



January 20, 2022

Dear Rockbridge County Families,

Rockbridge County Public Schools (RCPS) believes it is critical for students to be in school on a regular basis, five days a week for full school days. Unfortunately, last school year we observed the learning loss that takes place when students move to a virtual learning environment, and we endeavor to avoid further learning loss as much as we possibly can. The academic, social, and emotional benefits of being physically in school are critical to our student's development. Therefore, RCPS will continue to follow the language in Senate Bill 1303 (text below) and continue our current practice of requiring masks during the school day, as one of the layered prevention strategies provided by the CDC, with the exceptions the division has previously recognized including eating, drinking, or taking mask breaks.

While RCPS understands there are different positions on mask wearing, we believe that to continue the division's success in keeping our students and staff members safe and physically in school for as long as possible, masks need to be worn throughout the school day by all persons within RCPS facilities.

Virginia Senate Bill 1303 states:

***Each school board shall...provide such in-person interaction in a manner that adheres, to the maximum extent practicable, to any currently applicable mitigation strategies for early childhood care and education programs and elementary and secondary schools to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 that have been provided by the federal Centers for Diseases Control and prevention.***

RCPS and the Rockbridge County School Board appreciate the cooperation and support of our staff, students, and families as we work to ensure in-person instruction remains available and as safe as possible for everyone.

Sincerely,

Phillip Thompson, Ed.D.  
Division Superintendent