

Board of Education of Anne Arundel County | May 18, 2022

Key: (I) Information (A) Action (R) Review

REVISED Page 1 of 1

Board Meetings are held in the Board Room of the Carol Sheffey Parham Building at 2644 Riva Road, Annapolis, MD 21401

Times for agenda items are intended as guidance only.

The Board may choose to change the order of agenda items to meet the needs of the Board. Unless changed by the Board, items occur in the order listed.

Board Members

Joanna Tobin
President

Robert Silkworth
Vice President

Gloria D. Dent

Corine Frank

Melissa Ellis

Dana Schallheim

Michelle L. Corkadel

Bunmi Omisore

Upcoming Meetings

General Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 1, 2022
12:00 pm
Board Room

Policy Committee

Tuesday, May 31, 2022
3:00 pm
Virtual

Equity Committee

Tuesday, June 21, 2022
11:30 am
Virtual

Budget Committee

Monday, June 13, 2022
12:00 pm
Virtual

Board Workshop

N/A

4:00 pm 1. Motion to Enter Executive Closed Session

6:00 pm 2. Opening/Recognition

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2.01 Invocation | 2.04 Establish Agenda Order |
| 2.02 Pledge of Allegiance | 2.05 TAAAC Scholarship |
| 2.03 Approval of the Minutes | 2.06 Recognitions |
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6:10 pm 3. Public Comments

The Board will hear in-person and virtual public comment on agenda items from up to a total of 10 speakers per agenda item of each meeting, prior to Board discussion of those items. The process of signing up to speak and for delivering written comment can be found at www.aacps.org/boardtestimony.

6:40 pm 4. Reports

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|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 4.01 President's Report | 4.05 CRASC Report |
| 4.02 School Start Times Report | 4.06 CAC Report |
| 4.03 Equity Committee Report | 4.07 Superintendent's Report |
| 4.04 Budget Committee Report | |
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7:20 pm 5. Consent Items – Award of Contracts (A)

- 5.01 Asbestos - Repair and Removal
 - 5.02 Asphalt – Installation, Removal, and Replacement
 - 5.03 Behavioral Therapist
 - 5.04 HVAC Equipment Replacement – Relocatables
 - 5.05 On Call Plumbing Services
 - 5.06 PA System Replacement – South River HS
 - 5.07 Refuse Removal and Recycling
 - 5.08 Sport Surfaces – Installation and Materials
 - 5.09 Staffing Services
-

7:35 pm 6. Action Items (A)

- 6.01 Administrative Personnel Appointments
 - 6.02 Personnel
 - 6.03 Fourth Quarter Operating Budget Supplemental and Fund Transfer
 - 6.04 Ratification of the Negotiated Agreement between the Board of Education and the Secretaries and Assistants Association of Anne Arundel County (SAAAAC)
 - 6.05 Ratification of the Negotiated Agreement between the Board of Education and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, Local 1693 (AFSCME)
 - 6.06 New COVID-19 Outbreak Mitigation Strategies
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7. Motion to Enter Executive Closed Session (as needed)

The following testimony was submitted for the May 18, 2022, meeting of the Board of Education. The “...” designation indicates the cutoff of testimony due to it exceeding the word the limit. The full version of such testimony has been provided to the Board

ITEM 4.02 School Start Times Report

1. Changing the school start time will negatively impact many middle school PVA students throughout the county. My very talented granddaughter will have to drop out of the program if this short-sighted plan goes through. These students’ (most of whom are out of district) return bus rides can be over 1 1/2 hours on PVA days and help days. My granddaughter wouldn’t get home until 7 pm! I have contacted members of this board and leaders at the county building to get straight answers on how they plan to alleviate the stress this change will cause these kids. Crickets is all I’ve received. Does anyone have a solution? These uniquely talented kids deserve better.

Karin Meyers
Edgewater

2. You have been asked by families, staff, councilmembers, and transportation companies to delay start times until 2023-24. No one has asked you to ditch the plan; we have simply asked for a delay until you are actually ready to implement the plan. Any smart organization would see how their new system succeeds (opt-in transportation), fix the inefficiencies, and then implement the next change. This would also allow another year to secure more bus employees and continue planning so that when you implement the change, it might be successful instead of a complete and utter disaster.

I do not know why you continue to insist on this implementation from a report done in 2019 when we now live in a completely different world trying to recover from a pandemic. Families are struggling, and changing start times will not help.

Please come to your senses and delay start time implementation until 2023-24. This will give you time to make the plan an actual success instead of crash our school system into the ground. 40 plus buses were out Friday, May 13th. Next school year is not the time for this massive change that cannot be implemented because of a lack of staff, efficiency, and planning.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Fine

Gambrills

ITEM 6.06 New COVID-19 Outbreak Mitigation Strategies

1. I believe that the suggested mitigations strategies of wearing masks and providing tests when an outbreak is detected is a "right sized" strategy for this point in the COVID epidemic. I would like the board to re-state to teachers that we support them in staying home when they or their family members have COVID 19. Please encourage administrators to do the same. Two weeks ago my daughter was exposed by her teacher who told the class that she was feeling unwell, knew that she had covid, and was leaving right after school to go home to rest. The teacher was wearing a mask but had not been social distancing during class. I have heard other parents tell similar stories. I understand the teachers dedication, but we must do better in making them feel able to stay home when they are ill.

Alexis Guethler
Severna Park

2. On February 16, 2022 this board voted to make masks optional. It has come to light that some administrators within this county are doing as they please and requiring masks to be worn under certain circumstances. This is a direct violation of a standing Board Order. This must be resolved immediately. There should be consequences for the administrators taking matters into their own hands, directly disobeying Board Orders.

Amy Willey
Pasadena

3. Please do not put in any masks mandates! Our children have suffered enough from the choices, including masking, that have been made in the past few years. Learning loss has been proven! My child needs to be able to breath and see faces to learn. Masking only does her harm. She is still trying to catch up on the learning loss she has already suffered and the emotional toll these mandates have caused. She needs to see her teachers faces to learn the correct pronunciation of words. She needs to see the expressions on her peers faces to learn proper socialization. She needs to not have emotional stress added on by more covid mandates. Please vote no to all mask mandates.

Crystal Clarke
Annapolis

4. This is a ridiculous policy and a step in the wrong direction. This policy will not protect anyone, as studies have proven masks do nothing to stop the spread of the latest variants of covid. Stop the fear mongering and allow our children to be kids! 5% and everyone wears masks? If parents are still afraid of covid, then allow them to mask their

kids, but why force the rest of us to suffer? We don't do this for the flu, why are we doing this for covid???

