

Statement from the AASD School Board

On August 31, Governor Wolf announced a mask mandate for all K-12 schools in Pennsylvania. The Athens Area School District Board recognizes that this announcement has sparked a wide range of questions and different viewpoints from across the community. While the Board can appreciate that this mandate has both supporters and opposition, we would like to remind the community that this decision has been made at a state-wide level. As a public school district and in line with all legal guidance we have received, we will not be taking any further action at this stage to challenge or debate the mandate.

Moreover, we strongly feel that continued debate on this matter is taking our administrators and teachers away from their top priority - the education of our children.

As a school board we would like to stress the following points:

- The AASD board voted in July on the 2021/22 Health and Safety plan: the plan did not require masks, but recommended they be worn based on public health guidance.
- The latest decision was not made at a local level. We are following the mandate in line with advice from legal counsel.
- If changes to the mandate come into place in the future, we will review our local Health and Safety Plan at that time.

If you wish to take this matter up further, we recommend that you reach out to your local state representative.

AASD School Board of Directors