

2/24/22 Community Comments

Date Submitted	First Name	Last Name	Comment:
2/17/2022 15:27:04	Malgorzata	Kopec	Hello, I just want to say that we're so glad that my son finally can go to school-mask free. He is happy when he can see his teacher and some of the other kids faces.
2/18/2022 3:12:04	Maryellen	Maloney	Masks are no longer needed and possibly never were. Science is not backing it up. It is an injustice to children and must stop.
2/19/2022 17:56:30	Zoi	Giannakopoulos	With all the new information about the school mask mandates coming out will parents and staff get clear guidelines on protocols moving forward? For instance, are children to be separated in the classroom based on their masking status? My boys have been doing some masking and some time without masks. I am totally fine without them wearing masks, but left the decision up to them. I have explained to them that we are ALWAYS respectful of everyone's choices, and kindness is of utmost importance. But, I got a little worried when my oldest son told me that he wears his mask a lot because he wants to participate in class activities. That students without masks are not allowed to get up and walk around the class? I don't know if this is my son's interpretation, but I have been hearing similar instances from friends with children at Lions and Westbrook too. That kids without masks are being moved to sit together and aren't being allowed to work in group activities. That dividers are being utilized to separate the unmasked students from the masked. I am very hopeful that it's not really happening in this way, because that would be really sad for those kids, and truly a form of segregation. With all the time and investment the district is putting into equity audits, I would hope that if this is occurring it is stopped immediately. As segregation of any kind does not provide an equitable learning environment for students. Lastly, please continue to make masking optional. It's time to continue moving forward, with respect and kindness for all students and families. Thank you for your time.
2/19/2022 19:21:05	lisa	shah	Hello, I am writing in regard to the possibility of the return of certain mitigation strategies to covid 19 to district 57. I understand there is a possibility of bringing back quarantine for students who are considered a close contact of another student while at school. I strongly urge the board to understand how disruptive this is to students and their learning. We are entering our 3rd year of this pandemic and it is imperative that students have as a consistent schedule as possible while in school. The quarantine is extremely disruptive to the students as well as the teachers. The CDC guidelines suggest that a test to stay option should be utilized for students as an alternative to quarantining at home. <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/what-you-should-know.html#test">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/what-you-should-know.html#test</a> Up until the TRO was in effect, district 57 was not utilizing this for students at the elementary level (i.e. unmasked exposure at lunch). I understand Lincoln has this option for masked students in the classroom that are less than 3 feet apart, but according to Dr. Gorr, the test to stay option was not available for the younger students. I do feel if this option was available, you would have more participation in shield testing. While I understand the severity of the pandemic and the need to take it seriously, I do think taking smart and realistic steps in a forward direction will allow our district to safely keep our students in school.
2/22/2022 16:30:27	Debbie	Rento	I'm one of the parents who let my kids go to school without a mask. It's been shown that after 30 mins (and that's being generous, especially with omicron) the masks these kids have been wearing are and have been ineffective. There is various charts out there from reputable sources, but I can't attach one here. Kids can not wear N95, which is the only mask that can provide a school days worth of filtration (when worn properly...which kids really don't do) . Science and studies of masks effectiveness prove that in a school setting, they only offer a short time of "protection". It's not even helpful as a layered mitigation to the virus. Ironically, they are more effective in a shopping store setting but that's not even going to be mandated anymore at the end of the month. Doesn't make much sense, does it ? Kids have been coming to school since the start of the year wearing these cloths masks or paper masks and our numbers have been fine. No Covid clusters, no spread...like 86 cases total in Fairview. This whole year it hasn't been the masks that has achieved this. They have a half hour expiration in the classroom. They basically have been walking around with no protection on their faces after 30mins of wear. I feel like it's been the distancing, cleaning and kids staying home when they are sick. The contact tracing has been annoying...my kids have had to quarantine three times because of it (they have not caught Covid from their close contacts either) But I can still understand the logic behind contact tracing. But masking my 10 yr old who has ADD and Tourette's all day even though his mask is only effective for 30 mins yet people working in in office buildings can be mask free...that I can not find logic behind. I'm asking that the school boards take logic into consideration when they discuss mitigations. Thank you Debbie Rento
2/23/2022 15:38:16	Tera	Herling	We need to get rid of mask mandates. It needs to be a family choice at this point. Also, We should move back to regular lunch tables. So kids don't have to sit on the gym floor.
2/23/2022 20:00:36	Stacey	Pahlke	Hello,  I know this is a very difficult time for the board and I want to thank you for your efforts through the Covid pandemic. I also want to thank you for making masks optional as this pandemic has come to a decline and it has been shown that Covid is not being significantly spread in schools. All we were ever asking was for a choice and we have made a great step in the right direction. I hope we can continue moving in the same direction and that mask don't come back as mandatory. Masks have caused such a significant decline in children's learning progress and mental health. I beg you to make the right decision and keep masks optional in schools.  Thank you
2/24/2022 6:01:46	Nolan	Hollis	Hi, my name is Nolan Hollis. I am a fourth-grader at lions park school. I have a few concerns.  My first concern is that I am confused about the board's final decision on mask-wearing. This is my opinion. I think every family, student, and staff have the right to choose to wear their mask or not. Wearing a mask is not for me. The last three weeks have been the best three weeks of school since covid started because I can see people's faces, smiles, and reactions, and seeing people's smiles make my day. So please don't make us put a mask back on if we don't want to wear it. Just remember how it affects some people.  My second reason is testing has not been the same thing. It is different because we have masks on our faces. This affects our learning because we cannot then focus on the test. Instead, we are focusing on wearing a mask correctly. I feel that because of the masks the test scores have gone down.  Thank you for reading my thoughts on wearing masks.
2/24/2022 6:57:20	Kim	Pearson	Dear D57 BOE, I am writing to you to ask that you please keep masks optional in our D57 schools. Our children have been through so much the past 2 years since this all began. Having masks as an option is helping kids feel a sense of normalcy, which is what children need. People should always be given a choice, and that's simply what I'm asking you to do. Let families choose what is best for them and their children. Thank you for your time and all of your hard work during this trying time. Sincerely, Kim Pearson
2/24/2022 9:21:55	Andy	Revelis	I write to request the board reverts the lunch seating arrangement at Westbrook back to a table setting that was in place at the beginning of the school year. For over 3 months our children have been eating ON THE FLOOR! The floor is no place for our children to be eating their lunch day after day. Floors are dirty, constantly stepped on and even though they may be cleaned prior to lunch they DO NOT provide the correct space to eat lunch. As explained to me, the reasoning for this was to keep the students 6 feet apart to eliminate missing school due to being considered close contact. With the recent communication out that District 57 will not be contact-tracing nor exclude close contacts, this floor setting is no longer necessary or needed. Our children deserve to be eating lunch in a table and chair setting as we adults do in our daily lives. They should not be treated any differently and have this simple yet important right RETURNED TO THEM! Thank You.
2/24/2022 11:14:41	Lucyna	Bak	Dear Dr. Gorr and Board Members, During your discussion and while updating D57 COVID Mitigation Plan please keep in your minds Judge Grischow's ruling: "under no circumstances IDPH can delegate its authority regarding public safety to ISBE or school districts - it is an abuse of power and was never contemplated by the Legislature." Only the health department can issue a longer than 48 hours quarantine order by proving in front of a judge that a particular individual is a public health risk. As of today the health department failed to do so and all of the individual cases have been won by the parents. In addition "the Court has already ruled masks are a device intended to stop the spread of an infectious/contagious disease, and thus are a type of quarantine." This administration and board chose to follow unconstitutional mandates reworded for its allegiance to the Governor by ESSER money. Now that the law is clear on masks, quarantines, and testing I advise the Board to act in accordance and never, now or in the future, allow this kind of actions. In addition please stop the practice of making kids eat on the floor or on their labs - this is inhumane and can be accounted as a child abuse. The same would apply to keeping them 6 feet apart - this practice is pointless and not backed up by science. Please be advised that you will be held accountable for your decisions. Sincerely, Lucyna A. Bak

