



Health & Wellness Report of May 17, 2021

Following up on the April Health & Wellness Report:

- **Adult Vaccinations/Protocols** – The issues with the Johnson & Johnson “one & done” vaccine have been resolved and it is back in use (along with the two dose Moderna & Pfizer vaccines). New York State is currently mounting a campaign to combat “vaccination reluctance” emphasizing the safety of these vaccines as well as the “advantages” of being fully vaccinated, such as much easier access to public events for those who can show proof of vaccination. Amazingly, in a couple of months we have gone from only certain categories of adults can be vaccinated (with appointments being very difficult to get) to where they are now offering incentives for people to get vaccinated. The CDC has recently released new guidelines regarding mask use & social distancing, however New York State has not yet decided to go along with these, but is expected to shortly. SUNY has announced that all on campus/in person students will need to be vaccinated before being allowed to attend classes (following the lead of many private colleges & universities in the State)
- **Children’s Vaccines/Protocols** – Pfizer recently received approval for use of the vaccine in individuals as young as 12 years old and these vaccinations have already begun (NYS has a “pop up” vaccination site in Hauppauge that will be offering 12 & up vaccinations tomorrow afternoon) There is still no timetable for when an “under 12” vaccine may become available. Pfizer is the only vaccine available for those under 18 years of age. Some of our School Districts are now looking to offer student vaccinations on campus. In fact, there was a just such an event recently in Half Hollow Hills (prior to the 12-15 yr. old approval). The big question now is, with vaccinations available to children 12 & up, will NY State seek to make vaccinations mandatory for secondary school attendance. It should be interesting to see how this all plays out over the next few months.
- **Protocol “Push Back”** – over the last month we’re starting to see some “push back” against the current Covid protocols here on Long Island. Nassau County Executive Laura Curran sent a letter to Governor Cuomo on May 12th “calling on New York State to immediately reevaluate and overhaul school guidance, including mask protocols and hybrid learning, to ensure that our students are getting the best education possible”. I would respectfully request that Suffolk Region PTA reach out to Suffolk County Executive and ask that he send a similar letter be sent on behalf of our children to the Governor (a copy of Ms. Curran’s letter is attached to this report) ... The Lindenhurst Board of Education also sent a letter to Governor Cuomo (along with Education Commissioner Rosa & Health Commissioner Zucker) on April 30th, objecting to the regulation “that in order to attend proms or graduations, the students must either show proof of a negative Covid test within 3 days (6 hrs. for a rapid test) of the event, proof of full vaccination status or proof of a previously confirmed positive with a release of quarantine notice. The school Board felt that “This requirement is at best arbitrary, and at most needless, NOT benefitting the public health, nor even sensible”. The letter goes on to explain the reasons for their objection (a copy of their letter is also attached to this report)

- **Meeting with the Suffolk County District Attorney** – On Monday, May 10th, Bevin Llanes and I had a (Zoom) meeting with members of the Suffolk County D.A.’s Office to see what could be done to make more people aware of Drug Free School Zones and the additional penalties that an individual could face for committing a drug violation on or within 1000 feet of School Grounds. The DA’s Office was very receptive of some of our ideas, such as mentioning Drug Free Schools in any press releases of any drug busts made within these zones. They may also be interested in working with us on some “public service announcements” regarding these zones and have offered to keep the dialogue going with Suffolk Region PTA. They are also going to look into a Local Law (Suffolk County “Safe Schools”) that adds weapons of various types to the violations subject to increased penalties in or near our schools. It should be noted the emphasis at the DA’s Office is on drug trafficking and not so much on individual use. In fact, a few years ago they established a “Diversion Plan” where individuals arrested on possession charges could get those charges erased by going into a treatment program.

Should anyone have any questions regarding this month’s report, please don’t hesitate to contact me via email at: **gerardbringmann@gmail.com**

Respectfully submitted ... Gerry Bringmann

LAURA CURRAN
NASSAU COUNTY EXECUTIVE



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
THEODORE ROOSEVELT EXECUTIVE & LEGISLATIVE BUILDING

May 12, 2021

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor
New York State
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

Nassau County continues to do an outstanding job getting shots into eligible arms, where 55% of the total population has received at least one vaccine dose and we continue to see infections and hospitalizations steadily go down. Now, as we expect vaccine eligibility soon to be expanded to include residents 12 and older, it is time for the State to reassess how schools are operating under New York COVID protocols.

Our students, teachers and families have been doing an incredible job adapting, but as we continue to beat down this virus and reopen New York, the State must reevaluate the protocols in our schools. I have heard from numerous parents who are worried about the effects that these protocols are having on their children's quality of life and their education. As a parent, I understand and agree with their concerns.

I am calling on New York State to immediately reevaluate and overhaul school guidance, including mask protocols and hybrid learning, to ensure that our students are receiving the best education possible. Our children deserve to have a normal education and to get their lives back as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laura Curran".

Laura Curran

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Board of Education
Lindenhurst Union Free School District
McKenna Administration Building 350 Daniel Street Lindenhurst, NY 11757
Tel: 631-867-3001 Fax: 631-867-3008

April 30, 2021

Dear Governor Cuomo, Commissioner Rosa and Commissioner Zucker,

As we all know and with which we agree, the health and welfare of our students, their families, and the NY state population at large is of utmost importance, and certain rules & regulations must be put in place to ensure that. We've watched, interpreted, followed, and carried out every single one of the regulations issued from your collective offices since the pandemic began, sometimes creating extremely unpopular situations in our communities.

At some point, there comes a time when we must speak out, and hope our voices are heard. This is that time. We recently learned that, in order to attend proms or graduations, the students must either show proof of a negative COVID test within 3 days (6 hrs. for a rapid test) of the event, proof of full vaccination status, or proof of a previously confirmed positive with a release from quarantine notice.

This requirement is at best arbitrary, and at most needless, NOT benefiting the public health, nor even sensible.

Why, one would ask, are we objecting to this regulation and not the others before it? Understand that in our district, like many others in the state, these students have been in classes, in the same physical building, buses, and even personal vehicles, all along. They may play sports, which now, in the spring season, no longer require ANY testing. The staff chaperoning them are the same staff who have been teaching them, coaching them, and advising them every single day since September.

Many districts, including ours, conduct outdoor graduations. The same conditions for prom will be in force – unless you change them – for graduation. And again, the students are in close contact every day in school, with the same cohort of staff members.

As a reasonable people, we understand the measures taken in the past, and even recently. We can see the value in following them while trying to maintain a level of normalcy for our youth. However these latest measures go too far, and for arguably little to no additional value in protecting the health of our communities.

We urge you, implore you, to look to reason, and lift these mandates, and lift them immediately, as prom & graduation season are around the corner, and our school district, like the other 730 in NY state, must begin to plan immediately for this.

Sincerely,

Donna Hochman
President

Edward Langone
Vice President

Gabrielle Anzalone
Trustee

Linda Aniello
Trustee

Mary Ellen Cunningham
Trustee

Michael DiGiuseppe
Trustee

Kevin Garbe
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Lindenhurst Board of Education

Jacquelyn Herig
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Josephine Martino
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