

PINE PLAINS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

2829 CHURCH STREET • PINE PLAINS, NEW YORK 12567-5504

TEL: (518) 398-7181 FAX: (518) 398-6592

WWW.PPCSD.ORG

June 4, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians:

I am writing to update you on several important developments affecting the schools.

I have attached a letter from Mr. Greg Ransom, Executive Director for Section IX Athletics. The flexibility with regard to mask at outdoor athletic contests is something that we have been asking for continuously over the past weeks. We have instructed our coaches to make maximum use of this guideline.

Similarly, though Mr. Ransom has no authority over the instructional day, it makes sense to me to apply the same approach to our outdoor activities, for example recess and outdoor physical education. I have asked the principals to give that direction to their staff members. Please note, this does not change the mask mandate for indoor activities nor does it change the requirements for end of year activities such as graduation, at this time.

I must point out that increased flexibility in mask requirements make it even more important that parents do their part in keeping home any student who exhibits any of the symptoms on our health screener. If those symptoms do not resolve in one or two days, a healthcare provider should be contacted.

One final word on vaccinations, I believe the increasing flexibility that we are experiencing is a result of the significant number of people who have been vaccinated against COVID 19. The infection rate in Dutchess County has been reduced from near double digits a few months ago, to less than one percent. This is great news!

The District will continue to offer information on the availability of vaccination clinics. We have held three clinics at our high school and have a final clinic scheduled for June 13th to administer the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine. If there is a demand for an additional clinic, we will offer one over the summer. The decision to have this vaccination is a personal one for adults and a decision for parents of those under the age of 18.

Finally, I have been asked numerous times what I think school will look like in September. At this juncture, we do not know. We will follow the NY State regulations as they are at that time. It is my sincere hope that if the infection rates continue to drop, we will be back to at least a near normal.

Thank you again for your continued cooperation and support.

As always, be well and stay safe.

Dr. Martin D. Handler
Superintendent

MDH/jwt

Attachment



Section IX Athletics

Gregory P. Ransom, Executive Director

To: All Section IX Schools
Re: Masks, NYSDOH Guidelines, and Heat Index
Date: June 3, 2021

As we approach the last week and a half of the spring season, the weather forecast for the next week is predicated for many days in the 90's. The NYSDOH Guidelines for wearing masks has not changed, but the guidelines do state the following: "individuals must wear acceptable face coverings, unless players are unable to tolerate a face covering for the physical activity". I think we can all agree our athletes and officials in 90-degree heat will be unable to safely tolerate a face covering and be at too high a risk for heat exhaustion or heat stroke. I cannot waive the face covering guidelines of the NYSDOH but recommend you use the "as tolerated" portion of the NYSDOH Guidelines allowing for common sense to prevail and protect our athletes, officials, and spectators from the excessive heat.

We must also be mindful of the real feel temperature regulations of NYSPHSAA. If the real feel temperature reaches 96 or higher all practices and games must be stopped. Play and practice can resume once the real feel temperature drops to 95 or lower.

It has been a most challenging year and I am sure we all want to end it on a positive note for our athletes, coaches, officials, and parents. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience.