

Good evening, I come to you today as a concerned parent, asking for a Mask Choice versus a Mask Mandate. Our children are important to us and we care about their ability to breathe and function. I am appalled that the district sent out a video Monday from some "experts" to tell me and my family how good masks are for our children. With an expert whose experience comes from dealing with HIV epidemiology, totally irrelevant to masks. This was full of fear and propaganda... Making parents believe that the only way to keep their children safe is for them to wear a mask?? I believe the purpose was to deter any arguments from parents about having a choice. That's all we want is a choice. If other parents choose to put their children in masks 9 hours a day, then they should have that choice.

We have a 9 and 11 year old who are bright, amazing children and as their parents, we will fight for them so that they believe that speaking up is better than just following blindly. We want our children to get a great education but it has become like a prison, they must eat in their classrooms, they must stay behind plexiglass, they must wear their masks constantly, sometimes 9 hours with limited breaks, they must play only with their peers in their class at recess-they are forbidden to interact with other classes, they must use hand sanitizer religiously throughout the day until my son's knuckles bleed for fear that his germs may get on someone else and vice versa...how is this different from a prison?

My 9 year old was asked to write an opinion piece on something that was important to him. He wrote:

In my opinion, I don't like masks because they are annoying and I can't see people's faces. I also don't like feeling like I can't breathe when I run with a mask on. I get a headache when I wear my mask too long.

The other day I was wearing my mask while playing basketball in PE and it gave me a really bad headache. I took off my mask and felt much better. My ears hurt sometimes when I wear my mask because of the things that go around my ears. I can't see when someone smiles when they are trying to be nice and they might think that I am being mean. They might think that I am being mean and ignoring them because they can't see my mouth and face and then I can't make a new friend.

In conclusion, it would be nice to not have to wear masks like we used to.

This is a 9 year old's words explaining and supporting that masks are not healthy and are psychologically damaging our children.

I believe that it is totally unfair for one person to have the authority over all parents and children to implement such stringent rules without knowing the real impact this is having on OUR children. It is devastating that an environment has been created to make children feel like they can't play with their friends or hug their teacher for fear that that hug or game of catch will hurt the other person. All teachers or school staff have had the opportunity to get the vaccine if they wish, so why do OUR children have to remain masked and behind a wall of plastic??

Our children should not be punished. **WE** are not afraid and **WE** deserve to have a choice for our children.