



Founders:

Patty Hotz

Karen Larson

Cindy Nudd

February 28, 2022

Dear S.E.A.L. Community,

As COVID-19 cases continue to decline in Illinois, S.E.A.L. Administration has carefully outlined a plan to decrease some of our mitigation strategies. At this time, S.E.A.L. will continue to follow in-house procedures such as; encouraging hand washing, thoroughly sanitizing surfaces, and observing social distancing guidelines. We will also continue to follow IDPH and ISBE guidance for quarantining positive cases.

Starting on Monday, March 7, 2022, face-covering will no longer be required, but strongly recommended, for **students** in all S.E.A.L. buildings and on S.E.A.L. transportation.

If positivity rates within our communities and programs remain low, on Monday, March 21, 2022, **S.E.A.L. staff** will also be given the option to remove face-coverings while in the school building and on S.E.A.L. transportation. Again, we strongly encourage and recommend the continued use of face coverings.

**As a therapeutic environment serving a wide geographical region of communities, S.E.A.L. has an obligation to give our staff, students, and their families time to adjust to changing mitigation. S.E.A.L.'s decision to stagger the reduction of the face-covering requirement is also due to our dedication to keep S.E.A.L. an environment that can maintain high staff to student ratios as is best practice for our population and program.**

All of our staff and students have done an incredible job following our mitigation practices over the last couple years. This has kept our schools running safely, and without any major COVID-19 outbreaks. We are confident that staggering the lift of the face-covering rule is in the best interest of our students, staff and family members connected to our community.

Regardless of any staff, student, or guardian's personal feelings about this change, we require that everyone act with respect and courtesy with regards to an individual's face-covering

<p><u>SEAL Lombard</u> 240 E Progress Road Lombard, IL 60148 Phone (630) 953 – 1222 Fax (630) 953 - 9171</p>	<p><u>SEAL Woodstock</u> 1200 Claussen Drive Woodstock, IL 60098 Phone (815) 337 – 2005 Fax (815) 337 - 2040</p>	<p><u>SEAL South Romeoville</u> 1265 Naperville Drive, Unit D Romeoville, IL 60446 Phone (630) 226 – 0004 Fax (630) 226 - 9083</p>	<p><u>SEAL South Yorkville</u> 109 Beaver Street Yorkville, IL 60560 Phone (630) 642 5888 Fax (630) 642 5878</p>
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decision. There may be times when masking is appropriate and necessary for all or for particular individuals. Students and staff who feel a need to mask should feel comfortable and safe doing so at all times.

In the weeks following this reduced mitigation practice, S.E.A.L. will continue to monitor both local metrics, as well as observe our internal positivity data. If it is felt that our environment is being affected by the reduction in mitigation measures, S.E.A.L. may decide to reinforce face-covering rules for all who enter our buildings.

We thank you all for your understanding and continued support of the School of Expressive Arts and Learning.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

SEAL Leadership and Administration

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