

Public Commnets 4/27 thru 5/10 1:45pm

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/7/2021 11:24 AM	Potential Mask revisions	<p>We implore you to take action immediately to remove the mask requirement effective May 12th, thereby taking a step towards restoring personal freedom and responsibility. It is unacceptable to require masks in our schools with no scientific reason but with many adverse effects. □</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Personal freedom - let children and their parents choose for themselves whether to wear a mask. We, the parents, are responsible for our childrens' health and safety. •Science - look at actual scientific studies; it is not acceptable to continue the mask requirement based on "generally accepted beliefs" that masks work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> oDanish RCT that showed masks make no statistically significant difference in COVID infection. https://www.acpjournals.org/doi/10.7326/m20-6817 oCompilation of data from America's Frontline Doctors-https://assets.website-files.com/606d3a50c62e44338008303d/6076df0f279ced9dbf117d_Masks-Science.pdf oChildren and schools are proven to not be "super-spreaders". •Timing – All teachers and staff have had the chance to be vaccinated and achieve peak immunity well over a month ago. -The Ada County mask mandate was lifted three months ago. - Many other Idaho schools have lifted their mask requirements, as well as many other schools across the country. •Health risks – serious health risks to our children from wearing masks all day, including reduced oxygen supply, skin infections, bacterial pneumonia, and oral health damage. •Psychological health – many adverse effects of the masks on the psychological health of our children: social awkwardness, isolation, depression, suicide. •Focus and support - for our West Ada teachers and staff. Remove from them the unfair responsibility of enforcing compliance with the mask requirement. Enable their focus to be on educating our children, not enforcing mask compliance. •Trust – <u>we trust the School Board and administration to act in the best interests of ALL our children by removing the mask REQUIREMENT now.</u>
5/7/2021 02:02 PM	Mask mandate at an ool	My daughter missed her piano recital because of isolation from an exposure at school. If you prematurely remove masks from school how many kids will miss graduation, end of year activities, recitals etc because of isolation??? Why not play it safe and ensure these kids get to keep going to school?
5/7/2021 02:07 PM	Mask Mandate	I would like for the current mask mandate to stay in effect for the remainder of the school year. We are almost at the end f the year and transmission has been low due to masks. If kids stop wearing masks we may see more cases and kids would miss out on end of year activities due to exposure. Also, it is way to premature to decide the mask policy for next Fall. As we have seen for the past year, things change very rapidly. There is no way to determine now what things will be like in August.
5/7/2021 02:07 PM	Mask Mandate	I support continuing the mask mandate in West Ada schools for the rest of this school year. There is no good, science-based reason to drop mask wearing, and all it can legitimately do is increase potential for infection. I also do not believe any policy should be set for next school year at this time--it's too early and we don't know where infection rates, variants, etc. will be by the time school opens in the fall.
5/7/2021 02:10 PM	Potential Mask Revisions	By removing the mask mandate, West Ada School District will be unable to take advantage of the zero day quarantine when students are exposed to COVID-19 in school. The choice of a contagious student to not wear a mask, could force other students to miss out on end of the year milestones. We're in the homestretch of this school year; the idea to remove the mask mandate mere weeks before school lets out is a distraction to all our parents, teachers, and students who should be focusing on instruction & testing, and enjoying year end celebrations.
5/7/2021 02:11 PM	Mask policy	Please do NOT rescind the mask mandate for our students and staff. We have been able to come back because of the policies in place. Taking that away will send a message to patrons that this pandemic is not dangerous, is not real. 500,000. Do not forget that number. That includes two of my family friends. Please, do what's right to keep our kids and staff safe.
5/7/2021 02:12 PM	The mask mandate	Please do not change the mask mandate at this time. We have made all year wearing masks and believe we should continue wearing masks through the rest of this year. Also, please do not set the policy for this year. I believe we need to see what the next few months bring us. Do not set policy when you have no idea what is going to happen
5/7/2021 02:14 PM	Face Mask Mandate	This year has been tough for everyone. Students, teachers, support staff and parents. Let teachers and student end the year without another change. Keep the face covering requirements the same. Let us finish out the year and remain open. There is not enough vaccinated people to stop the spread let us not have schools start contributing to the spread. Face masks and social distancing has worked. Also please don't try and decide what the policy will be for next year. Has the board not learned it's lesson about this virus? Please just let us get to the end of this school year without another change and we can pick up this discussion when we get closer to fall 2021 and have a better idea where things are at. As a teacher and community member please consider all request to keep face mask requirements in place for the remainder of the year.
