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COOK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH STATEMENT ON MASKING IN SCHOOLS

As the legal issues regarding the Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) on the governor’s school mask mandate are analyzed, the [Cook County Department of Public Health](#) continues to strongly endorse universal masking in all schools – public and private – consistent with [CDC guidance](#).

Masking is a proven strategy and a key element of a layered approach in schools to fighting this deadly virus and its variants, particularly among a population with such low vaccination rates. In addition to getting vaccinated and staying up to date on boosters, the layered approach to keeping our schools safe include wearing an appropriate mask indoors, maintaining physical distance from others when possible, having proper ventilation in school buildings, and frequent handwashing. The least vaccinated throughout suburban Cook County (and nationally) are youth under 20 years old. [In suburban Cook County, only 47% have had at least one dose and 32.8% have had both vaccine doses.](#)

The pandemic is not behind us. The risk that new variants of the virus will be created and spread throughout Cook County is present. a new surge requires us collectively to remain vigilant and adhere to evidence-driven public health practices.

Links:

- [CCDPH School Guidance Page](#)
- [CDC School Guidance](#)
- [CCDPH Vaccine Data](#)