

Cheektowaga-Sloan Union Free School District

Mrs. Andrea L. Galenski
Superintendent of Schools
(716) 891-6402



Board of Education
Denise McCowan - President
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March 4, 2022

Dear Cheektowaga-Sloan Community,

I would like to begin by sharing what an incredible past few days we have had. Our students have demonstrated true respect and understanding for one another. They recognize that while some students are no longer wearing masks, others are and we are here to support one another in this process. We have remarkable students who appreciate differences and this is just another example of how our students recognize that and have proven it through their supportive actions. I am so proud of our Cheektowaga-Sloan Students!

I wanted to share some updates with our community as a result of further guidance that we received from the Department of Health this past Wednesday evening.

First, please note that there is one remaining situation where masks are required. According to the Department of Health, individuals who have tested positive for COVID must wear a mask through the 10th day following the date of their initial isolation. (For example, on days 1-5, you would be at home, and on days 6-10 it is required that you wear a mask if you return to school.) This is consistent with the State's general procedures for returning from isolation and is not limited to schools. It just has not been a specific issue for schools before, since everyone was required to wear a mask in all situations.

Below is a summary of how the latest guidance will affect protocols we have been using here in Cheektowaga-Sloan. It is important to emphasize that the guidance represents an obvious shift in how school districts approach COVID. It is made clear that as case numbers drop while treatments and prevention strategies have become more available, the guidance gives schools the ability to assume more normal operations.

Masking: To review, students and staff are no longer required to wear masks in school settings (including buses). The only exception is for students or staff who have tested positive for COVID. If they return to school after 5 days of isolation, they must wear a mask on days 6-10. If any child requires a mask, we have them readily available in the Nurse's Office.

Symptomatic Individuals: If students or staff show signs of COVID, they will need to continue following the same process for returning to school. All of these protocols are posted on our website for your convenience. A very important change is that we will now be accepting negative results from home tests in addition to antigen or PCR tests.

166 Halstead Avenue • Sloan, New York 14212-2295 • www.cheektowagasloan.org

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Testing: Since exposed students, regardless of vaccination status, are no longer required to stay home from school, we will be discontinuing our "Test-to-Stay" program.

COVID At-Home Tests: For the convenience of our families, if a child is showing symptoms of COVID at school, our nurses have been provided with a supply of At-Home COVID Tests and will be prepared to send home a free test kit when parents come to pick up their child. This should make it easier for parents to then test their children at home and as mentioned before, we are now able to accept negative results from home tests. We hope this is helpful to our families.

Daily Health Screener: We have kept this process in place as a precautionary measure; however, it has not been required for quite some time. As a result of this most recent guidance and the relaxation of the various protocols in schools, we will no longer be requiring families and staff to use the daily health screener beginning on Monday, March 7, 2022. Thank you for continuing to monitor your children for any COVID symptoms and for keeping them home if necessary. Again, if you need a free test kit, please contact the school nurse and you will be provided with one.

Friday Reporting of Positive COVID Cases: This protocol has not been required for quite some time as well; however, we have continued to inform our community each Friday about the number of positive cases in each school. As we move to more normal daily operations in our schools, we will no longer be communicating this information each Friday. If, for some reason, we recognize an increase in positive cases, we will begin this process again so that our community is informed. Please know that we will continue to record all positive cases in our system as monitoring this data is very important to us.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend the deepest gratitude to our families, students, community, teachers and staff who have been incredibly supportive throughout this pandemic. It is with such pride and honor to boast about the community we have here in Cheektowaga-Sloan that has carried themselves with grace, support, respect and trust in us. Please reach out to us with any questions that you may have. We are here to support everyone and work together as team now and into the future.

Sincerely,

Andrea L. Galenski

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