



Akron Central School District

In Pursuit of Excellence

*Patrick D. McCabe
Superintendent of Schools*

June 14, 2021

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
New York State Capitol Building, Second Floor
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

Thank you for your service to the students of New York and for your leadership throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. As you know, school districts continue to work diligently to provide optimal learning environments for all children while complying with all NYSDOH and NYSED guidelines for in-person instruction. As we draw closer to the end of the 2020-2021 school year, we are asking you to exercise the same degree of compassion and care for our students as you have in the past.

The Akron Central School District is respectfully requesting that you repeal all mandatory mask wearing requirements for in-person learning at the conclusion of the 2020-2021 school year. Moving forward, for indoor settings, masks could be strongly encouraged, but not required.

The risk for COVID-19 transmission in our area is at an all time low with a 7 day rolling average of 11 positive cases per 100,000 people. At the same time, the percentage of vaccinated people has reached 69.9% and is likely to surpass the 70% milestone when, by your account, "we will be back to life as normal." Yet, for reasons not supported by any scientific data, school age children will still be required to wear masks indoors despite the numerous safety protocols we continue to have in place to safeguard their well being and mitigate the spread of the virus. As you stated on June 7, 2021, "The numbers show that the risk of transmission by children is extremely low, especially in this state, which has an extremely low positivity rate."

In response to learning loss and the need to address the social/emotional effects of the pandemic, our District is seeking to dramatically expand summer learning opportunities for all students in grades K-12. In addition, we are planning for the full return of students this September. At the same time, parent outcry for an end to mandatory mask wearing intensifies daily with some parents considering keeping their children home rather than have them wear masks throughout the summer and next year. Our data clearly demonstrates that students need to be back with us and they cannot afford to attend school in a remote model any longer.

We respectfully request you to revoke all mask mandates for students and staff so that we can focus on the critical work of closing achievement gaps, promoting social and emotional health, and the restoration of our classrooms and school buildings to places where children long to be.

Sincerely,

Patrick D. McCabe
Superintendent of Schools

James H. Grant
Board of Education President