

August 17, 2021

Dear Chardon Parent/Guardian:

We realize that students wearing masks in schools has become a divisive issue in our community. We are looking at a possible creative option to meet the preferences of Chardon families. We are **considering** offering fully-masked classrooms at the elementary school level (grades 1-3) for students choosing to wear masks all of the time. It is important to understand that each grade level band brings unique questions that will need to be addressed as we proceed.

If there is enough interest and we are able to provide this option, we are not guaranteeing a 100% masked environment at all times. Students may interact with others not wearing masks at lunch, recess, in common areas, and possibly in individual classes (e.g. Band, specials, etc.).

We will only be able to provide this option if enough students opt-in. We are planning one classroom of fully-masked option at the kindergarten level. However, we will need approximately 25 students in each grade-level (1-3) at each building to make this option viable at Park and Munson.

Please understand that if we are able to offer this option, this will require potentially changing the classroom assignments of both masked and unmasked students to balance classroom sizes. We do not have the opportunity to add staff or classrooms due to facility limitations. The District may also be limited in our ability to offer this fully-masked setting by special-education and other programming requirements.

We are not considering this approach at CHS. High school students are eligible to receive the vaccine, and Credit Flex options are available on a case-by-case basis for families interested in virtual high school classes.

This option does not change our responsibility to follow any future mandate regarding masking for all students in schools.

If you are interested in a fully-masked classroom for your GRADE 1-3 child, please mark YES in this form. ([HERE](#))

If you are not interested in a fully-masked classroom for your GRADE 1-3 child, no action is required.

If you are interested in this option for more than one GRADE 1-3 child in your family, please submit the form for each child.

If this option is possible, we will begin filling GRADE 1-3 classroom(s) on a first-come-first-served basis using the time stamp on the opt-in response.

Please understand that this is only an idea at this time. We will communicate again as it becomes clear whether we have enough opt-in for us to make this happen at the kindergarten level and if we can scale this up to other grade levels.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Hanlon, Jr., Ph.D.
Superintendent

FULLY-MASKED OPTION FAQ

Is this a “vote” on masking in schools?

No. This is an opt-in for a fully-masked classroom option at the elementary and middle school levels.

What if the target number of students choosing a masked classroom is not reached at each grade level and/or school building?

Then the District will not be able to offer a fully-masked classroom.

What is a "target number" of students at each grade level and/or school building in order to determine if the District can offer a mask environment?

The number of students needed to offer a fully-masked classroom differs by grade level, and building. The important factor will be how enrollment in a fully-masked classroom will affect the teacher-to-student ratio in all classrooms at that grade level.

Will the staff interacting with students in the fully-masked classroom wear masks?

Yes. We are currently identifying teaching staff interested in this role.

If I am interested in this option for my child, and the District is able to offer this, will my child have to remain in this classroom assignment all school year?

Yes. The important factor will be how enrollment in a fully-masked classroom will affect the teacher-to-student ratio in all classrooms at that grade level.

My child receives special education services and we are interested in this option, how will he/she be affected?

We may not be able to provide all programming in a fully-masked setting. Our first priority is to meet the Individualized Educational Plan for the child in the appropriate setting.

My child is in gifted/accelerated classes and we are interested in this option, how will he/she be affected?

We may not be able to provide all programming in a fully-masked setting.

Will my child have separate school transportation?

No. While on school transportation, all students and staff must wear a mask.