

The Foxborough Board of Health and the Foxborough School Committee held a joint meeting on Wednesday, August 18, 2021 to allow for comments and recommendations from the Board of Health, on the School Committee's draft Face Mask Policy for the 2021-2022 school year.

The School Committee conducted general business at their scheduled meeting start time of 6:30 p.m. The face mask policy was not discussed until 6:47 p.m.

At 6:47 p.m. on **August 18, 2021** Betsy Allo, opened the meeting of the Foxborough Board of Health, under the Open Meeting Laws of the State of Massachusetts. Members present, Betsy Allo, MPH, Vice-Chair and Eric Arvedon, Clerk. Meeting took place in the Andrew A. Gala, Jr. Meeting Room inside the Foxborough Town Hall at 40 South Street.

Others present:

Matthew Brennan, Director of Public Health

Thomas Kenvin, Deputy Chief – EMS/Public Health Nurse

Diane Passafaro, Public Health Coordinator/Recorder

M. Brennan began by providing an update on the surge in cases occurring in Foxborough and the increase in positivity rate over the last two weeks. He discussed the Delta variant specifically and it being the cause of 97.7% of all new Covid cases. M. Brennan further explained the differences in current guidance coming out of both the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the State of Massachusetts surrounding the use of face masks, in particular within the school setting. In addition, he informed those in attendance that the Board of Health, during their August 2, 2021 meeting, adopted the Foxborough Board of Health Advisory that recommends the Foxborough Public Schools, grades K-12, wear masks in school.

E. Arvedon provided comment on the use of face masks, stating the Board of Health is trying to take a proactive approach rather than a reactive approach and believes it is in the best interest of everyone to wear masks in school. He expressed his hope for the Foxborough School Committee to adopt a face mask policy and to consider the use of the Board of Health as a resource when making future decisions.

Dr. Amy Berdos, Ed.D. provided a summary of the draft face mask policy. Chair, Rob Canfield provided the first reading of the face mask policy (EBCFA).

Following the reading of the policy, questions and answers were exchanged between the Foxborough School Committee, Dr. Berdos, and the Board of Health. The Board provided input when requested. In summary, the Board provided information and/or provided comment on the following:

- Vaccine efficacy. Severe illness and hospitalization highest among the unvaccinated.
- Covid cases per age group are available on the State of Massachusetts Covid dashboard.
- Transmission can occur among the fully vaccinated.
- The Delta variant's high transmission rate.
- CDC categorizing Norfolk County as being an area of substantial risk for transmission.
- Masks cut down on the rate of infection.

- The benefits of in-person learning. The use of face masks reducing the potential for extended periods of isolation or quarantine.
- Department of Elementary and Secondary Education policies for school classrooms, including chorus and band, are expected to be forthcoming.

The Foxborough School Committee allowed for public comment.

E. Arvedon made a motion to adjourn the Foxborough Board of Health meeting at 8:35 p.m. B. Allo seconded the motion. Motion passed, 2 – 0.

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Eric Arvedon, Clerk/dp