5/7/2021 02:16 PM	Masks	I support children in grades K-12 wearing masks until community spread is under control in our county.
5/7/2021 02:17 PM	Mask Mandate + Future Mandates	I believe it is the responsibility of the board to ensure the health and safety of students and staff in the West Ada district. For this reason, I fully support the enforcement of a mask mandate for the remainder of the school year. In addition, I believe it is incredibly premature to set any policy for future school years. Our children deserve for us, as adults, to make responsible and educated decisions. Please set this example as a school board. Thank you.
5/7/2021 02:17 PM	C regarding masks	Keep masks for safety. We understand that masks are not fun, but nothing about a pandemic is ideal or fun. You made a, promise for this year, it would be great if you stuck to it. And for next year, right now is too early to decide. Elementary students will not be able to get a vaccine yet, so to in an effort to mitigate more quarantined students missing school, don't disrupt the mask require as is. Keep masks to keep kids learning.
5/7/2021 02:18 PM	Potential Mask Revisions for current school year and future school year	Our students should finish the current school year and start the next school year with masks. We have no idea how long the pandemic will last, but we know that our kids won't be vaccinated in time for the start of the fall semester. The mask mandate should remain in place until kids are eligible for the vaccination. We know that parents send their kids to school when sick. Masks have significantly reduced the number of colds, etc. that my kids had this past year. You've already packed our kids into classrooms without physical distancing. Masks are the only thing we have left to protect them.
5/7/2021 02:20 PM	Face mask mandate	I am in support of face masks so that kids can continue to benefit from in-person learning while minimizing the risk of disease. Please prioritize safety.
5/7/2021 02:20 PM	Mask Mandate	I am a high school English teacher at currently the largest high school in the state of Idaho, and I am in support of maintaining the current mask mandate through the end of the 2020-2021 school year. Students and staff have been resilient throughout this challenging and stressful situation. We've taught, and learned, while wearing masks and our numbers have largely reflected adherence to the mask mandate. I am in support of mask wearing to protect my immunocompromised students and their families, my coworkers, and the community. As Barbara Jordan once said, "A nation is formed by the willingness of each of us to share in the responsibility for upholding the common good." Public health is a common good that must be maintained for all, despite our fatigue, despite our personal feelings, and despite the challenges presented to us. I personally have zero hesitations about inconveniencing myself by teaching in a mask if it means my students are safe. I hope the Board recognizes the diligent commitment and obligation teachers have to protect our students, and recognizes how the mask mandate helps us to uphold our professional duty.
5/7/2021 02:28 PM	C masks	Please continue the mask mandate at school. It is helping greatly to reduce both the number of children and the number of days missed by possible exposures. Very few kids have a problem adhering to this policy since all students are required to wear them. Very few students are even eligible for the vaccine, so discontinuing the masks at this point would only increase exposures and community/school cases.

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5/7/2021 02:30 PM	Face mask policy- this school year and next	As a teacher in an over crowded high school I wish you would reconsider changing the face mask policy for this year. We have been able to keep Covid-19 at bay in the schools since we are enforcing the face mask policy and using social distancing, when social distancing is possible. I believe it would be short sighted of us to dispose of this before the end of the school year as we are still, as a community, in need of continuing these protections for all. Finally, making mask policy for next year does not seem to make sense. We have just gone through a year of changing policy because we are uncertain to how this virus reacts. How could we possibly know now what we might fact in August, 2021. We make much better decisions when we have more facts and this will come as we progress through the summer. Let us all be able to come back to the issue in late summer so that we can make educated decisions.
5/7/2021 02:42 PM	C - Masks	The dress code policy of requiring masks should not be changed until all school aged children are given the opportunity to be vaccinated. Covid-19 is real. It impacts children. Please do the responsible thing and keep our children safe by continuing to require masks.
