

**Board of Education**

Victor Iannello
Board President

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Governor Phil Murphy
225 W State Street
Trenton, NJ 08625

August 16, 2021

Dear Governor Murphy,

Please be advised that the Hazlet Township Board of Education respectfully requests you to repeal your most recent Mask Mandate, Executive Order 251. This Order requires masks and other face coverings to be worn in school buildings although children and adults are not required to wear masks in places such as supermarkets, movie theaters, or gyms. This is not only illogical, but also removes the local school district's authority from making the same decisions that other businesses and entities in the State of New Jersey are permitted to make.

In June of this year, the Hazlet Township Board of Education approved a Proclamation asking for the repeal of the previous mask mandate and, with this subsequent letter, we are once again asking for the same action on behalf of your office.

Local school districts are better equipped to gauge their individual community's needs, as well as closely monitor the dangers, if any, should COVID and the Delta Variant take a sharp upturn in our Township. We believe that local school districts should not be denied the opportunity, via their oath of office, to provide what is best for their students, staff and community. Your Executive Order treats all school districts throughout New Jersey exactly the same when it comes to the mask mandate, which may become necessary in some communities and not others.

The Hazlet Township Board of Education urges you to lift the mask and face coverings mandates as it applies to our school buildings and our students. It would be an injustice to require masks be worn again this school year if the local district decides it is safe to offer it as an option, which will allow families to decide what is best for them.

It is time to give the local school districts the same autonomy that you grant other businesses that interact with children on a regular basis. Local rule, not a one-size-fits-all mandate, should be the ONLY rule when it comes to OUR children.

Please consider returning this important choice to each school district and allow for school districts to make decisions that best suit their individual stakeholders.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Victor Iannello".

Victor Iannello
President, Hazlet Board of Education

"Educating our students...to achieve their maximum potential."