Phillip King
Deale

5. Parents in AACPS have confirmed that some administrators in our school system have recently been mandated the masking of children in classrooms under certain circumstances. THIS IS IN DIRECT VIOLATION of a standing Board Order that made "masking optional in all AACPS Facilities beginning February 18, 2022." MSDE also confirmed that AA County has met the vaccination requirement of 85% to unmask our children for good!
Please be clear that we, as a community, will not stand by and watch as our freedoms are taken away again by scared adults! There will be people who will choose to live in fear of this disease for the rest of their lives, but those of us that choose to move on and live life normally should not be bound by other people's personal and individual anxieties. The burdens of adult fears will no longer be carried on the backs of our children.
This is not March of 2020 anymore. No more "just two more weeks".

Kim A Pratta
Edgewater

6. I respectfully disagree with Dr. Kalyanaraman's recent recommendation to have a mask mandate only in schools with a 5% positive rate or higher. This is going to create a disincentive to report positive cases. Instead, I believe AACPS should be proactive and reinstate the mask mandate system-wide until the end of the year to keep our kids in school.

Jennifer Greeff
Millersville

7. I implore you to stop abusing the children with useless testing measures and masks. Maryland continues to play these games with our kids while the rest of the country has moved on.

Stop

Brooke Glasgow
Millersville/Severna Park

8. STOP forcing students to wear masks. Masks are harmful; they decrease oxygen intake, Increase carbon Dioxide POISONING, increase bacteria, increase fear, increase dental

decay. Masks cause developmental delays. Masks cause social anxiety. STOP feeding into the epidemic of suicide which is the #2 cause of death for 15-25-year-olds.

Dana Schulze
Millersville

9. We are writing in support of the proposed COVID mitigation measures for schools experiencing outbreaks. We have a toddler at home who is too young to be vaccinated, and the children's grandfather has stage 4 cancer. We feel worried about the possibility that our children may expose these and other members of the community to unnecessary COVID risk. We support masking and testing in schools with 5% positivity for the following reasons:

-If the goal is to keep students in in-person learning, these are relatively simple measures we can take to keep them in-person

-Given that recent studies have shown vaccines generally prevent children from severe illness but not from catching and transmitting COVID, this will help protect the staff at our schools, particularly those who are older or immunocompromised

-If making masks optional was in response to local COVID data, temporarily reinstating should also be done in response to local COVID data such as outbreaks. Data should not be followed in only one direction

-There needs to be recognition of/concern for students under 5 or younger siblings of students who continue to wait for the opportunity to be vaccinated

-Local health experts such as Dr. Leana Wen have suggested that masks can be thought of as similar to raincoats, which you wear when there is a good chance of rain. If we are entering a BA2 hurricane, there should be an effort to get the coats.

Sarah Zsak
Davidsonville

10. In light that the BOE is discussing masks for our children again and schools are using their own discretion, blatantly disregarding the policies of the DOH, MSDE and AACPS, I do not support this. I am a tax paying AA county resident and mother of 2 AACPS students who will not stand by and tolerate AACPS taking away our children's freedoms again. Families and staff opposed to the current policy have always had the option to mask themselves; no where does it say they're not allowed to.

Some schools are re-implementing the testing or quarantine rule for unvaccinated children regardless of prior COVID history. As a nurse I can attest, the majority of people who are testing positive now and are repeat cases are the fully vaccinated and

boostered...none in those with natural immunity.

In my opinion AACPS should instead protect the students and staff who CHOSE not to be vaccinated and instead require the vaccinated now to be tested and quarantine. Their vaccination is giving them a false sense of immunity; they refuse to accept they have COVID when symptomatic and irresponsibly refuse to isolate themselves. If I had a dollar for every positive vaccinated patient who has said "it can't be COVID I'm fully vaccinated"... It almost seems as if they are the ones now spreading it. My children have natural immunity to COVID, as most now do, and will NOT be wearing a mask ever again in AACPS nor unnecessarily missing valuable education time.

Michele Rowley
Pasadena

11. I am a parent with a third grader at Crofton Meadows Elementary School. After two years of successfully avoiding Covid, my vaccinated child was infected last week. He wore a KN-95 mask to school and was diligent about it, but it didn't matter when only some students are wearing masks. Before we knew he was infected, he passed Covid on to my husband and two adult family friends (all vaccinated) who have also been very cautious. I urge you to reinstate the mask mandate for all students. Since masks help prevent transmission during outbreaks, I do not see the point in waiting until people start getting sick before acting. I would also urge the board to act to improve ventilation in the buildings since this problem will be with us for a long time. This is a serious illness and there is no guarantee the next variant will be less dangerous.

Tracy Vogel
Crofton

12. Anne Arundel County's eligible citizens are over 80% vaccinated against Covid. This metric was good enough for the Maryland Department of Education to allow our county to lift the school mask mandate. Why is this new 5% rule being suggested? Don't the vaccines work?

According to the AACPS dashboard, there are 294 total active cases in all AACPS schools. The actual 2021 enrollment numbers are not yet available, but if you calculate all schools' active student cases with the estimate provided by AACPS of 87,639, the average is around 0.3 percent. If you factor in the 73 active staff cases, it jumps to 0.4 percent. Breaking it down further, only one school reaches the 3% positivity rate based on current cases.

Prince George's County continues to mask their students, and they are seeing a small uptick in Covid cases like here. Dr. Kalyanaraman's recommendation likely wouldn't really help if implemented. And last I checked, the current variant is not unlike having the common cold.

Lastly, Dr. K., during the January 7 AA County Council meeting, said he could not in good conscience recommend a proper diet, vitamins, and exercise as effective ways to combat Covid when asked by Councilwoman Fiedler. I know Dr. K. is well-respected by the Board, but recommending common sense self-care steps to help with any illness should not be a controversial position. It would make more sense than making kids mask again. It's forced humiliation, and it's wrong.

Linda Sienkiewicz
Severna Park

13. I am asking that board please accept the logical and important recommendations presented by Dr. K for mitigation updates to stop the spread of COVID in the schools. Numerous peers of my children are testing positive so the spread is high. As careful as my family has been we have had Covid recently too even fully vaccinated and boosted. If we want to be able to keep the schools open we need to take steps to prevent massive spread. This is a smart move. Please protect our progress and not make us back peddle. The long term effects are still unknown and the treatments are just a guess for those of us that have long term issues. Thank you for your consideration.

Rebecca Wrotny
Crofton

14. Hello my name is Donald Carr my son attends old Will Senior high school. I would just like to start out by saying that I am firmly against the masks and I think the county should reject any mask requirements in schools, back in February 2019 we were told that two weeks of quarantining would slow the spread which it never did we were told vaccinations would work which they didn't we were told masking would work which it does not there has been no scientific data to support that masking students (which by the way this particular age group has the lowest death rate) is effective at combating or stopping the spread of COVID-19.

