

# LONGWOOD CENTRAL SCHOOLS

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June 14, 2021

As the elected leaders of the Longwood Central School District in Suffolk County New York, we supported the various decisions that have been made for our students and staff since the beginning of the pandemic. Based upon the data provided to us by state and federal leaders, including infection rates, positivity rates, hospitalization and death rates, we supported the decision to mask our children in schools. With the lowest positivity rate on Long Island since the pandemic began, it is time to change these mandates. The CDC informed us last week that they will not revise their guidance for New York State schools. While we agree with the decision to unmask children outside, we find the decision to keep children masked inside unacceptable.

Our priorities continue to be student and staff safety. We are requesting that the CDC and New York State leaders revise their guidance based upon current COVID-19 data. The children in our district, ages 5-18, have been resilient, adaptable, and patient. Our district is noticing an increase in mental health issues with regards to leaving the mask mandate in place. We implore you to remove the indoor mask mandate.

The same children that we require to wear masks in our buildings are with each other on weekends, participate in extracurricular activities, frequent community events and are coming together mask-less in their homes and backyards. We support a parent's choice to mask or unmask their children. We are demanding that mask restrictions be lifted inside our school buildings and to give such restrictive decision making to the local school district leaders who know their communities better than our state representatives.

We have listened to our government leaders and now it is time for our representatives to listen to us. Please give us local control and let us unmask those who choose to do so.

Thank you.

Respectfully,



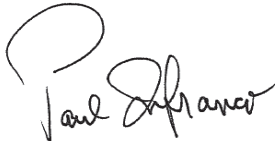
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