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Virginia PTA Statement on Schools Following CDC Guidelines

January 18, 2022 (Richmond, VA) – Virginia PTA prioritizes the health and welfare of students, staff and families and supports school operating plans that follow the most up-to-date Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines and incorporate the best available science and expertise of doctors and health practitioners. At this time the CDC recommends mask wearing in schools, among other mitigation measures.

Maintaining the safe functioning of preK-12 schools and high academic standards for all students should be the first priority of every school division. Every student, including our medically at-risk students should be able to safely participate in school instruction alongside their peers. At the start of the pandemic, our parent survey, which had more than 50,000 responses, indicated 79% of parents support masking as a mitigation measure to protect students from the spread of the virus and maintain in-person instruction.

Due to the current surge in COVID-19 infections, schools are struggling with severe staffing shortages leaving students to learn on their own without qualified, licensed staff to lead instruction. Additionally, many students are missing instruction due to quarantine, which is further exacerbating academic success.

Virginia PTA renews our call for school districts to provide clear guidance about which safety mitigation measures will be in place based on the outbreak level in their division and to offer multiple modes of instruction to support student learning during quarantine. Every child should have the resources necessary to reach their full potential, yet many of Virginia's school districts do not have the funding needed to provide critical supports to all students. We urge the General Assembly to fully fund our schools.

Virginia PTA is committed to making every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. Virginia PTA thanks our families and school staff who have been diligently working together throughout the pandemic to create opportunities for parent engagement and participation in the education of their children.

For more information, please reference PTA's [position on school reopening](#) and www.vapta.org

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