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2/24/2022 11:30:17	Kirsten	Welter	<p>Dear Board,</p> <p>I implore you to continue to keep the masks optional status in our elementary and middle schools. I have seen a marked improvement in my children's ability to connect with their teachers and friends, and their attitude towards learning and school has improved dramatically as well. My children are excited to attend school again, have shown improved health at home (sleeping and breathing better), improved interactions with friends at school and are overall happier than they were when wearing the masks.</p> <p>I understand there are some families who have the desire to continue to send their children with masks, and they should have the freedom to do so. But my family, and the other families who desire to have the option to have our children unmasked, should not have this option be taken away from us.</p> <p>Additionally, the stress of contact tracing on my family has been a huge negative impact when it was installed. My healthy child was removed from her accelerated classes multiple times this past year because her sister had seasonal allergies. My older daughter needed to be pulled from her test at school, tested for COVID, and then returned later in the day after the negative results came back. There was no exposure to Covid and she had no symptoms. The disruption to her learning caused her undo stress and it was very hard for her to make up the work and lessons because her teachers didn't have after school hours for help.</p> <p>Parents are the best ones to determine if their child can attend school or not, and be trusted to make the appropriate decisions on when to seek medical attention or not.</p> <p>Children have the lowest risk of death with COVID, and 99.95% of children recover fully when they are infected with this. It is time we begin to live with COVID and recognize that the natural immunity that happens when one recovers from COVID. This is the only way to move forward in life.</p>
2/24/2022 12:00:01	Kate	Morton	<p>Thank you.</p> <p>Thank you to the board, administration and school staff for your time and dedication to our schools and students. I am writing to voice my support for continued COVID mitigations in schools. I also hope that the metrics referenced for decisions to reduce mitigations are conservative. We must consider the most vulnerable in our population and how quickly lowering mitigations could spread COVID in our community. There are students within our district and children in our families who have not had the opportunity to be vaccinated due to their age. I also hope that metrics and protocols will be frequently reviewed and updated as data and situations change. In addition to contact tracing and testing, please consider long lasting improvements to our schools to combat COVID and illness in the future with air purifiers, increased ventilation /air purification in meal areas and outdoor eating spaces when weather allows. I do hope that mitigations can be lowered when advised by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Thank you for your consideration for our childrens' safety and education.</p>