



To: All Whitman-Hanson Regional School District Families and Staff
From: Superintendent Jeffrey Szymaniak
Date: February 11, 2022
Subject: **Important updates from the Superintendent**

**~Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Announcement~
Mask Mandate will not be renewed on February 28**

Yesterday, the Governor held a press conference with DESE Commissioner Riley and announced that the mask mandate in K-12 schools would not be renewed on February 28th. DESE recommends that all unvaccinated students and staff wear a mask indoors. **Students and staff riding a bus or using the health centers or clinics will still be required to wear a mask.** DESE also indicated that lifting the state mandate allows for local control of masking for students and staff. At the Whitman-Hanson School Committee meeting last night, I made the recommendation to have Whitman-Hanson follow the DESE/DPH protocols, as we have done since the beginning of the pandemic. The School Committee agreed. After February 28th, students and staff may continue to wear a mask in our schools if they so choose but it will no longer be required.

~DESE District Report Cards~

Every year, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education releases a report card for each school and district in the state.

What is the purpose of the school report cards?

Massachusetts is required by federal law to annually produce information about school performance for families and communities. Just as a student's report card shows how they are doing in different classes, school and district report cards are designed to show parents and community members how a school or district is doing in different areas. Report cards highlight a school or district's strengths as well as any challenges that need to be addressed in order to make sure the needs of all students are being met. The District may distribute electronic copies of school report cards to families. Hard copies of report cards should be distributed to families that request them.

- The District will post links to report cards on the school & district websites
- The DESE link may be found here at <https://reportcards.doe.mass.edu/>

~COVID-19 Antigen Test Kits~

For parents that have signed up their children for the new weekly rapid at home antigen test program: **The next pick up is Saturday, February 19 between 9:00 am-1:00 pm at the high school.** Please enter the building through Performing Arts Center entrance and go to the Snack Shack window by the gym to pick up your test kit. Test picks are to be picked up every other week (3/5, 3/19, etc.)

Thank you.

Jeff
Jeffrey Szymaniak
Superintendent of Schools