

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

March 11, 2022

Aloha Parents and Guardians,

There have been important changes recently announced regarding state and county COVID-19 mandates. We appreciate your patience and cooperation as we continue to work closely with the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) on updating our Hawaii State Department of Education (HIDOE) COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidance.

Our recently updated guidance (bit.ly/HIDOEsaftyguidance) will go into effect after the return from spring break, on Monday, March 21, 2022. It incorporates the latest recommendations from DOH's statewide guidance for K-12 schools (<https://bit.ly/DOHschoolguidance>) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For a summary of significant changes, please see the last page of the guidance. Key updates are highlighted below.

- Outdoor masking at public school campuses and HIDOE facilities is optional for students, faculty and staff. This took effect on March 9, 2022. When community risk levels are high, masks must be worn outdoors where crowding or sustained close contact with others may occur, regardless of vaccination status.
- Indoor masking continues to be required by all students, staff, visitors and contracted service providers at schools, HIDOE facilities and in HIDOE buses and vans until further notice.
- With the continued implementation of universal indoor masking, individual close contact identification, notification and quarantine of in-school exposures is no longer required.
- Notification to the entire school community when a case is reported is no longer required since all positive cases are reflected on HIDOE's online COVID-19 case count dashboard (<https://bit.ly/HIDOECOVID-19Updates>).
- Notification of potential exposure will be distributed to classes or groups if exposed to a positive case for greater than 15 minutes when indoors or during participation in a high-risk activity (e.g., sports or singing) at school or a school-sponsored event.
- If the state's Safe Travels requirements have been met, students and staff who have traveled outside of the state are recommended to get tested for COVID-19 three days

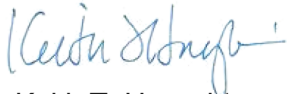
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following their arrival in the state. Quarantine is not required while awaiting post-travel test results.

The HIDOE's indoor masking policy remains in place, apart from the state's overall indoor mask mandate, which will expire after March 25. The DOH still recommends indoor masking in schools, especially given the recent changes to in-school case investigations and close contact quarantine requirements. Please know that because our goal is to always prioritize in-person learning, we are cautiously adjusting our guidance to ensure as many students as possible can continue to stay in the classroom.

Thank you to our students, staff and families for being so diligent with our health and safety protocols throughout this pandemic. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your school directly. Have a safe and healthy spring break and we look forward to welcoming you all back in the fourth quarter!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Keith T. Hayashi".

Keith T. Hayashi
Interim Superintendent

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