Donald Carr
Glen Burnie

15. Masking our children will do more harm than good. The Anne Arundel county department of health has already said masks are 0% effective. The Covid virus is not deadly to our children and only presents minor cold like symptoms in them. If our kids can do every other activity maskless they should not be required to wear a mask to attend school.

Faren Lohfeld
Arnold

16. We should stop treating COVID like the pandemic it is not and start treating it like the flu that it is. Never in history before this round of virus have, we quarantined the healthy. Study after study has shown that the majority of masks are useless, and that virtual learning did more harm than good. It is time to take a stand and put our kids first and allow the parents to decide if the risk of attending school is worth it. I am all for choice by each parent, allow absences to be excused for students and allow virtual learning for those that want it, but allow the school to do what it should be doing, teaching our children in person and unmasked. It is time to actually follow the science and realize that even if these kids are getting sick (a lot of whom are vaccinated) there are few complications and hospitalizations. This is now a flu like virus. Please make the right choice and allow parents to make the best decision for their own children.

Nicholas Harmon
Crofton

17. The county should do what is necessary to prevent outbreaks in our schools and decisions should be based on science. I support the proposed policy and encourage the board to adopt it. It is important to take actions that mitigate transmission and also help to keep students in the classroom. Additionally, many school-aged children also have siblings who are too young to be vaccinated, including kids who are in the schools' pre-k programs. Vaccination rates in the county elementary age range are abysmal and recorded transmission rates are extremely high. They are also significantly undercounted due to at-home tests. Please take this common-sense step as other schools in Baltimore City have brought back temporary required masking. I urge the board to support Dr. K.'s recommendation.

Carrie Zlatos
Pasadena

18. Please give up on the masking. Months ago, the CDC transitioned away from community transmission rates to hospitalization rates when assessing the "threat" of COVID. Children have been proven to not be at an increased risk due to COVID. Teachers are vaccinated and they may voluntarily mask up. Please listen to the science and leave the masks off children. The Atlantic and NYTimes have compelling articles against the practice. Please read the words of the professionals and don't succumb to ignorance and fear.

Tim Fenton
Severna Park

19. This is more of the same failed thinking of the past two years. Children are statistically non-factorial in community outbreaks, and especially hospitalization rates. While children may be able to spread the virus (albeit at immensely lower rates), your job as a board is not to protect the community writ large, it is to educate our children for future

success. The more you dwell on mitigation measures (that aren't needed anyway given the outbreak strain), the less you're focused on the job you're paid to do.

Brian Kimble
Crownsville

20. Under no circumstances will my children mask in school again. I would sooner pull them out than mask them again. We have five children, and we have complied with everything asked of us in the past in the name of public health. We are finished. No more masking these children. They have been through enough.

Jen Edwards
Davidsonville

21. I DO NOT SUPPORT THE CHILDREN BEING PUT BACK IN MASK AT ALL, this is by far the stupidest thing EVER!! No child even wears them correctly. This is not just becoming CONTROL.

Jacklyn Wes
Edgewater

22. I oppose reimplementing masking in schools as a mitigation strategy against Covid-19. The results of reducing the spread of Covid through masking (especially cloth) are underwhelming. The unintended consequences of implementing these types of mitigation strategies such as mental health issues and speech issues in younger children need to be considered more seriously.

Jordan Slaninka
Millersville

23. To whom it may concern: Please think how much the lockdown and mask have negatively affect the children. You have discriminated and bullied kids and parents alike and it is time to stop. This is the only sickness you force people to stay home and wear mask. You don't do this kind of strategy for anything else. Teachers and kids still come to school sick. All the rules contradict each other and common senses. Do what is right not political or for financial gain.

Luke Railsback
Severna Park

24. I implore you to not adopt these measures. In light of the fact that there is no verifiable proof that cloth masks make any difference in transmission and the amount of damage we have already caused to students by forced masking, adopting such a measure would

be a horrible mistake. We do not need to repeat past mistakes. Please allow children to finish this school year without being forced, once again, to be victims of a useless policy.

Stacie Vermillion
Davidsonville

25. Considering masking children again is child abuse. They are least at risk and least likely to correctly wear masks. Stop the madness and leave this decision up to parents. Follow some actual science. You are going to consider masking kids who are playing sports and hanging out with these kids all the time maskless outside of schools? Flying on airplanes with strangers with our masks and adults are free to go maskless at restaurants and bars. Use some common sense. Masks are over. This is a disgrace.

Kathryn G Belote
Davidsonville

26. Why change that?
Vaccinated rates have only climbed since you lifted mandates last time?
Make only harm our children from depression to learning disabilities.
Any society that would use their children to shield themselves from harm shouldn't be allowed to continue.
No mandates

Curtis Fisher
Annapolis

27. As a mother of 3 daughters in the public school system, I am very upset to hear that there is even talk about masking our children again. Data has shown over and over that they did not help during the pandemic, in fact, during mandated school masking all 3 of my children brought home COVID. Thankfully we all recovered quickly and it was just like a cold for us. Almost all have either been exposed to COVID by now or have had it and have built natural immunity. Masking our kids hides their identity, ability to see expression and emotions, and has caused up respiratory issues in children. Masking should remain an OPTION for individuals and should be a personal decision only. Only parents have the right to make medical decisions for our children. Should public schools continue to try and mandate medical equipment or any other medical decisions for my children, all 3 will be removed from the system and I know MANY other parents feel the same. Listen to the science and most importantly, LISTEN TO THE PARENTS!

Amanda Drennan
Shady Side

28. Do not vote this into place. Kids have finally returned to a normal school day. Cloth mask are 0% effective. But have negatively impacted children. You need to address the learning loss children have already suffered and not add to it. Mask have negative impact children especially those in elementary. Enough is enough

Elizabeth Boone
Crofton

29. Fully supportive of returning to masking inside schools to help mitigate the rise in COVID cases. This virus continues to persist and while it can be challenging we would do well to continue to follow the science in our collective efforts to reduce the spread.

Stacy Garn
Annapolis

30. I am adamantly opposed to the forced masking of children in our schools. Of course, those who wish to mask are welcome to do so. However, at no point should this ever be required. There is no legitimate scientific proof that shows masking stops or even slows the spread of the virus unless you are wearing hospital grade masks, goggles, gloves, etc. Also, you cannot control what/where/how people are congregating after school hours. If students and staff are going to get sick, a piece of cloth on their face for six hours will not prevent it. Maybe this is why we got vaccinated? Masking also inhibits our kids from obtaining that true human interaction that is so desperately needed with their teachers and peers. Please, NO MORE MASKS!!!