5/7/2021 02:57 PM	C	I understand the community is exhausted from masks, and would like to see them as optional attire for the remainder of the year. However, there is only a few weeks of the school year left and I feel the board has rolled the dice enough this year. Luckily, we managed to avoid any serious outbreaks and that relied heavily on wearing masks. Let's finish the year strong and please leave the masks in place.
5/7/2021 03:12 PM	Masks	As a teacher at West Ada School, I do not feel comfortable teaching without a mask mandate. Our classrooms are overcrowded, with limited ventilation. Masks are helping keep all of us safe. Without masks, more students will end up in ISO or having to quarantine due to exposure during the last days of school. This will be totally chaotic. I also feel that it is WAY too early to make any decisions about next year's mask situation. Things are changing rapidly and we have no idea where COVID will be at the start of next year. At a minimum, PLEASE keep the mask mandate in place to protect students so they can take part in all of the end of year activities they didn't get to have last year. PLEASE keep the mask mandate in place for those of us who have vulnerable family members. PLEASE keep the mask mandate out of respect for your teachers and staff.
5/7/2021 03:16 PM	Masks	We've asked our youth to step up and "protect others" by wearing these masks all year long, after an initial "two weeks to slow the spread" campaign, regardless of the fact that scientific proof overwhelmingly shows that masks are not effective in reducing viral transmission. Add that to the fact that youth are just not significantly statistically affected by this virus. This was simply a way to show we were "trying". Enough is enough. Not only do masks not work, they have actually been proven to be detrimental to our youths' mental and physical health. We, as adults, asked them for two weeks to accommodate us, let's give them two weeks to enjoy the end of their school year mask free.
5/7/2021 03:51 PM	Masks	I write in support of keeping masks mandatory for the remainder of the 2021 school year. I do not like masks and would very much like to get rid of them. But until we meet certain benchmarks regarding vaccination and community spread, it is unsafe to do so. Central district health lists Ada County as in the "Orange" category. That means that indoor gatherings should be avoided in general and are a VERY bad idea without the usual precautions in place (masks, distancing, etc...). The CDC says that due to age group, that schools are safe to operate in-person *IF* other precautions are maintained (a 3 foot distance, masks, etc...). Removing a mask requirement would violate the instructions of both of these experts. Simply making masks optional also doesn't work. Masks do the most to protect the people around you, not the wearer themselves. So the person choosing to go without a mask isn't the one at risk, it's the ones around them. We can't allow one student to make health and safety decisions for other students. As a teacher, I'm also concerned about what happens when a case appears in my classroom. With masks, only those within a certain distance need to isolate after an exposure. Without mask mandates one accidental exposure could result in the isolation of literally ALL of my students. Dramatically impacting the quality of education for an entire class. I would encourage you to make the repeal of the mask rule dependent on specific virus related conditions rather than calendar. For example the rule could be "When CDH and CDC say it's safe to remove a mask requirement, this is what we'll do..." or "When Idaho hits 70% of the population vaccinated, here's how we'll walk back the mask requirements...". The virus does not care about the calendar. Tying any changes to an arbitrary date regardless of conditions is dangerous.
5/7/2021 04:03 PM	Mask mandate in the dress code policy	Early in the pandemic, when scientists were scrambling to understand how the virus that causes Covid-19 spreads and infects, thousands of unprotected health care workers fell ill from the disease as the patients they were treating spread it to them. After hospitals adopted universal mask mandates, the number of infected providers fell drastically. Our schools have been able to operate with very little transmission thanks in part to the mask mandates and the tireless efforts of teachers and staff to maintain distancing and sanitization. The science is clear, masks do not cause harm and they mitigate the spread of respiratory viruses. Please do not give the virus the chance to spread unchecked through schools by making masks optional. Please refrain from using our kids to test how quickly it can spread without masks because some people don't understand or don't believe the science. Protect the lives of students, teachers, and staff. Honor the sacrifice of thousands of healthcare workers who've worked tirelessly for over a year by maintaining the mask mandates.
5/7/2021 04:16 PM	Mask policy	As a teacher in the district, I would like West Ada to follow all CDC k-12 operational strategies for School and Childcare. The people at the CDC have dedicated their lives to studying viruses in service to public health and are the most qualified to make recommendations on how to safely operate a school during a pandemic. Thank you for your time.
