

Stephanie Clougherty, *Chair*
Andrew Cardarelli, *Vice Chair*
Jennifer Pratt, *Secretary*
Colleen Zaniewski



CloughertyS@carver.org
CardarelliA@carver.org
PrattJ@carver.org
ZaniewskiC@carver.org

Carver School Committee

3 Carver Square Boulevard, Carver, Massachusetts 02330-1200
ph: (508) 866-6160 fx: (508) 866-2920 www.carver.org

September 27, 2021

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148-4906

To Whom It May Concern:

The Carver School Committee formally requests that the Massachusetts Department of Early and Secondary Education, Commissioner Riley and Governor Baker restore school COVID mitigation efforts, including mask requirements, to local control on or before October 1, 2021.

As grounds therefore, we state that local governance is in the best position to assess individual community needs and consider unique community resources that impact the risk of COVID transmission in our schools.

The Carver Public School District, for instance, routinely monitors COVID-19 data for not only our town, but for neighboring towns as well to help inform decisions by our Committee on any potential community spread in the area. Our district has developed robust and successful contact tracing. We are implementing the testing protocols outlined by DESE, including diagnostic testing, test and stay and pool testing of staff. The district also regularly disinfects and sanitizes our school building, and has invested considerable financial resources into maintaining and/or improving our air circulation systems in each school building. We also have strong collaborative relationships with our town departments, including our Board of Health.

We strongly believe that local governance, including our School Committee, can determine the best approach to COVID mitigation in our schools while meeting the needs of families and keeping our community safe.

We further request clarification on the information and science used in the development of the masking policies currently in effect for Massachusetts schools. Given the fluid nature of the pandemic and so much evolving information, it is easy to find conflicting information, data, and studies regarding different aspects of the pandemic, which leads to uncertainty and confusion regarding the public policies implemented in response to COVID-19.

We request that public agencies and officials at all levels be transparent with the information they are relying on to make and implement public policy decisions. To that end, we ask that DESE publish the data, studies, and references it relied on to make the decision to reinstate a mask mandate.

Sincerely,

The Carver Public School Committee
Carver, Massachusetts