Katie Epperly
Davidsonville

31. Masks have been scientifically proven to not stop the spread of covid 19. If students or teachers are worried about covid they can stay home. Freedom first. Nobody is stopping people from wearing a mask or getting a vaccine. They are safe. Nobody should be forced to do anything. They are not criminals. Maryland is the FREE state. No masks

Steven Fraser
Arnold

32. I wholeheartedly oppose the re-instatement of a mask mandate on our children in Anne Arundel county schools. There is not one single randomized, controlled study anywhere in the world that shows any significant decrease in transmission or infection rate where masks are employed. Not one! And yet they cause anxiety, feelings of shame, fear of others, resentment, isolation and separation in our children. They interfere with language development and they erase the faces of our children from us and each other. They dehumanize. The children cannot see each other smile. They have a hard time understanding each other in the muffled speech that masks cause. If this sickness was

more harmful than a flu AND the masks were in any way effective at their assigned task, I would be all for them. But they are not, so I urge you NOT to re-muzzle our children.

Rosie Sheppard
Davidsonville

33. Do not mask our kids again. If we wanted them to wear a mask they would. Stop taking away parents rights.

Lauren Plantas
Pasadena

34. I really had hoped that we were past this but of course Dr. K is at it again. With all due respect, the masking of students needs to be left up to the parents and the choice given to staff. Looking at AACPS covid dashboard, currently the highest school with the most reported active cases is only 8 which is very low and nowhere close to 5%.
If a vote is needed to pass this ridiculous strategy please remember all those smiling faces that don't have to wear a mask anywhere outside of a doctor's office or hospital.
#keepmasksoffourkids

Jennifer Powell
Davidsonville

35. If testing of staff will be mandatory, consider reinstating Covid leave. Many of us newer teachers/staff members will have our sick leave wiped out or severely depleted if forced to stay home while asymptomatic, especially if we've already gone through one or more isolation periods this school year.

Amy Hood
Annapolis

36. I am the mother of a kindergarten student at Benfield Elementary and am writing in support of the COVID mitigation strategy recommended by County Health Officer Dr. Kalyanaraman. Although you will hear criticism of this policy from members of white supremacy groups, many parents to include myself want our students to wear masks and get tested to prevent the spread of COVID. The effects of long-term COVID have not yet been fully identified, but early results are very concerning and we should be doing the bare minimum of wearing masks and enforcing testing in order to prevent more people from getting sick for both short and long periods of time. Please do not give in to white supremacy groups such as Moms for Liberty; listen to the other parents of the district and support this plan.

Jennifer Sell
Severna Park

37. You all make it way too hard to find the item number. Makes you think. For the entirety of Covid I have had very down the middle feelings about how we should be handling it. I am empathetic of your positions and your responsibility to do the right thing for our kids. But enough is enough, we know after 2 years that our children are in very little danger when it comes to Covid, and those who wish to mask can surely do so. To force our kids to continue to acquiesce to non science based measures would be wrong, and I feel compelled enough about it to submit this testimony. Please go back to the drawing board because this solution isn't it. Let our kids be kids, it's been long enough.

Michael Johnson
Annapolis

38. We can not go backwards on this issue. Covid is in our communities and people have the choice to vaccinate or wear a mask should they choose. The masks that are out there do not protect against this variant. Therefore, this agenda item is simply political and not a public health measure. Please, do not pass this ridiculous measure. Thank you

Heather Spencer
Severna Park

39. We should not force our children into masks again in public schools. This has to end at some point in time. Our children have been doing fine in public schools mask free for months. If we have learned anything from Covid we have learned there will continue to be mutations of this virus. We have also learned it affects both vaccinated and unvaccinated people. Our children are not forced to wear masks while playing sports yet they are going to be forced to wear them in school? The CDC has removed mask mandates on public transportation including airlines. States have removed mask mandates state wide yet we are considering forcing our children back into masks. Haven't they dealt with enough already? They've been through virtual school, wearing masks in school, being forced home to quarantine because they've been in close contact without the ability to test out of quarantine, and now that they are finally out of masks we are considering putting them back in masks because of a strand of Covid that has proven to be contagious but milder than any other strand of Covid. Please stop doing this to our children and let them have a normal childhood!

Rebecca Nutty
Pasadena

40. I absolutely do not want my child forced to wear a mask. We should be able to decide what's best for our children. If you are afraid ... then have your kids wear a mask. Don't mandate it for mine.

Christina Weaver
Crownsville

41. No to mask mandates. Recent studies show that masking did not decrease transmission. Masking in the large European study was actually associated with an increase in cases. Our very own Johns Hopkins study also confirmed masking and lockdowns did next to nothing.

Kristin Abboud
Millersville

42. Absolutely NO masking mandates for our children!! Enough is enough! Children are not getting sick and are certainly NOT dying from COVID! Let our children finish the school year strong! Stop spreading unnecessary fear and creating more anxiety and additional mental health issues for our children!

Sherrie Ward
Annapolis

43. I am a teacher at Broadneck high school. I have enjoyed being mask free, as have many of my students. But I also don't want my students to miss time again because of spread. If the mitigation strategies help ensure I have my students in my classroom, I'd rather wear the mask again for a couple of weeks than not have them be there. Especially in a content area where they can't really do the work at home.

Chris Olsen
Annapolis

44. School year is almost over, masks should not be a consideration. Let the kids focus on school

Scott Ward
Annapolis

45. Pitman needs to STOP with the foolishness and mask mandates. We know from REAL data that the masks did NOTHING to reduce the spread.

Kenneth Glover
Arnold

46. Please thoroughly consider all aspects of the newly proposed mitigation strategies. Consider not what is popular opinion, but what will keep our kids SAFELY in school for the remainder of the school year. This is my daughters first year in the classroom since she was virtual last year and I would hate for her to miss out on end of year activities and that feeling of that last day of school before summer break because measures

weren't put in place to keep transmission low and avoid entire classes having to go virtual. Thank you.

Lisa Hoover
Arnold

47. NO MASK MANDATE !!!

George Fold
Pasadena

48. Masks have affected adults and children emotionally and mentally. My daughter was made to wear a mask while eating. She was told to take a bite, then mask up while chewing. She choked and now barely eats anything. She has lost (8) lbs and she said with a mask on she always felt like something was in her throat. She now see's a therapist once a week. Even though under this new potential mitigation plan, she won't have to wear a mask while eating, but will still suffer through the feeling the other 5+ hours of school. Also, kids need to see facial expressions to help understand people. These are the things you don't realize about how masks and restrictions have affected all of us. We should focus on keeping the schools sanitized and clean instead of reverting back to masks. This virus, as we all know, will continue to be a part of our lives forever. Masks have been "Political Theatre" long enough. We need to focus on moving past mandates, not moving back to the past.

