



Immediate release

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Michigan's Children Urges School Boards to Do their Job and Protect the Safe Return of Kids to In-Person Classrooms

As Michigan's 1.4 million schoolchildren return for the start of the 2021-22 school year against a politically charged landscape and rising infections due to the deadly coronavirus, Michigan's Children is urging locally elected School Boards to do their job and act to ensure school safety through effective mask-wearing by students and staff.

"Nonpartisan, locally elected school board members hold the gravest responsibility to set policies that protect the wellbeing and health of our children during school hours. All politics aside, they hold our children's safety in their hands, and we're counting on them to act wisely and with courage," said President & CEO Matt Gillard of Michigan's Children.

"With no personal gain to themselves, these are individuals who have committed themselves through countless hours and personal sacrifice to serve the children and families of their communities. Michigan's Children fully supports those who have taken action to enact mask-wearing policies that are proven to prevent the spread and infection of COVID-19 and any variants, and implores those who have not yet done so to act immediately," Gillard continued.

Michigan has 891 school boards and with the exception of appointed Intermediate School Districts they are by and large elected biennially to the task of setting policies that local superintendents administer. In many districts, members have taken necessary steps to require mask-wearing during school hours, even in places where political pressure and opposition has been organized and vigorously mounted.

"This has to be an all-in approach to ensure that all kids, those who are immunocompromised and those under 12 who are not yet vaccinated, remain disease free," Gillard said. "Health officials tell us that anything less will lead to unnecessary infections of children as well as continued and widespread school closings that negatively interfere with students' education. No one wants that."

[Michigan's Children](http://michiganschildren.org) is an independent, multi-issue public policy firm dedicated to ensuring equity in public policies related to children, youth and families in Michigan.

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