



Tom Grady, *Chair*
Ben Gibson, *Vice Chair*
Members
Monesia Brown
Marva Johnson
Ryan Petty
Joe York

TO: Superintendents, School Boards, College/University Presidents, Early Learning Coalition Executives, Private School Owners, Charter School Governing Boards

FROM: Richard Corcoran
Commissioner of Education, Florida Department of Education

DATE: March 3, 2022

SUBJECT: Updated COVID-19 Guidance

Last week, Governor Ron DeSantis and State Surgeon General Joseph Ladapo announced sweeping changes to Florida’s COVID-19 guidance affecting schools, child care facilities and employers in general. This news in mind, we anticipate and celebrate the opportunity to see many Floridians freed from outdated federal COVID-19 requirements of the past two years.

First and foremost, the guidance addresses the needs of parents, children and employees by advising the removal of burdensome isolation requirements. Specifically, the updated guidance recommends employers, schools, and child care facilities allow employees and students who test positive for COVID-19 to return after only five days if they are fever-free for 24 hours without the need for additional testing, and allow those who do not test positive or develop symptoms to forego quarantine entirely.

In addition, the updated guidance advises that Florida businesses should “no longer require facial coverings for employees, as there is no proven significant clinical benefit for facial coverings among the general population.” Moreover, the guidance makes clear that child care facilities should *never* force children to wear masks, and should leave decisions on facial coverings, given a lack of evidence supporting their efficacy, to parents alone.

In closing, I know that educators, students and parents across the state—myself included—are encouraged by this recent announcement, knowing it will take us all one step closer to normalcy. I am equally enthused with and strongly applaud the Governor’s and Surgeon General’s decision to support Florida workers and their families by reducing the unnecessary and arbitrary burdens placed on them by this pandemic. It is my hope that you will join me in my enthusiasm, do what is best for all Floridians and immediately update your policies to comply with this guidance.

Sincerely,

Richard Corcoran
Commissioner