



**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Milwaukee Board of School Directors

5225 W. Vliet St., Room 273, Milwaukee, WI 53208

(414) 475-8284 • Fax: (414) 475-8071

mps.milwaukee.k12.wi.us

governance@milwaukee.k12.wi.us

January 11, 2022

Milwaukee Common Council
City Hall
200 E. Wells Street
Room 205
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Common Council Members,

On January 6, 2022, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors voted to submit a request of the City of Milwaukee to reinstate a city-wide mask mandate for all buildings and events open to the public.

Milwaukee Public Schools made the difficult decision to start the second semester virtually. This decision was made after careful analysis of the COVID-19 statistics for Milwaukee. In addition to other testing sites, MPS held its own testing clinic and tested over 2300 students and staff. Data collected within MPS, and over winter recess, indicated that approximately 1,500 staff members and over 2,700 students tested positive for COVID-19.

Prior to the holidays, MPS had already begun dispatching Central Office Administrators, limited-term employees, and district substitutes to fill vacancies in the schools created by staff members being out due to COVID-19. As we saw a surge in the post-holiday testing numbers, we wanted to take every precautionary measure to keep our students and staff as safe as possible.

MPS parents, staff, and the entire community understand the importance of in-person learning. Studies have shown that students learn best in an in-person environment and we want our students to be back in their classrooms. The Milwaukee Board of School Directors believe that a city-wide mask requirement will assist in minimizing the spread of COVID-19. With a vaccine rate of 61.1% for adults over age 16 and a COVID-19 positivity rate of 38.5%, it is clear that a mask mandate must be instituted. We need to use every tool available to ensure that children can be in school learning.

It is imperative that we do all that we can to keep our children safe and prevent another year of learning loss. We look forward to working with the Office of the Acting Mayor, the Common Council, and the City of Milwaukee Health Department to move Milwaukee – and the education of our children – forward.

On Behalf of the Milwaukee Board of School Directors,


Robert E. Peterson

President, Milwaukee Board of School Directors

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