5/7/2021 04:21 PM	Potential Mask Revision	Please keep the mask mandate in place until the end of the year.
5/7/2021 04:30 PM	WASD Mask Mandate	As for revising this year's (2020-2021) mask requirement, please leave it as it is! Parents have been assured multiple times in writing via emails from west ada that masks will be required for the rest of this school year. When assurances like that are provided, they should be honored and upheld if you want people to have trust in the leadership. Further, until all students have the opportunity to receive the vaccine if they want it, masks should be required in schools. You've taken away safe distancing, so masks are the only protection left for students. There won't be many smiles when more and more kids have to isolate during the last few weeks of school due to potential exposure. □ As for next school year (2021-2022), it is premature to make a decision on mask requirements now. There continue to be new COVID variants appearing; until we have a better idea of what cases look like in the late summer, why set yourselves up for making yet more changes and breaking more assurances in what you tell families? What is the rush to decide right now? □ We need to finish this year safely and strongly with masks, and see how the summer goes before making a decision about next year.
5/7/2021 04:41 PM	C	Masks still need to be mandated through the rest of the semester. It is ridiculous to not require it for the last few weeks of school! We have a senior and really want to see him graduate in person and our freshman is not able to get vaccinated yet. If the mask mandate is lifted, our children SHOULD have the option to do remote learning for the rest of the semester. Please listen to the science. What are we showing our children if we are not acting upon scientific recommendations? What does this say about our district?
5/7/2021 04:52 PM	C	I am very concerned about lifting the mask mandate before the end of the term as very few kids will be fully vaccinated by that timeline. I completely understand the kids situation but putting all in harms way by removing this mandate pre-maturely will be putting them at excessive risk and would be fairly irresponsible by us adults. The school and teachers have done a wonderful job in keeping this virus in check but the students staying vigilant 2 more weeks would be extremely helpful as we hopefully can bring this virus as close to an end as possible this summer. Thank You.
5/7/2021 04:53 PM	Mask mandates for students/ staff	I will be at my twins' baseball game on May 11th but wanted to give my comments on the current mask requirement. One of my twins is hearing impaired and due to this was given the option to wear a face shield. As a shy 5th grader the last thing he wanted to do was stand out from his class. So instead he wears a mask which makes his very quiet voice even harder to understand leading to more embarrassment as he is continually asked to repeat himself. I do not know the damage these blanket mandates have caused on our children. But I can say that every pediatric counselor in our valley has a waiting list so something is going on that is affecting our kids mental health. The K-5 grade students often come home with filthy and wet masks. These are not the sterile masks that are used for scientific studies. I am sure when your mask is sucked on, sneezed on and sweat on for hours the degree of protection drops to a point where we have to ask ourselves why are we having young children wear them. Please listen to your staff, parents and students and make the masks optional. Thank you.

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5/7/2021 04:59 PM	Mask Requirement	It has come to my attention that there is a small group of very vocal parents that are attempting to overturn the current mask mandate that we have in place in our schools. Please be assured that these people do not speak for the majority of West Ada residents. We have come so far and we have been doing a great job at keeping Covid under control in our schools and the masks are a huge reason why. When we have 30+ students in close quarters for 8 hours a day without the ability to social distance them, it is very important to keep the masks in place. With the end of the school year so close, why would we want to mess with success and put our students in danger. The CDC still recommends wearing a mask indoors. Please do not go against the CDC guidance at this critical time of the year. We should not be throwing all of our successes out the window because of a very small minority of people that have a very loud voice. It is also very premature to be making a decision on the mask policy for next school year. Let's see where things are in August and make a decision then.
5/7/2021 05:07 PM	Mask policy	It is far too early to lift the mask mandate. Although most teachers are vaccinated, students are not. There are still outbreaks of COVID in schools, which the masks help stop spreading throughout the student body. Isn't the goal to keep as many students in school as possible? Then keep the mask policy for the remainder of the year! Additionally, it is too early to decide on mask policies for next school year until we know more about the new variants and the communicability of them. Again, the goal is to keep students in school - not to shut down because we cannot control the spread of disease. Look to history - the Spanish Flu raged for 2 years. We've only completed year one of COVID.
