

# BOLTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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February 11, 2022

Dear Parents and Staff,

During Governor Lamont's press conference on Monday, February 7, 2022, he recommended that the State Legislature extend the DPH and CSDE Commissioner's authority to mandate that masks be worn in schools until February 28, 2022. Should the State Legislature approve his recommendation, the state mask mandate would end on that date. If the State Legislature does not approve the extension, the last day of the statewide mask mandate in schools will be Tuesday, February 15, 2022. Yesterday, the General Assembly convened and discussed House Bill 5047. The House passed the bill and the Senate is scheduled to vote on the bill this coming Monday, February 14, 2022. If adopted as currently written, the Department of Public Health Commissioner will be authorized to rescind the statewide mask mandate in schools effective February 28, 2022. Further, the proposed legislation preserves the state's authority to reinstate the statewide mask mandate in schools between February 28 and June 30, 2022 if health metrics warrant such a change. Please note at this time under federal order, students will still be required to wear masks on the school bus to and from school.

Last night at their regular meeting, the Bolton Board of Education determined that if the legislature decides to not extend the state mask mandate in schools beyond Tuesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, the Board will hold a Special Meeting on Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at 6:00 PM via Zoom to discuss whether or not to continue the mask mandate in the Bolton Public Schools beyond February 15, 2022. To join the February 15<sup>th</sup> BOE Zoom Meeting please go to:

<https://boltonct-org.zoom.us/j/82810097096?pwd=ZVJCb1NWeFBsUWIST1dBbDV1emM3UT09>

Meeting ID: 828 1009 7096

Passcode: 269664

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Further, if the legislature approves the aforementioned bill to extend the state mask mandate in schools until February 28, 2022, the February 15<sup>th</sup> BOE Special Meeting will be canceled. I will communicate via School Messenger prior to the meeting on Tuesday, February 15<sup>th</sup> whether or not the meeting will occur. The Board of Education also determined at their meeting last night that if this happens they will then add to their February 24, 2022 Zoom Budget Meeting an agenda item on whether or not to continue the mask mandate in the Bolton Public Schools beginning on February 28, 2022. To join the February 24<sup>th</sup> BOE Zoom Meeting please go to:

<https://boltonct-org.zoom.us/j/87344284761?pwd=SXpib01waklHaDFGdWUybzY3VUxGQT09>

Meeting ID: 873 4428 4761

Passcode: 179909

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The Board and I value public comment and members of the public and the school community are encouraged to attend Board of Education meetings. Please note that Per Board of Education Bylaw 9325, comments will be limited to a maximum of three minutes per individual. All comments are directed to the Board. Members of the public wishing to speak at a meeting will be asked to please state their name and address for the record. All speakers must maintain appropriate standards of decorum and inappropriate conduct will be grounds for termination of that individual's right to address the Board. Please also note that public comment during a meeting is not a question and answer period. Response at the time of public comment is not part of the Board's procedure.

As a point of reference, this school year the Bolton Public Schools has had 193 (21%) confirmed positive COVID cases, however, there are likely some unreported cases. Although we have parents that know first-hand that they have needed to seek medical attention for their children due to COVID, thankfully, we have had no deaths of school age children or staff. Currently, the vaccination rates for school age children in Bolton are at 42% for ages 5 – 11 and 71% for ages 12 – 17. The vaccination rate for Bolton Public Schools staff is 96% and it is 50% for our bus drivers. The Town of Bolton's most recent two week reported COVID positivity rate for January 23 through February 5, 2022 was 12.1%.

At all times throughout the pandemic, the Bolton Public Schools has followed health experts' advice from the DPH and the Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD) related to our mitigation measures. By doing so, we prioritized the health and safety of all members of our school district community and successfully mitigated against the spread of illness in our schools while providing high-quality instruction throughout the pandemic. This approach has and continues to benefit all members of our school district community during a complex and ever-evolving global pandemic.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Sincerely,

*Kristin B. Heckt*

Kristin B. Heckt  
Superintendent of Schools