

August 12, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It is almost time for our first day of school and we are looking forward to this day with great excitement. Unfortunately, the pandemic remains, and important safety measures must stay in place. Keeping our students and staff safe is our first priority.

I realize there are many different points of view regarding the COVID rules and restrictions. Frustrations are plentiful and all of us would like nothing more than to return to normal. We will get back to normal but it is going to take some time, and until then, keeping everyone safe is our top priority.

We kept much of the pandemic at bay by following the guidelines provided by the Governor, Department of Health, and the Wareham Board of Health through last year. Currently, the Wareham Board of Health is mandating that all must wear masks when in Wareham Public Schools and on buses; this is regardless of vaccination status. Face masks are not required when outside. As a Town entity we are compelled to follow their mandates. As stated earlier, keeping our students and staff safe is our first priority.

Our School Committee will be discussing masks at their next meeting as they will be making the final decision regarding the wearing of masks. As we approach the August 26th School Committee meeting, our Committee would ask you to complete the following survey as I gather information to share.

<https://forms.gle/TerdLMNeCwDWonBE6>

Below are some questions which have been asked. I will continue to add the FAQ as we continue to field questions.

Thank you and I appreciate your time and input.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kimberly B. Shaver-Hood

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is there an option for remote learning?

*No, the Commissioner of Education issued on May 27, 2021, Districts will no longer be able to offer remote learning. Districts are required to be in-person, five days a week.*

2. Why is Wareham not following the new mask guidelines that were released by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education?

*We are currently following the mandate from the Wareham Board of Health. The School Committee will be discussing this further at their meeting on August 26, 2021.*

3. Will there be assigned seating this year?

*Yes, there will be assigned seating on our buses, lunchroom (elementary and middle) and in classrooms.*

4. Will students be physically distanced during the day?

*No, as students will return to school five days a week, physical distancing is not an option. Opportunities will be provided for students to be outside when possible.*

5. Will mask breaks occur?

*Yes, students will be provided with mask breaks during the day.*

### **We need your help....**

Before coming to school or getting on the bus: Families should assess their child's state of wellness before leaving home for school. It is expected that each family will assess each of their children every day.

If your child has any symptoms of COVID-19, please keep them at home. The family should notify the school that the child is absent and why. When the child has been seen by a doctor and testing has been completed, please notify the school of the results.

**Additional information will be updated and placed on the District website.**