5/7/2021 05:10 PM	Mask Policy	I was concerned when I heard that there is a group of parents attempting to remove the mask mandate from West Ada Schools. I am very much against this attempt. I feel that it is dangerous for our students to be sitting in overcrowded classrooms all day without masks on. A majority of our school children have not had the opportunity to get the Covid vaccine yet. Children are able to contract and spread this very deadly disease. As I recall you promised everyone in West Ada School District that the mask mandate would remain in place throughout this school year. Please do not break that promise now that we are so close to the end of the year. Keep the mask mandate in place !!! Also it is too early to be talking about next year. Please wait until August before making a decision about next school year.
5/7/2021 05:22 PM	Mask Policy	Please keep the mask mandates in our schools!!!! If you take the masks away you run the risk of covid and its variants spreading like wildfire. Give the kids a chance to get the vaccine!!!! Give the kids who have been home a chance to return to in person safely!
5/7/2021 05:24 PM	Face mask mandate	Please keep the face mask mandate through the end of the school year. I will not be sending my child if you lift this mandate. He is in elementary school and there is no vaccine available for him at this time. Please don't disregard my child's safety. ☐ Also, please do not make any decisions regarding next school year as this is very premature.
5/7/2021 05:35 PM	Masks	The mask mandate for schools should not be removed until all age groups are allowed to have the choice to be vaccinated. Elementary age kids are unable to be vaccinated. Many of the variants are affecting kids. Until they have the choice to be vaccinated, they should not be unprotected by masks. The flu shot is not mandatory, but each family has the option to vaccinate their children for protection. The covid vaccine should be available for families to choose if they want their kids vaccinated before the mask mandate is dropped. We want our 8 year old vaccinated before masks are dropped in school and daycare but it's not available. Not available=masks. His daycare continues to require masks, why would you drop it for school? You built this into policy for this school year, why can't you adhere to a policy in this district? Even entertaining this topic is another disappointment added to the district this year. Next fall, I also hope you consider the health of your elementary kids. They will still not be vaccine eligible. Again...the vaccine should be available to all ages before you decide to take away their protections. Working at a local hospital, science is a pretty amazing thing. The kids have been amazing thru everything and are on board wearing their masks. It's the adults that seem to be throwing tantrums. Let me at least be able to vaccinate my child before you drop masks.
5/7/2021 08:27 PM	2021-2022 Bell Schedule	Please do not change the bell schedule for elementary school for the 2021-2022 school year. Moving the start and end times to later in the day makes it different for working parents. It also makes it difficult for kids to be involved in sports that are located in Boise and tend to follow the Boise School District bell schedule. If anything please move the times to earlier in the day.
5/7/2021 08:46 PM	Potential Mask Revisions	When the board decided to bring 6-12 back in March, it was with the understanding that masks would be required until the end of the year. Parents and students made the decision to stay in school or transfer to VSH based on that understanding. I realize that a majority of students would rather not wear masks, but I am concerned about those students who are becoming anxious about the possibility of being at school without everyone masked. Yes, teachers and elderly relatives have had the option to get the vaccine, but what about the student with a vulnerable younger brother or sister, or who has a condition themselves like asthma. Some students are just rule followers and have heard from the medical experts (including those who have consulted for West Ada) that masks should be required. They felt safe with other students wearing masks, but now you are considering removing that requirement which is increasing the anxiety in some of the students. One of the major reasons to bring 6-12 back full-time was because of mental health concerns, but now you are considering a decision that would increase stress and anxiety for some students. It is too late for these students to transfer to VSH, so what if they decide to go remote for the rest of the year? That is an added burden on teachers in what has been the most difficult and stressful year of my 31-year teaching career. Why? Are you going to listen to the science and the mental health concerns of students, or some very vocal parents?
5/7/2021 08:55 PM	C	I'm writing to support the continued use of masks in the schools for the remainder of the school year. Masks are helping and my kids age 7 and 10 have no issues wearing them. The numbers are low because the children have been wearing masks. Our young children are not able to be vaccinated and they will remain at risk. It seems absurd that this is even being raised with less than a month left in the school year. Keep the requirements that were promised to parents and students.
