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DISTRICT 31

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Community Education Council District 31

Resolution Calling for the In-School Mask Mandate for New York City Public School Students Enrolled in LYFE, Early Learn (Infants & Toddlers), 3K, Pre-K and 4410 Classrooms to be Optional

Approved at the March, 7th 2022 CEC31 Calendar Meeting

by a roll call vote of all members present (9 in favor / 0 opposed / 0 abstain)

This resolution calls upon Governor Hochul, Mayor Adams, and Chancellor Banks, to modify the in-school mask mandate that began in September 2020. CEC31 requests that the mask mandate that began in September 2020 be optional for all students in our District; including students registered in LYFE, EarlyLearn (Infants & Toddlers), 3-K, Pre-K, and 4410 classrooms

WHEREAS, NYC Department of Education announced that as of March 7th, 2022, masks would be optional for all individuals in indoor K-12 school settings, with updated guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) but that children and faculty in LYFE, EarlyLearn (Infants & Toddlers), 3-K, Pre-K, and 4410 classrooms masking would remain mandatory;

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention “Guidance on the Use of and Care of Masks”¹ recommends that masking should be based on personal preference and informed by personal level of risk when COVID-19 Community Levels are low;

WHEREAS, the New York City Department of Education has been able to fully reopen schools with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance and NYC Department of Education daily Covid Case Map data shows 33 reported COVID cases total Citywide for New York City Public Schools as of March 6th, 2022;²

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention³ confirm that children are at a low risk of severe disease, long-term side effects, and death from COVID-19;

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

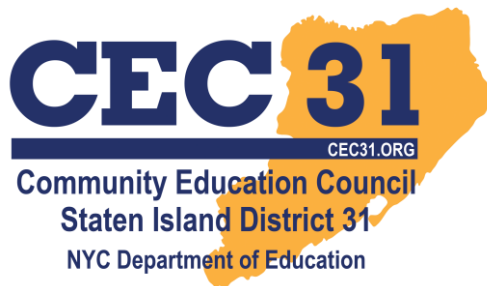
² <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness/covid-information/daily-covid-case-map>

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/investigations-discovery/hospitalization-death-by-age.html>

COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 31

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WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Guidance⁴, states a poorly fitting or uncomfortable mask or respirator that might be worn incorrectly or removed often, would reduce the intended benefits;

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization⁵ states that children under 5 years old should not wear masks, and requiring masks for children should be made based on several factors, including the impact of wearing a mask on a child’s psychosocial development;

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization⁶ also recommends against children wearing masks during exercise or play, as masks compromise a child’s ability to breathe;

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Health⁷ declared that Schools in NYS have been operating safely during the COVID-19 pandemic through adoption of recommended public health measures, including but not limited to masking. Additional mitigation measures should remain in use, including improved ventilation, widespread vaccination, testing and use of home test kits, maintaining physical distance as feasible, hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette, encouraging students and staff to stay at home when ill or symptomatic, and voluntary mask wearing for those who prefer the extra protection;

WHEREAS, 100% of classroom teachers, school personnel, and administrators actively working in NYC schools are now vaccinated;⁸

WHEREAS, Federal guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention gives local boards control to make decisions based on conditions in their communities;⁹

WHEREAS, current language of the new guidance states that the indoor mask mandate is still active for LYFE, EarlyLearn (Infants & Toddlers), 3-K, Pre-K, and 4410 classrooms since children under the age of five are not yet eligible to receive the vaccine, face coverings

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

⁵ <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/q-a-children-and-masks-related-to-covid-19>

⁶ <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/q-a-children-and-masks-related-to-covid-19>

⁷ <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/new-masking-guidance-update-schools>

⁸ <https://infohub.nyced.org/working-with-the-doe/covid-19-resources/covid-19-vaccination-mandate>

⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cdcresponse/index.html>

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remain our strongest defense against COVID-19 for our youngest learners.¹⁰ However other students throughout the NYC Department of Education’s K-12 programming that are unvaccinated and plan to remain so, have returned to school with the mask requirement being optional

WHEREAS, CEC31 supports that masks be fully optional, and that all those students and families who require or would prefer to remain masked should continue to do so and be fully supported by their entire school community in that decision

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CEC31 calls on Governor Hochul to eliminate legislation that makes masking mandatory at all schools, including Pre-K centers, and daycares in New York State and allow the administration of each school district to set their own classroom mask policies

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CEC31 calls on Mayor Adams to make the use of masks optional at all NYC DOE schools, Pre-K centers, and daycares in New York City and allow the administration of each school district to set their own classroom mask policies

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CEC31 calls on Chancellor Banks to make the use of masks optional at NYC DOE schools, Pre-K centers, and daycares in New York City and allow the administration of each school district to set their own classroom mask policies

¹⁰ <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/messages-for-families>