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James F. Lane, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUPERINTENDENT'S EMAIL

Contact: John Hendron, 804-225-4387

DATE: August 12, 2021
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUPT'S EMAIL: New State Health Commissioner Public Health Order Re: Masks in Virginia Schools

Today the State Health Commissioner issued [a Public Health Order](#) requiring all students, teachers, staff, and visitors age 2 and older to wear a mask indoors in private and public K-12 school settings, regardless of vaccination status. This is consistent with [the latest recommendations from the CDC](#) for mask use by students and staff in school settings regardless of vaccination status; and the rapidly growing number of COVID cases in Virginia, largely attributed to the highly contagious Delta variant.

The Order applies to both public and private schools, and applies to all individuals age 2 and older inside school buildings. The Order includes a variety of exemptions, as had been previously included.

The Order is a complement to [state law requiring school boards to provide in-person instruction in public schools](#) in a way that adheres, to the maximum extent practicable, to CDC mitigation strategies.

Additionally, the VDH and VDOE guidance ([Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in PreK-12 Schools](#)) has been updated to reflect recent changes to CDC guidance and this public health order.

For more information

- [August 12 Public Health Order](#)
- [VDOE COVID-19 Resources for the 2021-2022 School Year](#)
- [VDH Guidance for Schools](#)
- [CDC Guidance for Schools](#)

For more information please contact Holly Coy, Assistant Superintendent of Policy, Equity and Communications at holly.coy@doe.virginia.gov.

JFL/HMC