

Miller Place Union Free School District

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January 12, 2023

Sent via fax (518) 474-1513 and US Postal Service (CM:RR)

The Honorable Kathy Hochul

Governor of New York State

NYS Capitol Building

Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

We are writing to you today on behalf of the Miller Place School District and community to ask for your continued support of families making their own choice to receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

The Miller Place Union Free School District was able to have a traditional school opening for the 2022-23 school year when over 2,400 students returned to our classrooms in September. Since this time, our students have been participating in person in our classrooms, interscholastic athletic teams and clubs as well as concerts and field trips. As a result, our students are thriving as their lives return to some normalcy.

As a New York State School Board of Education, we understand and recognize your focus is on mitigating the transmission of COVID-19. We would like New York State to consider that by enacting a COVID-19 Vaccine mandate, some families may choose to exclude their children from attending school in person. Consequently, any families opting to withdraw their children from school would further expand learning gaps already present as a result of previous COVID-19 mandates. This would not only impact Miller Place families, but potentially groups of students across the state. We are committed to bridging the gaps in our community in order to foster success for all of our students.

The Miller Place Union Free School District strives to maximize in person student attendance so that students can continue to succeed academically, socially, artistically, and athletically. We are advocating that you keep the COVID-19 Vaccine as a choice for our families. Being in school is of the utmost

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importance to academic success and mental health, and the current guidance has helped us bring our community together after the pandemic while still meeting our goals.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this important matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Seth A. Lipshie

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Superintendent of Schools

Lisa Reitan

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President, Board of Education

Bryan Makarius

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Vice President, Board of Education

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