



# FORRESTVILLE VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT #221

SUPERINTENDENT  
Mrs. Sheri Smith

February 6, 2022

Dear Forrestville Valley Families,

Since March of 2020, our goal has been to keep our students and staff safe during a global pandemic. In addition, we have done our best to follow the rule of law and those obligations imposed on the District by the Governor and Illinois Department of Public Health.

This past Friday, February 4, 2022, a judge in Sangamon County issued temporary restraining orders related to the Governor's COVID-19 executive orders and emergency rules issued by the Illinois Department of Public Health ("IDPH") and Illinois State Board of Education ("ISBE") regarding covid mitigation strategies for students and staff in school. Forrestville Valley was not a party to this lawsuit, and the judge's order does not expressly apply to us today.

The Governor and IDPH have vowed to appeal this decision. At the time of this communication, the status of any such appeal is unknown. We understand that the Appellate Court will consider this matter on an expedited timeline, with a current expected deadline of February 17, 2022. The Appellate Court may also issue a "stay" (i.e. hold) on the decision while the case is being considered. If a stay is issued, all mitigation rules under the executive orders will remain in effect.

While we await a decision of the Appellate Court, Forrestville Valley will implement the local district plan determined in July, prior to the executive order requiring masking. This plan will follow our weekly numbers to determine recommended layers of mitigations strategies. **Effective tomorrow, Monday, February 7, 2022, masking is recommended as we are currently in low status, with overall percent of cases less than 3% district wide. However, all students participating in district transportation are REQUIRED to wear masks, due to the continued TSA mandate requiring face coverings on public transportation.**

*Please note: while we will put our local plan in place, the Appellate Court will govern future decisions. We expect a decision no later than February 17, 2022, but it is highly possible we have an update as early as tomorrow. It is likely our local plan will once again be placed on hold. We will do our very best to communicate all changes in a timely manner.*

As we have learned throughout the past two years, we have various personal opinions and feelings related to this pandemic. Our goal is to move forward with the least disruption to our educational process. We acknowledge covid has impacted families in various ways and as a result, families may respond to mitigation strategies differently. Please practice kindness and empathy as you encounter differences.

If you have concerns regarding the attached local plan or the health of your child, I encourage you to contact your building principal for clarification. Again, our goal has been to continue in person learning throughout a global pandemic while doing everything we can to keep our students and staff safe.

We appreciate your patience and flexibility as we have arrived at a new phase in this pandemic. Please continue to remain flexible as we wait for clarification from the courts. You can expect to receive additional communications in the days ahead, and weekly updates regarding our local plan transmission levels.

Sincerely,  
*Mrs. Smith*