the prospect of allowing the children in the Dennis Yarmouth Regional District to attend school unmasked as of February 28th.

I understand the Dennis Yarmouth School Committee will have discretion to continue the current restrictive mask policy or to finally allow students the right to breathe freely, communicate properly, and finally see the faces of their teachers and friends.

Please allow parents the choice to decide for our own families and discontinue the mask policy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lori Dumont
Parent

Carol Woodbury

From: Megan Mahan <mugsie0122@aol.com> on behalf of Megan Mahan
Sent: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 12:09 PM
To: woodburc@dy-regional.k12.ma.us
Subject: Nonrenewal of Mask Mandate

Dear Ms. Woodbury,

Numerous times throughout the year I have contacted you regarding my concern of the covid restrictions placed on our children. Your response has always been that your hands have been tied because the restrictions come from the State and the DESE. I have done my due diligence contacting these agency's frequently throughout the year to get these restrictions off our children. With the encouraging news of today's announcement regarding the mask mandate, I am hoping you will allow masking our children to be a parental choice. It is time for our children and teachers to start seeing and connecting with their peers and getting a scene of normalcy back to their lives.

Please support parental choice and lift the mask mandate for the DY district.

Thank you,

Megan Mahan

Carol Woodbury

From: Olivia brown <livbrown91@gmail.com> on behalf of Olivia brown
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2022 7:05 PM
To: Carol Woodbury
Subject: Mask mandate end

Good evening Carol I hope this email finds you well,

I am ecstatic to hear that the state of Massachusetts is no longer requiring the masking of our children after February 28th. I am however reaching out considering the district itself is given the opportunity to extend the mandate on their own, and I am here to celebrate your chance to go without the masks. No longer is it about funding or the decision of the board of education as you said in our last email you said 'I would love to stop all of it' here is our chance. As a community, as educators and as parents we have a chance and opportunity to do what our children DESERVE. They have suffered more than they ever should have regarding their education and learning environment. I can not stress enough how hopeful I am that the Dennis Yarmouth district will take our children into consideration and not move forward continuing masking and do the right thing.

Sincerely Olivia Brown

Sent from my iPhone

Carol Woodbury

From: Lindsay Pietro <pietrolindsay@gmail.com> on behalf of Lindsay Pietro
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2022 8:38 PM
To: woodburc@dy-regional.k12.ma.us
Subject: Masks

Good evening Carol,

As you evaluate whether the district should require masks in school, I thought I would let you know my personal opinion as a parent. Thankfully, both of my kids are vaccinated and in good health, and I would be all for letting the kids express themselves and get back some more normalcy at school. (To be able to smile at a friend or read the teacher's lips to not misunderstand a direction!) I know you have many opinions coming your way, just thought I would let you know of my perspective.

Thank you for all that you do and I hope you are well, Lindsay Pietro

Sent from my iPhone

Carol Woodbury

From: Kimberly Fitzgerald <kimfitz101814@gmail.com> on behalf of Kimberly Fitzgerald
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2022 7:36 AM
To: jeni.landiers@dy-regional.k12.ma.us; jennifer.rose@dy-regional.k12.ma.us;
joe.glynn@dy-regional.k12.ma.us; joseph.tierney@dy-regional.k12.ma.us;
marilyn.bemis@dy-regional.k12.ma.us; phillip.morris@dy-regional.k12.ma.us;
tomas.tolentino@dy-regional.k12.ma.us
Cc: woodburc@dy-regional.k12.ma.us
Subject: Please Follow State Guidance and End the Mask Mandate

Good morning,

I hope you are all well. I am a DY Alumni and the parent of a Kindergartener at SAE. My daughter Evelyn loves school and I'm sooo grateful for that.

When I received the information that the state was lifting the state wide mask mandate on 2/9/2022, I had an overwhelming feeling of relief and hope for our children. I am so excited for my daughter to see her friends and educators smiles and for them to see hers. This is hopefully be one step closer to our children having a normal educational experience like you and I did.

I know you are aware of the pros and cons of children wearing masks in the school setting as you all have been knee deep in these discussions for the last two years so I'll spare you my rant on that.

*** But I need you to know that I am pleading with you to continue to follow state guidance as you have until now and discontinues mask use ASAP. *** These children are in desperate need of a return to normalcy. Not a new norm, the old norm.

