



Dr. Adele V. Pecora • Superintendent of Schools

1600 Washington Avenue, Seaford, NY 11783 • Phone: (516) 592-4010 • Fax: (516) 592-4049

February 8, 2022

The Honorable Kathleen Hochul
Governor of New York State
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

The Seaford Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools are writing to express our deep concern with the erratic court decisions and regulations regarding mask mandates in our state. The political sparring regarding this issue has confused and divided our community. The State must consider the explosive environment caused by the events of the last two weeks which includes the temporary lifting of mask mandates followed immediately by the reinstatement of mask regulations via a stay order pending the appeal. These events have negatively impacted students, and resulted in anger, anxiety, and discord among parents, staff, and educational leaders. Additionally, the halting of contact tracing by the local and state departments of health signals a huge disconnect regarding the severity of the current COVID 19 environment.

Just today, Governor Phil Murphy announced his plan to end the mask mandate in New Jersey. We would ask that New York follow the example set by our neighbor.

For too long, shifting COVID-19 case management and surveillance to the schools has inappropriately distracted school districts from their main charge of educating children in the healthiest and most efficient means possible. Boards, administrators, teachers, and staff are spending an exhaustive amount of time and energy on non-educational issues, which in turn does irreparable harm to the learning environment. Our schools are in a state of crisis because of the stress and anxiety directly associated with overextending our educational systems with tasks more appropriately assigned to the Department of Health.

The angst and depression caused by the wearing of masks continues to escalate. We desperately need the mask regulations to allow for individual and parental choice for staff and students. Therefore, we respectfully request that you either cease the mask mandate immediately or allow regulation 10 NYCRR 2.60 to expire on February 21, 2022.

Kindly communicate any anticipated changes as soon as possible so that our district may plan accordingly. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Stacie Stark
Stacie Stark
President of Seaford Board of Education

Adele V. Pecora
Adele V. Pecora, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools