

**PORT JEFFERSON SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
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Jessica Schmettan  
Superintendent of Schools

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August 13, 2021

Dear Royal Families and Staff,

As we collectively count the remaining days until the September 2 start of school for our students and staff, we know there are many questions regarding what school will look like when we reopen – especially related to COVID-19 protocols (masks, social distancing, etc.). While no local decision has been made on many of these matters, I want to share a brief update with the community on where we stand to date.

Contrary to past practices, the Governor's office announced last week that the State would not be providing any COVID-19 guidance directives to school districts. Suffolk County Department of Health Services issued [guidance](#) early this week. Just yesterday, the New York State Education Department issued a [Health and Safety Guide](#) for the upcoming year. In summary, both of these guidance documents concur with the [Center for Disease Control](#) and the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) regarding continued use of COVID-19 mitigation strategies. This includes universal masking indoors while maintaining three feet of social distancing.

An important update in all of these documents refers to the quarantine of K-12 students. *"In the K-12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within three to six feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) if both students correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting."*

Please know that our priority will continue to be the health and safety of all our students, staff, and families. We ask for your continued patience as the Board of Education, our leadership team and I are carefully review these updates, and will be communicating with you our definitive plan for reopening shortly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jessica Schmettan".

Jessica Schmettan  
Superintendent