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February 27, 2022

Dear Region 1 Parents/Caregivers and Staff:

I am writing to update you on the most recent decision communicated to us from Commissioner Dr. Juthani of the CT Department of Public Health. Effective February 25, 2022, the CDC will no longer be requiring the wearing of masks on buses or vans operated by public or private school systems, including early care and education/child care programs. Thus, school districts can now make local decisions regarding masking requirements on school transportation.

The Department of Public Health [press release](#) provides additional information about this decision as well as a COVID-19 monitoring tool that we will use in Region one as an additional source of data to support the regular assessment of the public health situation in Litchfield County.

Based on the assessment of the COVID-19 data included in the *Changes to School COVID-19 Safety Practices* plan included in my letter of February 24, 2022 combined with the CDC's "low" designation status assigned to Litchfield County with respect to the presence of COVID-19, **all Region 1 schools will allow masks to become optional on school buses effective Tuesday, March 1, 2022.** This is consistent with our plan for masks to become optional in school buildings on the same day. By delaying the start of this practice until Tuesday, we allow teachers and students to discuss the need to be respectful of everyone's choices as we make this transition to the next phase of COVID-19 management.

We continue to recommend that wearing a mask is an extremely effective mitigation practice in controlling the spread of the virus. This should be an important consideration for all students who ride on buses that are filled close to capacity. **This situation is especially true for the elementary school bus runs in Cornwall, Kent, North Canaan, and Salisbury.**

Thank you for ensuring that your children follow the universal masking requirement throughout the day and on the bus on Monday. Please contact me or your Principal if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Lisa B. Carter
Superintendent

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