REGIONAL
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To All Members of the Cape Cod Tech Community,

As we head into the new school year, I want to remind families that all students and staff who return to in-person learning at Cape Cod Tech will be required to wear masks, covering one's nose and mouth, to protect themselves and others. There are many different types of face coverings that people are using, and some types are much more effective than others. A study published recently by Duke University researchers investigated the effectiveness of 14 common types of face coverings at protecting one's self and others.

While N95 masks, which are expensive and in short supply, provided the best protection, other more available and less expensive options were highly effective. The study found homemade or store-bought two-ply cotton masks and disposable surgical masks to be nearly equally effective.

This study also found that two common face coverings were shown to be ineffective at reducing the spread of respiratory droplets that could transmit illness, and these will not be allowed as face coverings in our schools. First, gaiters/buffs (stretchy, single-layer, fabric which can be worn around one's neck and pulled up to cover the nose and mouth) were shown to be ineffective, as the fine mesh of the fabric potentially aerosolizes droplets. Second, bandanas, which loosely hang over one's mouth, were also ineffective at preventing the spread of respiratory droplets, and will not be permissible face coverings for school.

A third type of mask, those with exhalation vents, will also not be allowed in our schools. The CDC had previously not recommended these types of masks because the one-way valves allow air to be exhaled through a hole in a way that respiratory droplets could reach others. While these masks protect the user, they do not prevent the person wearing the mask from transmitting disease to others.

We have developed the attached graphic to guide our community in selecting masks that effectively protect both self and others. We encourage you to find a comfortable mask for your student, and get them used to wearing it throughout the day. Our school will have masks available should anyone's become soiled or break.

The decisions we collectively make, to protect ourselves and others, will ultimately determine if our schools can open and remain open. It is important to continue wearing a mask and maintaining physical distance around others.

Stay Safe,
Superintendent Bob Sanborn