



March 4, 2022

Dear Lamoille North Families and Staff,

Welcome back from our February break! I hope you were all able to enjoy some time doing the things you love with the people you love.

I would like to open this letter with many, many thanks to all of our Lamoille North communities for continuing to support our schools. We recognize that this year, in particular, was complicated in terms of being able to meet and collaborate about our budgets in the ways we have in the past, but the support we have received, and continue to receive, is a testament to the relationships we are so grateful to have with the people in our communities. On behalf of our Boards, administration, faculty and staff, we extend our gratitude and thanks to all of you for voting to pass all of our budgets. You can find all budget results [HERE](#).

As you may know, last week the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revised its guidance to states and counties regarding some mitigation measures, including masking. The CDC is using a tool that makes recommendations by county based on an assessment of the use of hospital beds, hospital admissions, and the total number of new COVID-19 cases. Lamoille County is considered to be a very low transmission county. The CDC recommendations for Lamoille County include optional masking indoors in public, staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccines, getting tested if symptomatic, and additional precautions for folks who are at high risk for severe illness.

Throughout the pandemic, our School Boards have made decisions about our mitigation strategies based on science from the CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and Vermont Department of Health (VTDOH) guidance. Secretary French stated in yesterday's press conference, "mitigation measures like masking are no longer necessary from a risk perspective". Further, Dr. Patsy Kelso from the VTDOH stated that "we are no longer seeing the same levels of risk because of vaccines and the phase of COVID-19 we are now in". In other regulations, the Federal mandate that once required masking on school busses was lifted on February 25, 2022.

Our School Boards, on March 2, 2022, adopted to move to optional masking for all students, staff and visitors effective Monday, March 7, 2022. We recognize, as stated before, that this may cause some people to be pleased and others to be concerned. We are having conversations in all of our schools about respect, kindness and empathy in all situations, to specifically include respecting the choices people make about their decisions to wear or not wear masks. In other COVID-19 related news, we expect to receive from the VTDOH changes to quarantine guidelines within a week or so. We will communicate all changes to you as we receive them.

In this week's community news, we are pleased to share information about a performance by artist and advocate, Speech, from the Grammy award-winning hip-hop group Arrested Development for an evening of discussion on racial equity and inclusion. **This event is being held in Stowe at the Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center on Wednesday, March 9, 2022, at 7:00pm.** This event is free to all Lamoille North youth and employees. You can access your free tickets by going to

www.SprucePeakArts.org and using the code **mariatix**. We thank Maria Davies, our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator, for arranging this event. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

Also in community news, an exciting announcement from Two Sons Bakehouse, www.twosonsbakehouse.com, that they will be opening their second location on Monday, March 7, 2022, in the former Fork & Gavel Restaurant building at 247 Main Street in Hyde Park. They will be open for breakfast at 6:30 am.

As always, I thank you for your continued collaboration and communication. Have a wonderful weekend!

My best to you,

Catherine Gallagher, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools
Lamoille North Supervisory Union