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RESPONSE TO REPUBLICAN DELEGATION'S LETTER TO SCHOOL BOARDS

The Cumberland County Democratic Committee urges School Districts and School Boards to dismiss the Joint Letter to School Districts Addressing Mask Mandates from the elected Republican representatives to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The letter, sent to every school district in Cumberland County, urges school leaders to reject science and expert guidance.

The American Academy of Pediatrics released new Covid-19 guidance that supports in-person learning and recommends universal masking in schools of everyone over the age of 2, regardless of vaccination status. The CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.

Citing the threat of the highly contagious delta variant of the coronavirus, spiking infections, and hospitalizations across the state and nationally, including among children, the PSEA strongly encourages every school district in Pennsylvania to require students and staff to wear masks in school buildings as part of a multi-layered approach to keeping our schools safe and open for in-person instruction. Pennsylvania's two statewide teachers unions urged K-12 schools to require masks in school, a measure many state officials are encouraging, but the entire Republican delegation to our state legislature requested our school boards to ignore.

School board members are also our elected officials. They are not obliged to capitulate to the six elected Republican representatives defining themselves as a school district's resource for funding levels for public education. Our school board's first obligation is to provide our children with a safe and healthy environment to learn and thrive. We are grateful to the several school boards and numerous directors who have voted to protect students through universal masking. The Cumberland County Democratic Committee supports the community members and the teachers union in requesting that all of our schools follow the CDC recommendations to follow universal masking in K through 12 schools.

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