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January 25, 2022

Good Morning PCS families,

Since last night, a lot of information has been disseminated via the news and social media on the topic of masking in schools. Regardless of where you stand on this issue, please continue to be patient as we navigate another challenge.

Yesterday (1.24.22), the Supreme Court of Nassau County ruled that the mask mandate imposed by the New York State Department of Health is unconstitutional. This is the opposite of a recent ruling in the Albany County Supreme Court which upheld the mask mandate.

Response from New York State:

Governor Hochul has stated that New York State Department of Health (NYDOH) will appeal the decision immediately. If an appeal occurs, a "stay" will be placed on the mask mandate, which means the mandate to mask in schools will remain in place until a higher court rules on the appeal.

Last night at 8:20PM, all New York State School Districts received the follow information from the New York State Education Department (NYSED):

"The State Education Department understands that Nassau County Supreme Court has ruled that the Department of Health exceeded its authority in enacting the mask regulation, 10 NYCRR 2.60, in Demetriou et al. v. New York State Dep't of Health et al. This regulation is the subject of conflicting decisions, insofar as Albany County Supreme Court recently upheld the regulation in Massapequa UFSD et al. v. Hochul, et al.

*It is SED's understanding that the Department of Health will appeal the Nassau County Supreme Court decision, which will result in an automatic stay that will unambiguously restore the mask rule until such time as an appellate court issue a further ruling. Therefore, **schools must continue to follow the mask rule.**"*

NYSED governs the Prattsburgh Central School District, and we must follow their direction on this issue until we are directed otherwise.

Please be patient as we anticipate how this decision will impact the students and staff here at PCS. Your cooperation and flexibility are appreciated as we work through this together.

I expect that there will be more information released on this topic throughout the day and the rest of this week as legal teams weigh in across New York State. I will continue to keep you up to date as the situation evolves.

Please reach out with any questions.

Kory Bay