

2122-7

A RESOLUTION OF THE SCHOOL BOARD FOR THE CITY OF SUFFOLK, VIRGINIA REQUIRING ALL STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES TO RECEIVE A COVID-19 VACCINATION OR BE SUBJECT TO WEEKLY TESTING

WHEREAS, on August 8, 2021 the American Academy of Pediatrics issued COVID-19 Interim Guidance: Return to Sports and Physical Activity for children who are participating in and/or returning to physical activity, inclusive of but not limited to, organized sports within school; and

WHEREAS, a considerable number of students enrolled in Suffolk Public Schools at the middle and high school level participate in athletics and extracurricular activities; and

WHEREAS, there are both physical and psychological health benefits for students who participate in athletics and extracurricular activities by improving their cardiovascular health, strength, body composition, overall fitness, and mentally they benefit from increased socialization with friends — all of which support their developmental growth; and

WHEREAS, data suggest that adolescents may spread SARS-CoV-2 as efficiently as adults; and

WHEREAS, because prolonged, close contact with a person infected with SARS-CoV-2 is the main driver of transmission, student participation in athletics and extracurricular activities influences the risk of infection. SARS-CoV-2 transmission among athletes has been documented in the sports setting, with indoor sports likely bearing the greatest risk; and

WHEREAS, most transmission associated with outdoor sports has been related to off-field activities, such as sharing meals and during transportation in private vehicles where people were unmasked or partially masked. SARS-CoV-2 infection rates for outdoor sports are likely to reflect community infection rates; and

WHEREAS, for the week beginning August 29, 2021 - September 4, 2021 the SARS-CoV-2 transmission level in the City of Suffolk was high transmission with a PCR

percent positivity of 18.4% and averaging 301.8 new cases per 100,000 people in the last 7 days; and

WHEREAS, Suffolk Public Schools and the Suffolk City School Board (“School Board”) wants to ensure to the greatest extent possible the health and safety of students enrolled in Suffolk Public Schools who are participating in athletics and extracurricular activities; and

WHEREAS, School Board Policy Section 2-2.1, subpart 25, provides that the School Board is responsible for the safety of pupils involved in school activities; and

WHEREAS, School Board Policy Section 9-20.9 provides that the School Board recognizes the importance of protecting students from the transmission of communicable diseases; and

WHEREAS, Screening testing is intended to identify persons who are infected without symptoms (or before development of symptoms) who may be contagious so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission; and

WHEREAS, because many children with COVID-19 are asymptomatic, their infections may be difficult to detect without regular testing; and

WHEREAS, the School Board encourages every student eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine to be fully vaccinated as defined by the Center for Disease Control in order to prevent the transmission of SARS-CoV-2.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that every middle or high school student enrolled in Suffolk Public Schools participating in athletics or extracurricular activities and all coaches and sponsors — in order to mitigate the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 — are required to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and be fully vaccinated by November 12, 2021, or submit to weekly testing for SARS-CoV-2. Suffolk Public Schools will offer a list of vaccination clinics for those who choose to be vaccinated; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that through its adoption of this Resolution the notice requirement found in School Board Policy Section 10-7.5:2, subsection E(c)(i) is met.

ADOPTED THIS _____ day of _____, 2021.

TESTE:

Approved as to form and content:

Clerk

Wendell M. Waller, *Esquire*
School Board Attorney