Sincerely,
Kimberly Fitzgerald
Parent and Licensed Certified Social Worker

Carol Woodbury

From: Tatiana Nickinello <tnickinello@comcast.net> on behalf of Tatiana Nickinello
Sent: Monday, February 14, 2022 9:16 AM
To: jeni.landiers@dy-regional.k12.ma.us; joseph.tierney@dy-regional.k12.ma.us;
phillip.morris@dy-regional.k12.ma.us; marilyn.bemis@dy-regional.k12.ma.us;
joe.glynn@dy-regional.k12.ma.us; jennifer.rose@dy-regional.k12.ma.us;
tomas.tolentino@dy-regional.k12.ma.us; woodburc@dy-regional.k12.ma.us
Subject: Lift Mask Mandate

Hello Superintendent Woodbury and members of the School Committee,

My name is Tatsiana Nickinello, I am a parent of middle school and elementary-aged children who attend school here at DYRSD. I am writing in support of removing mask mandate at DY schools on February 28, 2022. We have gone along with the mandate long enough despite the mounting evidence that masks did not prove to be effective in preventing COVID-19 as it was hoped by the authorities. We are harming the children by prolonging these fruitless efforts.

I believe that children today deserve to have a positive school time, free of the unnecessary and oppressive pandemic restrictions that dramatically diminish their school experience. There is mounting evidence that masks are unhealthy for children in various ways: social-emotional, developmental, physical and many more other areas, ranging from children inhaling micro particles on disposable masks, bacteria from moisture and exposure, to permanently deforming ears from mask loops especially in young children. I believe the state recognized the other, sadly, harmful side of the preventative efforts, and in the absence of direct danger to public is advising on lifting the mandate. I ask you to do the same, and stop the mask mandate at DY.

Thank you for your time,

Tatsiana Nickinello

Carol Woodbury

From: Meaghan McFall <meaghanmcfall@comcast.net> on behalf of Meaghan McFall
Sent: Saturday, February 12, 2022 7:38 AM
To: jeni.landiers@dy-regional.k12.ma.us; joseph.tierney@dy-regional.k12.ma.us;
jennifer.rose@dy-regional.k12.ma.us; phillip.morris@dy-regional.k12.ma.us;
marilyn.bemis@dy-regional.k12.ma.us; joe.glynn@dy-regional.k12.ma.us;
tomas.tolentino@dy-regional.k12.ma.us; woodburc@dy-regional.k12.ma.us
Subject: End Masks as suggested

Good Morning,

I am a Yarmouth resident, parent of a 4th grader, a 6th grader and also a 3rd grade teacher in the DY District. I'm writing to urge you to continue to follow the guidance from the state as you have been doing through the pandemic and end the mask mandate in our schools.

Although triple vaccinated, and masked at school, my family of 4 all had Covid over Christmas break. We were very lucky to only experience cold like symptoms as many are with this variant. In addition, 16/18 of my students were also positive during this recent surge.

The mask mandate was in place when it was necessary. As this surge subsides, the virus changes and lessons in severity, so too should the restrictions.

On Wednesday night, please vote to end the mask mandate.
Thank you for your time and support for our schools.

Sincerely,
Meaghan McFall

Carol Woodbury

From: Robert Converse <rconverse3107@icloud.com> on behalf of Robert Converse
Sent: Saturday, February 12, 2022 7:10 AM
To: woodburc@dy-regional.k12.ma.us
Subject: Masks

I just wanted to write you as a father of a first grader at the Baker school that I fully support the DESE decision to lift masking at schools on February 28th.
Sincerely, Robert Converse

Sent from my iPhone

Carol Woodbury

From: Ean Macpherson <eanmacpherson@gmail.com> on behalf of Ean Macpherson
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2022 10:22 AM
To: Carol Woodbury
Subject: Mask mandate

Good Morning Carol

Looks like we got what we all were hoping for! After the 28th I will hopefully be telling my daughter she can finally remove the mask. it's been long overdue and I know she will be very happy with the news. That is if yourself and the school board does the right thing and does not continue the unnecessary mandate.

Do you have any insight on what the ultimate decision will be? Will there be a public meeting on the issue before the 28th? From your past statements, it sounds like you will do the right thing but I need to make arrangements if for some reason this continues we may go a different route.

The news of the mandate being ended was a big relief for me and many others, please do the right thing! not just for me, my daughter or other parents but please do the right thing for the children of your district. masks must be optional!

Thank you
Ean