



Cheshire Public Schools Draft Mask Requirement Metrics

March 10, 2022 (Process implemented effective for 2/28/22)

***While CPS will not change practice as metrics change, the data has been updated for public information**

The Town of Cheshire and Cheshire Public Schools are continuing to very closely monitor local COVID-19 metrics and consult with State and local health officials to determine appropriate protocols in response to the recent increase in positive cases linked to the Omicron variant of the disease.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) strongly encourages all eligible residents to be vaccinated if they have not already done so, as this remains the most effective way to reduce spread and mitigate the severity of a potential infection. Vaccines are readily available at many convenient locations including our Chesprocott Health District, who can be reached at 203-272-2761.

Masks have been proven to be a significant mitigating factor in the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Of course, the wearing of masks can also present challenges of comfort, audibility, and expression. In consultation with our medical advisors and best practices as defined by the CDC, there are several factors for consideration regarding mask wearing in our schools. **Our medical advisors have agreed that if we meet the threshold for two or more of these criteria, masks may be considered optional in schools.**

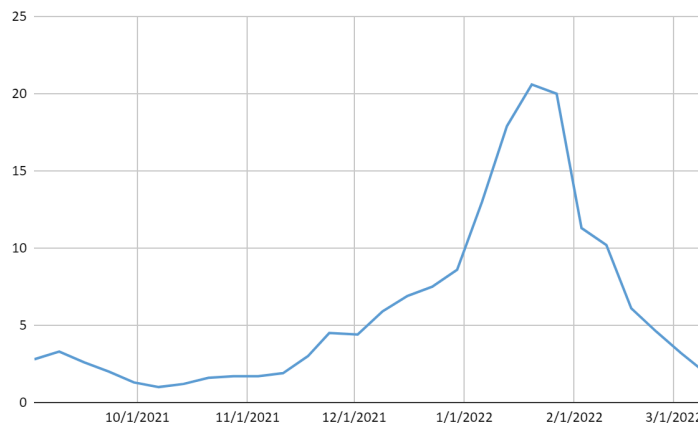
The Three Factors

The first consideration is vaccine prevalence. Cheshire has an extraordinarily high vaccine prevalence as a community (82.7% of eligible residents fully vaccinated) and a school district (in excess of 96% fully vaccinated).

Fifty percent of Cheshire residents aged 5-11 are fully vaccinated. Seventy percent of residents aged 12-17 are fully vaccinated. The district has been diligent in providing vaccination clinics for students and staff over the past year. The state vaccination averages are 32% for ages 5-11 and 66% for ages 12-17.

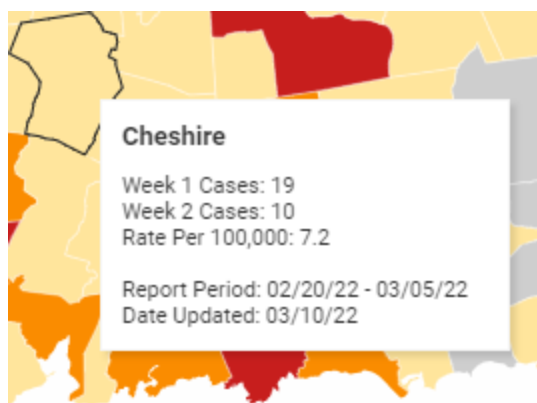
This factor has been met to permit a mask optional condition.

The second factor for consideration in the determination of mask wearing is the current rate of positivity in the community. Connecticut posts the positivity rate each Thursday evening. It is recommended that a 10% positivity rate is a threshold for concern. The chart below illustrates the current (1.9% as of 3/10/22) positivity rate and historical trend (3.2% last week).



This factor has **been met** to permit a mask optional condition.

The final metric for consideration is the new cases per 100,000 population. As of 3/10/22, Cheshire is registering 7.2 cases per 100,000 residents (13.1 last week). The target rate for cases per 100,000 people has been set at 15 for our community.



This factor **has been met** to permit a mask optional condition.

Data Analysis Outcome:

Having met all three factors of consideration, mask wearing is optional.

Pending further guidance from the Department of Public Health:

Masks will continue to be required for individuals identified as close contacts or otherwise identified in the [CPS Quarantine and Isolation Guidance](#). **Final decisions on whether or not exposed/positive individuals must wear masks are made by the school nurse in conjunction with our Medical Advisory Team.**

COVID-19 Vaccinations by Town and Age Group, Case Rate Per 100,000 and 14-Day Positivity Rate by Town are all published weekly on Thursdays- Data available here: <https://data.ct.gov/browse?tags=covid-19>

CDC Recommendation of vaccines for children: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1102-PediatricCOVID-19Vaccine.html>