

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



STEVEN BELLONE
SUFFOLK COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

GREGSON H. PIGOTT, MD, MPH
Commissioner

May 25, 2021

Dear Superintendent,

We entered the 2020-21 school year with a lot of uncertainty but it is evident that the safety protocols put forth by our federal and state partners and implemented by our schools were and continue to be effective tools in reducing the transmission of COVID-19. As a result, our schools are safe spaces. There has been very little school-based transmission and we have not experienced significant outbreaks resulting in long-term school closures. This success is attributed to the prevention strategies implemented by our schools including daily health screenings, universal mask wearing, and physical distancing.

The [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and [New York State Department of Health \(NYSDOH\)](#) have both been clear that existing school guidance should be followed through the end of this school year. This includes universal mask wearing even if students are spaced six feet apart. In fact, Pre-K to 12 schools are exempt from New York State guidance for fully vaccinated people and must continue to follow the State's existing COVID-19 health guidelines until more New Yorkers are fully vaccinated.

We have come so far in our fight against COVID-19. It is more important than ever to use the tools that brought us here - get vaccinated if eligible, wash your hands, socially distance, and wear a mask.

Thank you for your continued efforts to keep our community safe.

Sincerely,

Gregson H. Pigott, MD, MPH
Commissioner



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