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Comments for 9.27.21 School Board Meeting

1 message

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Mon, Sep 27, 2021 at 7:21 AM

Members of the School Board,

I am writing in support of Amy Riddle-Swanson's agenda item to approve a K-12 mask mandate for all the reasons/background information she provided.

At the last School Board Meeting, I believe I heard a request for more study-based evidence regarding masking in schools. The following link is an article that summarizes two such studies that came out on Friday. The text of the article also follows.

Thank you,

Julie Bendel
Menomonee

<https://www.healio.com/news/pediatrics/20210924/pediatric-covid19-cases-spike-in-areas-without-school-mask-mandates>

Pediatric COVID-19 cases spike in areas without school mask mandates

U.S. counties without school mask requirements saw pediatric COVID-19 cases increase nearly twice as fast in the 2 weeks after schools reopened than counties with mask mandates, according to an *MMWR* report published Friday.

In another new *MMWR* report, schools in two of the Arizona's most populous counties were found to be 3.5 times more likely to have COVID-19 outbreaks if they did not have a mask requirement at the start of school compared with similar schools that required masks.

For 999 of the eligible 1,041 K-12 public noncharter schools in Maricopa and Pima counties included in the study, 210 (21%) had an early mask requirement, 309 (30.9%) had a late mask requirement enacted a median

of 15 days after school started (interquartile range = 9-17 days) and 480 (48%) had no mask requirement at all.

From July 15 to Aug. 31, 191 school-associated outbreaks took place, with 16 in schools with early mask requirements, 62 in schools with late mask requirements and 113 in schools without mask requirements.

A similar, albeit nationwide, report found that during the 2 weeks following the start of school, the average change in pediatric COVID-19 case rates was lower among counties with school mask requirements (16.32 per 100,000/day) compared with counties without school mask requirements (34.85 cases per 100,000/day).

Another nationwide report studied COVID-19-related school closures and found that despite an estimated 1,801 school closures so far school year, more than 96% of public schools have been able to remain open for full in-person learning. Most school closures took place in the South, with the most being in Tennessee, Georgia, Kentucky and Texas, whereas Pennsylvania had the most closures in the East, Ohio in the Midwest and Nevada in the West.

Each of the studies promoted vaccines for eligible students, mask wearing and testing. Public school students aged older than 12 years are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, and Pfizer said earlier this week that its vaccine for even younger children generated a [“robust response”](#) in test groups. The company estimated that its vaccine would be authorized by the FDA [as soon as the end of October](#).

References:

[Budzyn SE, et al. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* 2021;doi:10.15585/mmwr.mm7039e3.](#)

[Jehn M, et al. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* 2021;doi:10.15585/mmwr.mm7039e1_w.](#)

[Parks SE, et al. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* 2021;doi:10.15585/mmwr.mm7039e2_w.](#)