Jeff Stramella
Arnold

49. I am not happy to see that you are wanting to put the mask back on my child. How is that my family can go on an airplane or go to a park with hundreds of kids and or adults sitting next to us with no mask but yet you want my child to be in a mask again just because my child's school is over the 5%. You do not make decisions for my child. It should be left up to the child and or adult to wear the mask. You do not have the right to test my child without my permission. This whole situation has gotten out of hand and you do not have the right to implement this mandate again on my child or anyone else's child. You are over reaching your power on my child with this. It's like asking my child if she or he wants to breathe or not? This has been going on for two years and we are over it and over your mandates. This virus is here to stay and we must all get use to it but implementing mandate after mandate solves nothing. You lifted the masks off the kids and staff and now you want to go back to it? How can anyone of you that sits on this board be ok with going backwards in this pandemic. This virus needs to run thru our schools so we can get immune to it but if you keep putting the mask on and off you will never reach that immunity...

Lisa Combs, Pasadena

50. I oppose mask mandates. The masks have proven ineffective in preventing the virus spread.

Roberta Fold
Pasadena

51. I do not support masking the kids again. They are the least vulnerable. They have been damaged by masking over the last few years and it needs to stop. My child = my decision. Not yours.

Billie Early
Pasadena

52. I am writing in response to the newly proposed Covid Mitigation Strategies being considered in AACPS. I am opposed to the policy of forcing students or teachers to return to wearing masks in the classroom. At this point, each family should be able to make the decision that is right for their personal situation. The risk for the young and healthy is minimal and those students and teachers that are at risk can easily wear a mask if they choose to do so. Forcing healthy low risk individuals to mask is bad for education and overall morale of the school. It has a negative impact on learning and many students and teachers alike have suffered negative consequences from prolonged masking. Each person deserves the right to be able to make the decision for themselves about whether they need to mask.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Melanie Loughry
Arnold

53. I'm very confused in this "new mitigation process" being reviewed. We are going backwards by trying to mask and test the kids again. Why is this based off of cases? If we are really worried about the kids then check the stats on kids getting seriously ill from covid. At what point do we realize covid is here to stay. Do we do the same mitigation process with flu outbreaks? What about if the stomach bug is being passed around? Enough damage has been done to our kids for a virus that basically is a cold for most of them. We have been just fine since masks were removed. Move forward not backwards.

Bryan Emmerich
Arnold

54. Don't even think about masking our children again. So much mental damage has been done with no way to ever reverse this. You are going to have a big fight on your hands if you try and pass this.

Holly Waters, Annapolis

55. As a parent, I am appalled that we are having discussions about masking our children again, especially after discussions on compulsory COVID-19 vaccine requirements. We already meet the MSDE requirements for 80% vaccinated student population. Optional masking is fine, compulsory masking is an absolute infringement that I will no longer accept in schools or this County at large.

Steven G Brower Jr
Pasadena

56. As a parent of AACPS students, I have concerns regarding proposed COVID mitigation strategies. Students and staff will be asked but not required to wear a mask once it is known 5% has been reached. It's not clearly defined in the 5% mark for the entire school, grade level, or classroom. As parents, we have no way of knowing what the current case count is per school. The AACPS Dashboard only reflects active cases, not percentages. Then exceptions to masking will still be made for lunch, PE, dance, and outdoor activities. While I understand this was the policy when masks were mandated, having all these exceptions during an outbreak is counterproductive. Why is the BOE wanting to change the policy of having virtual learning as the option during outbreaks? Is having a body in the classroom truly the most important thing? Over health of the student and their family? My household is currently dealing with COVID due to it coming home from school. We've had no notice that other students in their classroom were sick. We had no way to take extra measures for our family. We've pieced the information together from 7-year-olds. I'm frustrated about the lack of communication, transparency, and empathy from their school. That the BOE has made decisions to keep critical information from families by removing contact tracing. Now you want to change mitigation strategies when so many people already aren't getting tested, and the current variant has symptoms of a head cold/allergies. Unacceptable.

Jennifer Mechem
Glen Burnie

57. I am against requiring masks for students and staff of Anne Arundel schools. I work at South River and masks cause more health problems than they help. Covid isn't causing anyone to be sick and it is time to move on and put our time and attention to more pressing issues.

Jacquelyn Abend
Davidsonville

58. NOT AGAIN we will not allow our children to be masked for political theater. Harming children causing depression, anxiety and emotional distress is not putting children first. Masks have caused child and adolescent suicides to skyrocket.

Michelli Drish, Arnold

59. 6.06 is a violation of American children's constitutional rights. It is driven by money and has nothing to do with the safety of our children. There are no peer reviewed studies that show masks prevent the spread of anything in fact it says it right on EVERY BOX. The shots are hurting and even killing people and you want to force parents to put this poison into their children in order to attend your indoctrination centers. I know schools receive money for going along with these agendas. Do you really care about the health and welfare of the children?

Tamra Malloy
Chestnut Hill Cove

60. The current policy concerning Covid and especially face masks for students is sufficient. There is no need at this point for students to return to masking while indoors. Instruction has been disrupted enough for our students. Do not go back to face masking. Continue to follow the current policies.

Patricia Spencer
Pasadena

61. As chair of Moms for Liberty - Anne Arundel County, I represent over 700 AACPS families who completely oppose any mask mandates for AACPS students. Dr. K. himself stated that cloth masks provide ZERO protection against viruses - ZERO protection. THEY DO NOT WORK TO STOP COVID. What they do work to stop is young children learning to speak from watching others when they talk, they hinder communication, provide a concealment to hide behind and in doing so promote insecurity and reduce confidence in children, and contribute to mental, social, and educational decline. We do not need a mask mandate. We need to Dr. K and AACPS to step out of the way, allow parents to make health decisions for their children, and allow our children to learn.

Jennifer Fold
Linthicum

62. I'm encouraged that you now have the intention of trying to keep students in school. Should have been doing that over two years ago. In November 2019, I brought my granddaughter into my home. It was her junior year. Because of the extreme policies adopted by the school board and county officials, her graduation, her senior prom and her participation in a play were wrecked. It is clear that the "science" of facemasking is still not clear. Let parents decide whether their children should attend school and whether they should wear facemasks.

John W. Spencer
Pasadena

63. I do NOT support masking in schools again. How will you find subs to cover staff who test positive or are symptomatic? How is it better to force students and staff to stay home (and use personal sick leave ??) Versus going virtual for 10 days ? Everyone can have the opportunity to participate in virtual learning while navigating the "outbreak"? Let's keep the theme of equity across all areas of education. Switching to virtual for 10 days is a far more equitable plan !!

