



WALL TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board of Education

P.O. Box 1199 • 18th Avenue

Wall, NJ 07719

Mr. Ralph Addonizio
Board President

TEL: 732-556-2006
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August 10, 2021

Honorable Phil Murphy
225 West State Street
P.O. Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor Murphy,

Please accept this correspondence on behalf of the Wall Township Board of Education, our many stakeholders and most importantly the students of Wall Township Public Schools. This is a follow up to our letter dated May 24, 2021. This letter is to inform you of our opposition to Executive Order 251 dated August 6, 2021.

Again, for your understanding, the Wall Township School District is made up of One Primary School, Four Elementary Schools, One Intermediate School, and One High School. We employ over 750 people and are responsible for the education and safety of over 3,300 students.

The Wall Township Board of Education takes issue with Executive Order 251, as it comes directly after the district-wide Pandemic Response Team made the decision to have the 2021-2022 school year as mask optional. Your blanket orders do not reflect what is in the best interest of the students and staff of the Wall Township Public Schools and infringe on home rule.

In your new executive order, you cite "the CDC now recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors in K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status;" This is a recommendation, provided to offer guidance to states and families. The district Pandemic Response team used this guidance to make their final recommendation for the school year.

You go on to list several exemptions to the executive order such as "h. When wearing a face mask creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task." We as a board have had some parents tell us how masks are negatively affecting their children's psychological and emotional well-being, as well making it harder to learn and concentrate. Parents have expressed concerns over masking students for six hours per day.

We on the Wall Township Board of Education, along with our community stakeholders, call on you as the Governor, to immediately rescind Executive Order 251. The Board of Education should have the ability to decide if masks need to be optional or mandatory. We, as local community members, understand the needs of our district, not Trenton. Each school district, with the advice



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of district Administration, Pandemic Response Team and parents, know what is best for their students and community.

In conclusion, we strongly encourage you to reverse this order, returning decision making back to the individual school districts. Deciding to mandate wearing masks in schools, a month in advance prior to the start of school, challenged the local decision-making process and took the power away from the people directly involved in this community.

Sincerely,

Ralph Addonizio

Ralph Addonizio
President
Wall Township Board of Education

Andrew Krupa
Vice President

Board Members
Christopher San Filippo
Kenneth Wondrak
Christine Steitz
Russell Gartz
Joseph Hall
Adam Nasr
Kristen Hodnett