

# New Mask Mandate 2/22/21

Dear Cottonwood Parents,

I am writing today to address a masking update from the California Public Health Department (CDPH). So far this year, we have only required masking for students in grades 3-8 as mandated by the state. Although it was highly recommended, we did not require masks for pre-school thru 2<sup>nd</sup>. This policy worked well for us because we have seen no major outbreaks to date.

However, on January 14<sup>th</sup>, CDPH sent out their [COVID-19 Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework & Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in CA, 2020-21 School Year](#). This contained several changes to the masking requirements which can be found starting on page 16 of this document. It now states that **students in all grade levels K-12 are required to wear face coverings at all times, while at school, unless exempted**. This includes recess and PE. The only exemption for age, is for children two and younger. So this does include pre-school and TK as well.

After sitting in on discussions with our county health officials and discussions with our legal counsel on these new mandates, the District is left with no other options but to adhere to the new mandates and require all of our students, pre-school – 8th, to mask if we want to stay open with in person instruction. I know this change does not sit well with some parents, but at this point in time, we really have no choice. So when we return from break on **Monday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>**, we will implement these new changes and require all students to wear masks. Thank you for your understanding on this issue in these ever changing times.

Sincerely,

Doug Geren