Stacey Smith
Arnold

64. Once again here we are over 2 years into this pandemic, we are talking about masking our children. If we learned anything from these last 2 years it is that masks made it difficult for our students to learn in a classroom setting. The standards for my daughter have been lowered because of these issues, which I find unacceptable. Nationwide our school systems are falling behind. Learning phonics with a mask on and having online elementary school put our children gravely behind what used to be the standard. Re-masking and lowering standards is not the option. Multiple articles have shown masks make little to no difference in viral spread/severity of cases etc. but have significant detriment to our children and society. Even the CDC says the risk in our county is low and masking is up to preference. The virus continues to mutate and get weaker, masks are absolutely not necessary and are only hindering our children. Children are not the scapegoat in this problem, they should not have been the last to be unmasked and should not be the first to be remasked for a virus that has had almost no effect on them. Look at the suicide rates, the psychological disease rates and the reading/math proficiency grades over the last 5 years for children. Masks are not the option. Lowering standards is not the option. Keep schools open, unmasked and return to the higher education standard our children deserve.

Jason Tidwell
Lothian

65. Dear AACPS,
I will not ever require my children to wear masks in school ever again. I read your language and I am advising them to be defiant, your "suggestion" means nothing to me. If you don't like it you can send their work home for the remainder of the school year. If you refuse to do so and refuse to allow them back at school, we can work it out with CPS. Your school system has done more damage to them than either one of their parents.

Try me,
Amy Tanner
Pasadena

66. No more masks!

Michael Anderson
Arnold

67. Parents can see through this BS. This flu does not affect children. Masks don't work. Just stop. No more masking and testing of our kids! This is abuse.

James Elbourn
Severna Park

68. I am incredulous that under some circumstances children are being required to mask up AGAIN in AACPS schools. What new science has come about that now negates the dropping of the masks last February? PLEASE PROVIDE THE STUDY AND REAL DATA that show a reason for this. No more bobbing and weaving from Dr. K! We parents will not stand for AACPS taking our children's' freedoms away again because of this nonsense and the whims and dictates of nonelected bureaucrats!

Peggy Williams
Severna Park

69. No chance will I allow you to mask my kid again. I will pull him out of school and join every group I can to sue you and revoke your bonds. You should be ashamed of what you have done to our children.

Kristen Porter
Annapolis

70. Hello, I just wanted to express my feelings on masks. The children really suffered with the forced masking. All health interventions should be up to the parents.

Lauren Weir
Deale

71. Is there new research showing that masks work as a covid mitigation strategy? Please share the evidence the Health Department and AACPS are using to support this.

As a speech pathologist for AACPS, I believe that masks have done more harm than good for my preschool students. I have students who didn't talk when they wore masks. My students who attended preschools that did not require masks made significantly more progress than those attending schools that required masks.

Stop forcing a mitigation strategy that has been show to be inconclusive at best on our students. If some want to wear masks, that's great, they can do so. Allow those

students and families who do not wish to wear masks to make that choice for themselves.

Jerilyn Deitch

Arnold

72. On February 16, the Board of Education members voted unanimously to make “masking optional in all AACPS facilities beginning February 18, 2022.” My fellow parents and I were thrilled as we took this news home to our children, saw their surprise and excitement at the news, and then celebrated with them as we dropped them off to school that Monday morning seeing smiles on their faces for the first time in 2 years. Our children have thrived since then, and the vast majority have been attending school maskless.

Unfortunately, we are again faced with the possibility of an overreach by AACPS, Dr. Arlotto, and Dr. K, our unelected and partisan county health officer, as you are attempting to once again mandate our children into wearing masks to attend school.

I find it unacceptable that we are again having to stand before you to argue for our rights as parents to make the best health decisions for our children. You know, in February, though I was happy to have the mask mandate lifted, I felt that our victory was a hollow one. Because, even though my daughter could finally attend school maskless, this board never once recognized that the most important element in the question of masking had been removed from the equation: PARENTAL SAY. You have not recognized the value, the necessity, and the ultimate authority of parental rights, and the fact that we, the parents of the children who we entrust to you to educate, know what is best for our children...

Kerry Ann Gillespie

Arnold

73. I oppose mask mandates in AACPS. Masking should be a choice, as should all personal health decisions.

Joe Fold

Linthicum

74. Mask should be a choice.

Loretta Brenner

Arnold

75. Please do NOT bring back any masking rules. There are many studies that show no benefits to masking but they do show harmful side effects.

T.E. Bonney
Annapolis

76. I oppose mask mandates.

David Hepting
Pasadena

77. I oppose mask mandates in AACPS.

Megan Breslin

78. I oppose mask mandates in AACPS.

Brehanna fisher
Lothian

79. Keep the Masks OFF our kids.

You have no right to require an unconstitutional mandate.
Shame on all of you!

Hannah Legg
Severna Park

80. Masks are harmful to children it inhibits their ability to breath, see others faces and learning ability. If mask were really effective we would have worn them through every flu season. But they are not effective our natural immunity is best for our bodies. increased rebreathing of carbon dioxide From wearing the masks is not good for our children and has been found to be harmful. Look up the peer reviewed papers that approximately 130 doctors reviewed.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8072811/>

<https://centerforneurologyandspine.com/do-masks-work-see-the-review-of-over-150-studies-below/>

Gloria Habicht
Millersville

81. Please do not return to masks. As the Anne Arundel County Department of Health has said, masks as commonly worn are not effective in preventing the spread of viruses such

as COVID. Perhaps temperature checks (done by bus drivers and at the door for walkers and staff) would be a more effective measure.

Slavka Weaver
Severna Park

82. I oppose mask mandates.

Eric Norris
Pasadena

83. Here we go again with Dr. K. Let's not forget that his own employer, AA Co. Dept. of Health, posted a graphic on Facebook months ago showing how cloth masks are essentially ineffective against COVID. Yet, here he is again pushing for a masking policy in our schools.

Children are not the demographic who are adversely effected by COVID. Any symptoms that children get are minor, and in most cases, weaker than flu symptoms. If we are not doing mitigations for the flu they at this point, we shouldn't be doing them for COVID. IF the older population, such as teacher/office staff, are worried about transmission then they have the option to mask up.

April 27, 2022 per NY Post- "Dr. Anthony Fauci says the US is no longer in the "pandemic phase" of COVID-19". He also stated, ""We're not going to eradicate this virus." We can't keep running back to masking every couple months. We are past that. Parents are past that. The time has come for this to be personal choice because as we have learned it doesn't matter if you are vaccinated, boosted once, or boosted twice, you can still contract Covid.

We have followed your ruling at reaching a vaccination rate that was required to remove masks from students. Now here it is a few months later and you are again "moving the goal posts".

With 24 days of school left, let's focus on finishing the year with the children happy.

Mark Trohanowsky
Pasadena

84. No more masks now or in the future. We aren't going backwards. Stop these asinine policies all together. If a child is sick, he or she stays home until he or she is feeling better. NO QUARANTINE. NO MASK REQUIREMENTS. That is how you keep kids in school.

