



# LACEY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

*A Tradition Of Pride · A Tradition Of Excellence*

**VANESSA P. CLARK, PH.D.**  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

May 26, 2021

Honorable Governor Phil Murphy  
255 West State Street  
P.O. Box 001  
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor Murphy:

We write to you on behalf of the Lacey Township School District Board of Education to respectfully ask that you consider repealing Executive Order 175 in time for the start of the 2021-2022 school year, and relieve our students, teachers, and staff members of the obligation to wear masks inside of school. Lacey Township School District students have been in school five days a week since March. We've taken steps to protect our teachers and staff by making the vaccine available for those who wanted it. In addition, we have implemented various protective measures to ensure our staff and students are in the safest instructional environment possible. In many ways, you have entrusted the districts with this responsibility by providing a framework for our district's reopening plan, while allowing districts to operate within the individuality of our community.

We have partnered with our local union leadership to create a clear and solid plan based on our local data, and we have made that information readily available to our entire school community by posting a weekly [Enrollment Report and Number of Positive COVID-19 Cases](#) on the Lacey Township School District website. Our District Leadership Team has consistently worked to update the document to best support the children, staff, and families of our district.

As the number of vaccinated individuals increases and the number of cases decreases here in Lacey and Ocean County, we continue to move in the right direction. While we realize this situation is fluid, we again are ready to continue steps to get us closer to normal. As of now, Executive Order 175, as well as the recommendation by the CDC, requires those in schools to continue wearing masks. As always, our district is operating in compliance with all state mandates.

We believe we are at a point where the state policy regarding students and staff wearing masks at school – both indoors and outdoors – could be responsibly re-evaluated. Please consider repealing Executive Order 175 in time for September, and restoring a sense of normalcy that will help us all breathe easier, literally and figuratively. Thank you, Governor Murphy, for your consideration of this request, and for your leadership throughout these trying times.

Sincerely,

Dr. Vanessa P. Clark, Superintendent of Schools

Mrs. Donna McAvoy, President, Lacey Township Board of Education