

February 15, 2022

Dear Vermont Superintendents, Principals and School Board Associations:

In response to requests from school districts, the leadership team of the AAP-VT Chapter is providing updated recommendations for masking in schools should state masking guidance from the Agency of Education change.

In the summer and fall of 2021 the AAP-VT chapter [recommended](#) "continued universal masking regardless of vaccination status or school vaccination rate for students and staff until those under 12 years of age have had the opportunity to be vaccinated and when epidemiologic data tells us it is safe to remove masks." As unvaccinated or un-boosted children were indoors in school for many hours a day, we believed that additional precautions needed to be taken above what was recommended for the general public. Since that time, students 5-11 years of age have had the opportunity to be vaccinated and those over the age of 12 years have had the opportunity to receive a booster dose. As such, both the school population and environment now more closely reflect that of their surrounding communities.

Accordingly, we recommend the following approach to masking in schools:

- Students and staff should follow the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) masking recommendations for the general public found [here](#). Currently, the VDH recommends masking in public indoor settings regardless of vaccination status. If the VDH changes masking recommendations in the community, schools should mirror those recommendations.
- Additionally, those in in the school environment should continue to mask in accordance with current [protocols](#). Particular attention should be made to masking recommendations after infection with or exposure to COVID-19 in the school, community, or household setting
- Well-fitting, high-quality masks are most effective at reducing transmission and should be made available to students and staff.
- Students who are sick should stay home and follow [VDH health guidance](#) on return to school after illness.

As always, we appreciate the extraordinary work of school administrators, educators, and school nurses in promoting the health of children and adolescents in Vermont.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Rebecca Bell', written in black ink.

Rebecca Bell, MD
President