Nicole Kinstler
Severna Park

85. I am against mandating students to wear a mask and/or be vaccinated due to the Covid-19 virus. Both have been proven to not stop the spread or keep these students from catching the virus. Masks have been studied and proven to be harmful to Children's development, self-esteem, and overall health. As your making decisions for our children, keep in mind these children will grow up to run our country, let's give them the liberty and justice they deserve to keep this country on track. Don't sent them into the world with mental health or developmental issues.

Karen Piotrowski
Gambrills

86. Due to science, it has proven that masks do not work at all against covid 19. Therefore I vehemently oppose the mask mandate. It is abusive and lying to everyone that masks work. Mask mandates have already impaired my sons speech so badly that he has an impediment.

Also due to the fact that shots do not keep you from getting or spreading Covid, children nor teachers should be discriminated against if they do not get the shot. Medical information also is personal and legally does not have to be shared with anyone. It is a parents right to do their own cost analysis risk assessment whether they want to put a foreign substance in their or their child's body that is known to cause severe medical conditions and even death.

At this point in time, covid should be treated like the flu and if a child is sick, they should stay home but there should not be any discussions for additional mandates. Please think of our children and all they have already been through and lost!

Amanda Horvath
Edgewater

87. This item has been discussed over and over again. This issue has also been decided and voted on by the State and also this school board. Is this now a political thing or an attention seeking measure? Covid is a disease that has a vaccine and treatments. The risk is very very small to my children. Mandating masks, mandating vaccines, and especially closing schools for ANY amount of time is an awful idea. And this board knows it. Do the right thing.

Tyrus Scott
Annapolis

88. honestly cannot believe we are circulating back to masking our children again. There is so many issues within this school system that are more important than continuing to hold on to COVID. In my opinion these issue our school system is dealing with now with in our county are the product of Weak leadership and a BOE that allows the political

climate to take priority over our children. I will repeat one of my favorite statements “what is the definition of insanity? Doing the same thing time and time again and expecting different results”.

Melissa Idleman
Pasadena

89. There is no conclusive data or properly executed scientific studies to show that masks reduced the rates of infection, especially in schools. What has been definitively proven is the negative effects masks have created for our children. From delayed speech development to anxiety and depression, the negative consequences of forced masking outweigh any benefits. If a parent and child determine that masking is right for them, they are free to choose to wear a mask. Conversely, parents and children who agree to live their lives free of masks, must be afforded the same freedom. We must move beyond the narrative that a person’s actions of wearing a mask or receiving an injection have a particular bearing on others around them. Neither of these illusions have been proven accurate throughout the declared Covid pandemic. Let’s focus on health campaigns to promote exercise and healthy eating which will reduce health problems and subsequent co morbidities, which are most closely associated with poor outcomes for individuals who experience Covid.

Thank you for considering the concerns of parents.

Michael Dolinger
Severna Park

90. Under what authority does the AACPS BOE have to implement masks? There is no state or county emergency, hospitalizations are down, and we have hit the metrics to allow masks as an option. The job of the BOE is education, NOT POLITICS!!!

The effects of Covid on students has been a major discussion and the detrimental effects emotionally, mentally, and physically that they have had on students. That has not changed! This fear that is being instilled in young kids has got to stop.

Your main concern should be at the learning loss that these students still have because of COVID. What is being done to address that? I have yet to hear a response from my children’s school admin and anyone up the ladder.

Covid is not going away! AACPS needs to start coming to terms with that and how to live with it. Putting kids in masks is not the answer! This is not your lane! I still do not understand how Dr. K can have much influence and power over the BOE when he is not an elected official.

DO BETTER FOR YOUR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES!

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Tobe
Annapolis

91. Since the Board Order that removed the mandating of masks in all AACPS Facilities on February 18th - there is no new evidence that masking children slows the spread of Covid-19. In PG county, where they have masked their children this entire time, they are experiencing the SAME spike in cases. Masks do not help. And in fact, there is overwhelming evidence that masks hurt children - socially, emotionally and academically. If you pass a motion to mandate masks, in any circumstance, SCHOOLS and CHILDREN will be the ONLY place and group in our county where there is a mask mandate. We must stop placing the burden of adult fears on the backs of our kids.

Shannon Leadbetter
Crofton

92. Masks do not work. PG county has continued to mask and they are still seeing increased cases comparable to us. If masks actually worked their case rate would be dramatically lower. The virus particles that transmit Covid are so minute masks don't matter...they can fit through the pore size of face coverings easily. People who want to wear a mask CAN wear one whenever they feel necessary. All we are asking for is the CHOICE to remain in the parents' control so we can make the best decision for our own families.

Stephanie Penkert
Edgewater

93. "Positive tests are estimated by multiplying tests taken by the positivity rate. Positive tests may not be equal to positive cases because of reporting differences and people taking multiple tests taken." This is the data you are using to re-institute mask mandate? Are you kidding me? People wearing masks are the minority in Maryland! Stop abusing our children!

Paula Veltre Montgomery
Linthicum Heights

94. For the love of God please stop sticking our kids in masks. They are not properly fitted N95s, and even if they were, COVID isn't a material threat to, or from, children of grade school age. You're pushing families into private schools.

Christopher O'Connor
Crownsville

95. Why are we going back to using a system that doesn't effectively work? Rather than forcing children to wear masks, let the parents decide for their child. Why not install new air filters in the schools, take more time to clean surfaces and wash hands. There are other ways to finish the school year out safely, in person, than by forced masking.

Charlie Penkert
Edgewater

96. To vote in favor of this agenda item would be a vote against the children of AACPS. Mask mandates have proven ineffective of stopping the spread of covid. Just look at the case rate in PG county schools compared to our own, the numbers are virtually the same. The difference I can testify to seeing in my own children since the mask mandate has been lifted in AACPS is the smile on their faces, the enthusiasm to attend school everyday and a vast increase of self confidence. It is troubling to think all that could be taken from them once again for a virus that isn't going anywhere and largely does not affect children negatively. What does have a negative impact is mask mandates. If they can sit elbow to elbow and eat lunch and go out in public with no mask safely they can learn and interact in school all day without being masked. Freedom of choice is what all AACPS students and staff deserve.

Melissa Dillon
Millersville

97. I oppose mask mandates.

Eric Norris
Pasadena

98. I vehemently oppose any and all mask mandates in AACPS. Covering a child's face mutes nonverbal forms of communication and can result in robotic and emotionless interactions, anxiety and depression. Seeing people speak is a building block of phonetic development. It is especially important for children with disabilities such as hearing impairment. Do not force our children to make developmental sacrifices that will the cause long-term harm.

