



March 1, 2022

Superintendent's Message: Masking survey and Health Symposium Webinar

Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff, Students and Community Members,

Many of you are aware that the California Department of Public Health announced a change in the current mandatory indoor masking for schools, which was followed by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) announcing it would move to strongly recommend continued indoor masking at schools, effective March 14, 2022.

Masking survey

Please take our short [masking survey](#) so we may gather feedback from our parents, staff and students on this shift from required to strongly recommending indoor masking. We need this data quickly to help guide our next steps and school board consideration and action. **Please submit this survey by Saturday, March 5, 2022, at 5 p.m.**

Health symposium webinar, March 7, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.

Please join us online for a health symposium webinar on Monday, March 7, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. for an update on our masking protocols and testing.

Zoom webinar: <https://bit.ly/HealthWebinar030722>

Passcode: 445132 Phone: 669.900.6833

Our webinar will be moderated by Senator Ben Allen, our esteemed former school board member, and include local medical experts to discuss the current status of the COVID-19 pandemic, vaccinations, masking and off-ramping strategies for SMMUSD to ensure the ongoing health and safety of our students and staff. [Webinar flyer](#).

Our panelists are:

- Dr. Nava Yeganeh, Pediatric Infectious Disease physician, currently serving as the Medical Director for Vaccine Preventable Disease Control at LACDPH and Associate Professor of Preventative Medicine at UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine.
- Dr. Jamie Lloyd-Smith, UCLA Professor, Dept of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Studying COVID-19 Aerosol and Surface Stability.
- Dr. Will Nicholas, Director, Center for Health Impact Evaluation, LA County Department of Public Health.

We will record the webinar so if you are unable to join us live, we will post it on our website the next day. www.smmusd.org/Coronavirus

Thanks to the commitment and resilience of our SMMUSD community doing our part, we now have the tools to begin turning the page on this pandemic toward returning to a more normal environment. Throughout the pandemic, we have displayed resilience and found common ground. Because of this, we are where we are today, in a place where we are able to more safely enjoy the things we love. As we begin to transition from pandemic response into a new chapter where we can use more routine disease control tactics, we will not only be ready for if and when something changes, but we have built stronger and more flexible systems for the future.

This new chapter is focused on continuing the mitigation strategies we are all familiar with including continued weekly testing and high-quality ventilation systems, with a great deal of focus on personal responsibility and respect that I will talk more about at our webinar and in my next letter.

We are planning a special board meeting for Wednesday, March 9, 2022 at 7 p.m. via Zoom to discuss the latest health recommendations, review survey results and consider comments from our health symposium for our school board to approve next steps for our campuses and offices. The board meeting agenda will be posted early next week on this webpage:

<https://www.smmusd.org/Page/4047>

Please take our survey and join us on Monday.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Dr. Ben Drati, Superintendent