



Illinois State Representative
Dan Caulkins – 101st District

July 12, 2021

Governor JB Pritzker
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Pritzker,

I write to you today regarding a subject that has attracted much attention over the past few weeks. The focus point of these discussions is whether or not the State of Illinois will require children to wear a mask while in class and during activities this coming school year.

We are all concerned about the health and welfare of our children. Decisions such as this must be made with careful deliberation and overwhelming consideration of the wishes of those closest to the issue - parents who know and care the most for their children.

I'm sure it's tempting to issue a state-wide mandate on masks. Please consider this first. The science has improved and evolved over the last year. We have many examples of our schools being open for in-person learning as well as scientific studies on the effects of children wearing masks for extended periods of time. To the best of my knowledge, no spikes in COVID cases has occurred in districts where in-person learning has taken place. We also know (JAMA Pediatrics 6/30/2021 Research Letter) that the buildup of carbon monoxide has been detected in children's masks which can lead to serious health issues. This study and others conclude that mask wearing by children in school can lead to both physical and mental health problems.

My ask of you today is to let the decision on school children wearing a mask be left up to local school districts. They know their situation and the desire of their parents. It's obvious that parents wouldn't put their children in danger, any more than you would. I'm also asking that you direct the State Board of Education to stop threatening school districts for making these decisions. There is no legislation that permits the Board to withhold funding from any district without due process. In fact, the ISBE's mission is to support our local districts, not dictate to them their personal preferences.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. As you know, my phone is always on and I stand ready to work with you and your staff on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Caulkins".

Dan Caulkins
State Representative – 101st District