Nicole Hutchison
Shady Side

99. Please leave the children alone. It would make zero sense to mask the kids that are barely even infected by this virus- the stomach bug is making them more sick. They would leave the school to venture with their friends and family in all the other places of the world that are mask free. Leave them alone. They need fresh air and faces. Don't do this to us again.

Jennifer Campbell
Severna Park

100. Good day to you all. I would like to thank you for understanding and realizing we each can decide to mask up as needed and do not need a group of people to tell us to do so. "It's a myth that masks prevent viruses from spreading. The overall evidence is clear: Standard cloth and surgical masks offer next to no protection against virus-sized particles or small aerosols.¹ The size of a virus particle is much too small to be stopped by a surgical mask, cloth or bandana. A single virion of SARS-CoV-2 is about 60-140 nanometers or 0.1 microns.² The pore size in a surgical mask is 200-1000x that size. Consider that the CDC website states, "surgical masks do not catch all harmful particles in smoke." And that the size of smoke particles in a wildfire are ~0.5 microns which is 5x the size of the SARS-CoV-2 virus! Wearing a mask to prevent catching SARS-CoV-2, or similarly sized influenza, is like throwing sand at a chain-link fence: it doesn't work. There has been one large randomized controlled trial that specifically examined whether masks protect their wearers from the coronavirus. This study found mask wearing "did not reduce, at conventional levels of statistical significance, the incidence of Sars-Cov-2-infection."³." If you return to mask wearing we all will know your level of incompetency. This will reflect on your career forever and will ultimately end your position here. Thank you for your time. Andra Cerasani
(<https://americasfrontlinedoctors.org/legal/masks-and-the-law/>)

Andra Cerasani
Pasadena

101. Children have been irrevocably harmed by any and all forced masking measures. You e had 2 years to see that masks do NOT work, they only contain the virus of fear and paranoia. Study after study has shown that masks simply do not work and are harmful to everyone's mental and physical health. You simply will not muzzle children any more! It's child abuse. If a poor child has been brainwashed by his parent into thinking he needs a mask to be healthy, well that is a choice for that family to make, not the schools. Schools educate, and that's it!! Kids will not be sacrificed again!!

Kecia Pettey
Annapolis

102. I adamantly oppose masking children or imposing any quarantine on healthy people. Do not force masking against the wishes of parents. The masks do not stop Covid. They are an emotional support tool that should be optional for those who need the crutch. Schools who are making kids quarantine because of contact with a person who tested positive should be held accountable for not following the board's previous order. Stop discrimination against vax status which is a private medical matter. We are no longer in a state of emergency. Hospital and death rates are down. You are sowing

fear with talks of outbreaks. This is now the new flu. The sick should stay home, wash your hands, and let our kids get the mask free education I'm paying for!!!

Respectfully,

Ruth Laughary
Severna Park

103. Masks don't work & vaccinated get covid. Suicide & attempts rose 35%, > in depression/anxiety & education fell because of covid protocols. Our kids are THRIVING. Don't destroy this because a couple of kids got sick (none died) sacrificing the many for the couple. You have ONE job - educate. Stay focused.

Lisa Smith
Severna Park

104. Masks need to remain optional regardless of 5%. The flu is worse than Covid. The mental affects it will have on staff and students is not worth it. There is enough science that shows masks do not work, only minimally does a N95 mask work. Get used to Covid by treating it like the flu or any other illness. Do not go backwards and force masking, the risks of masking causes depression, massive speech delays and so much more. Masks need to be optional.

Amanda Runion
Glen Burnie

105. The fact that new COVID mitigation strategies are being discussed by Drs. K. and Arlotto is utterly laughable at this point. There are so many other pressing issues in AACPS that our Health Department could be focusing on, i.e. the nutritional quality of the meals that are provided, declining mental health of our student/staff population, and the unhealthy amounts of screen time required for schoolwork.

Does Dr. K. think that we've forgotten that just a few months ago he told us that cloth/surgical masks are ineffective in preventing the spread of COVID? Is this recommendation supposed to be taken as a "better option" than his current recommendation that discriminates against those who have chosen not to receive the COVID shots? Mandatory masking in schools, under any circumstances, goes against Board policy. It is a choice.

We have lost our frame of reference. We would never have forced our kids to put a mask on their faces because of a 5% positive flu rate, strep throat rate, RSV rate, etc. We have let the "experts" lead us into a place where we have forgotten how to critically think for ourselves. THIS DOES NOT MAKE SENSE.

Please consider what is best for your children and family. If wearing a mask makes sense to you, by all means, go for it. It should not be forced on those of us who cannot see the reasoning behind it.

Drs. K and Arlotto should be ashamed for taking up anymore of everyone's time for this nonsense.

Tina Belford
Linthicum

106. I am writing to the Board Members today regarding the mitigation strategies recently proposed by Dr. K.

The county has already met the off ramp established by Dr. K so why does he continue to move the goal post? Why are we using the same mitigation strategies we have used before and expecting different results?

Our children cannot be part of this continued need for power. Children in this county continue to fall behind academically and it is time for decisions to be made between parents and their children regarding this topic. It is time for us to move on from this topic like so many other counties and states have done to this point.

Krista Drecchio
Severna Park

107. Dear Board of Education,

Please accept this written testimony regarding the May 18, 2022 agenda item 6.06 New COVID-19 Outbreak Mitigation Strategies. I am the parent of two children attending school in AA County.

During the COVID pandemic, our children have carried a great burden placed upon them by faulty science and overzealous leadership. Mental illness is widespread, suicide rates are increasing and our children are behind the curve educationally. This is because of masking.

Masks have proven to be ineffective and can actually increase sickness. There is no valid medical support for using this ineffective method of preventing the spread of illness.

<https://thenationalpulse.com/2022/05/16/study-finds-correlation-between-mask-compliance-and-covid-deaths/>

The Covid virus is no longer killing people and natural immunity from previous infection has been proven to be long lasting, much longer than immunity from the vaccine. It is time to move forward. Enough is enough.

Do not let fear or cowardice dissuade you.

Choose the children. No mandatory masks.

Thank you,

Victoria Hoffman

108. Totally oppose putting kids back in masks. Pittman is a total jerk for mandating up such a thing. Remove him from office. Let the parents decide what best for their kids. Stop forcing this.

Lisa Gree
Edgewater

109. How stupid is this moron "Doctor," Dr. Kalyanaraman? Kids are least at risk and we all know what the definition of insanity is...keep doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. Masks DO NOT WORK. These tyrannical mandates do not work and I hope, should you clowns implement these arbitrary measures, that people disregard and carry on with their lives. These experts and bird members have lost all trust during these last two years. Never again. Screw off

Matthew Gray
Edgewater