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Dear Voorhees Community,

As many of you are aware, on June 29, 2021, Governor Murphy announced that facemasks for students would not be mandated for the 2021-2022 school year. At the time of that announcement, there were 134 positive Covid-19 cases in NJ. Unfortunately, over the past six weeks, we have seen an alarming shift in positive cases throughout the country and the state. We also see an increasing number of positive Covid-19 (Delta Variant) cases among our younger populations.

[Persichilli: COVID-19 Increase in Children is Troubling - New Jersey Business Magazine \(njbmagazine.com\)](https://www.njmagazine.com/news/persichilli-covid-19-increase-in-children-is-troubling-new-jersey-business-magazine/)

- On July 19, 2021, the American Academy of Pediatrics announced that **all** students should continue wearing face coverings when schools reopen in September.
- [COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools \(aap.org\)](https://www.aap.org/covid-19-guidance-for-safe-schools).
- On July 27, 2021, the CDC also announced that **all** students and staff should continue wearing face coverings when schools reopen in September.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>
- On July 29, 2021, the Camden County Department of Health recommended that all school districts follow the CDC guidelines.
- August 6, 2021, Governor Murphy announced masks will be required for all staff and students in grades k-12.
- August 8, 2021, Camden County entered the “Red” category indicating a high transmission rate.

Due to this new guidance, the Voorhees Township School District will require all students and staff to continue wearing face coverings for the start of the 2021-2022 school year. We recognize that we have families on both sides of this issue. We also acknowledge that due to our mitigation practices during the 2020-2021 school year, we avoided severe Covid outbreaks within our schools.

As a district, we want our students in-person as much as possible and look to reduce the chances of being forced to quarantine entire classrooms, grade levels, or buildings. Together the Voorhees Township Community has come too far in this health crisis to turn back now. We thank you in advance for your support and cooperation.

Respectfully,

Michael T. Redfearn
Acting Superintendent