
Formal Written Correspondence to the Board [#464]

1 message

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Subject *

Masks for all in school

Comments *

To the Board, We entrust you to provide a safe learning environment for all children. Our children come from homes with different views on many things, including COVID, but the need to keep kids safe is universal. We need our Board to hold true to this mandate and continue to keep our kids safe. COVID is not the common cold or flu, if you get COVID you have a risk of long term health impacts. This risks far outweigh the annoyance of wearing a face mask. My children are not annoyed or negatively impacted by wearing a mask. It is normal for them. In fact, they had to wear masks all day at their LARPD run camps. The children are not complaining, the complaints are coming from adults who have more complex feelings about COVID. We are not debating those feelings, but are instead focusing our discussion on the health and safety of our children.

The science is clear, wearing a mask helps keep you and others safe. The mask you wear protects those around you and their mask will in turn protect you. We want to be able to have our kids fully benefit from in person learning but not be asked to trade off safety and health to do so. Some argue that their decision to no mask is only risking their health, but the science shows that is not true. You can be infected with COVID and be asymptomatic AND you can still spread the virus as you breathe, speak, cough, etc. and in turn infect someone else. If you are masked the risk of you spreading the virus drops significantly. When your personal choice impacts the health and safety of another it no longer becomes a personal choice. We have had this debate with smoking and as a society we made a decision that one's personal choice could not be to the detriment of others around them. Smoking harms the person holding the cigarette AND the second hand smoke harms those around them. Because of this we have removed smoking from places where people congregate. Yes, you can smoke but you cannot smoke around others who may be harmed. Masking is very similar. Yes, you can be unmasked if you are alone but once you are around others you must mask. Your personal choices cannot impact the health and safety of others. There are so many examples where we as a society have decided that personal choices must be limited so others may stay safe and healthy, another daily example would be something as simple as speed limits, car seats. Booster seats, etc., etc. We are part of a society and thus we have to understand that when interacting in public spaces and with groups that the personal choices we can make may be limited.

Lastly, I ask the Board to fully review and validate any claims made by speakers during the upcoming board meeting. There is a significant amount of mis-information available and all must be vetted. For instance, some may try to

reference the JAMA article that purported to prove that having children masked for long periods of time was detrimental to their health. JAMA has retracted this article. Through additional peer feedback it was noted that the methods, instrumentation and data used by the researchers had significant issues. As noted by Amy Houtrow, MD, PhD, MPH | University of Pittsburgh

As a member of the editorial boards for three journals I understand the challenges in evaluating the scientific rigor and validity of submitted manuscripts. In my experience it has become increasingly difficult to secure high quality peer reviews. Nonetheless, the fact that this manuscript made it through editorial screening, peer-review, and approval is concerning. The need for the study was not well justified, the premise biased, the methodology flawed and thus the resultant data unhelpful and the conclusions inappropriate. I fear that those with political incentive to demonize mask-wearing will use this study as 'scientific evidence' to undermine public health strategies.

As you make you decision, you need to ensure the information you use is validated and accurate. We ask the Board to ensure the safety of our children and all the district staff by requiring ALL on school property be masked regardless of vaccination status and that this mandate be enforced.



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