

WEBUTUCK CENTRAL SCHOOLS

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Dear Webutuck Families,

As some of you may be aware, Monday evening a Nassau County court ruled that the statewide mask mandate for schools, scheduled to expire next month, had not been properly enacted and was not enforceable.

The New York State Education Department indicated that schools should keep the mask mandate as an appeal was going to be filed. The appeal was filed late last night, which meant that a stay would be in place while the issue was decided by the state Appellate Court. The New York State Department of Health indicated that schools should listen to the Education Department. Finally, a hearing took place where the two sides presented preliminary arguments before the Appellate Division, Second Judicial Department, regarding the validity of the stay while the mandate itself was considered and adjudicated. If this is confusing to you, you are in good company.

The ruling regarding the stay was issued just before 5:00 p.m. this evening. In short, the Appellate Division granted the application filed on behalf of the Governor's office and the Commissioner of Health to stay the implementation of the Nassau County Supreme Court decision pending a hearing and determination on the motion. Counsel for the respective parties are scheduled to be heard on this matter on Friday, January 28th at 10:00 a.m.

Therefore, the mask mandate remains in effect.

We continue to work closely with the Dutchess County Department of Health, the New York State Department of Health and the Department of Education. We will continue to monitor this situation and apprise you of further updates as they arise.

Again, these are confusing times. We continue to do our best to make sure that our entire learning community is as safe as it can be. We all look forward to normalcy. I think we have good reason to believe it is in sight. We remain grateful for your patience, cooperation and support.

Respectfully,

Raymond Castellani
Superintendent