5/7/2021 09:32 PM	Bell Schedule for next school year	Please reconsider the start and end times of school. Late start Wednesdays are pointless. Early release days are much more effective for teacher collaboration. There is also no need for the extra 10 minutes of elementary school. ☐ I would prefer that elementary switch times with high school.
5/7/2021 09:40 PM	Proposed bell schedule	This schedule is ridiculous for our littles. Poor kiddos already get out so late compared to neighboring districts. Does this push teacher contract time back later? None of us ever leave before 5 anyways, will this make us stay later? Please no. Many of us have families to take care of in the evening. Kids shouldn't be in school past 4 pm. Honestly, even 3:55 feels late. Boise gets their kids out before 3:30. Do something like that instead.
5/7/2021 09:51 PM	Next years bell schedule for elementary school	I do not support the 10 minute later start and release times for elementary. Students are already exhausted by 3pm. As a specialist teacher in the district, I see all students in my building through a given week. The current schedule begins and ends late. We currently have students who don't get home on the bus until 5pm. This will compound that issue. After school activities or Dr appointments will be impossible for families to participate in. Not to mention the hardship on parents who have to be at work by 8am. As it is, students are dropped off in the morning long before they should arrive because parents need to get to work. I can only imagine students being left at home alone for that hour to catch the bus without adult supervision. If any change is adopted please leave it as is or make the start and release time earlier. Do not adopt a later release date. This is not best for kids or families.
5/7/2021 09:57 PM	The proposed bell schedule.	Elementary schoolers already get out of school so late, why do we need to make it even later? As a parent I have really loved early release this year and am not looking forward to returning to late start Wednesday. Elementary schoolers usually have early bed times and the late release means they have very little time between the end of school and bed time.
5/7/2021 10:02 PM	Masks and Schedule	Please make masks optional for the rest of the year and also next year. Or take them off the dress code completely. ☐ Also, please don't make Elementary schools bell schedule into a longer day for kids. Kids need after school activities and making their day longer is nonsense.

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5/7/2021 10:10 PM	21/22 Bell Schedules	I am opposed to the proposal to start and end elementary school 10 minutes later than it is now. This could be very troublesome for parents commuting to work. More students will be left home alone in the mornings. In addition, they get out late enough as it is. Currently, Elementary students have very little time after school for activities, sports or family time. It may seem like 10 minutes is not much, but that 10 minutes compounds with added traffic. Also, as a teacher I am very disappointed to see the collaboration moved back to Wednesday mornings. Our collaboration time is taken over by meetings and playground duties. <u>Monday late start for collaboration has truly been helpful.</u>
5/7/2021 10:17 PM	Starting elementary school even later then now	It is already way too late for these kids to be starting school in the morning. Start middle and HS earlier if you need to Change something. These kids need to be able to have some sort of a childhood
5/7/2021 10:34 PM	C	Please do not remove the mask mandate this school year. The new COVID-19 variants are more contagious and dangerous for kids and as of today most school kids are unable to get vaccinated. Seniors want to be able to graduate. Students want to be able to finish out the school year in person. Removing the mask mandate puts everything kids, teachers, and staff have worked so hard to accomplish this year. We only have a few weeks of school left. Please stay true to your word on at least 1 Covid policy this school year. This year has been very hard to keep faith and trust in the Board when they haven't held true to their word on any of their decisions.
5/7/2021 10:37 PM	Bell schedule for elementary students	I would like to state my opposition of the proposed bell schedule for elementary students for next school year. There are several reasons why and I will list a few of them here. 1) later start time means my children will be left at home alone while waiting for the bus bc my husband and I have to be at work by a certain time and the later bell schedule will mean a later bus pick up time. 2) As the bell schedule is right now both my children come home very tired as they have been awake since 7-7:30am bc they naturally wake up earlier and go to bed earlier (8:30pm). For the elementary aged children studies have been done that prove they excel better in school during the earlier hours of the day. For example (8:30am-2:30pm). 3) A later release time also means less time for them to get homework done before extra curricular activities begin (typically around 5pm). Then there is no time left for anything else such as family time or playing outside with neighbors before having to come inside to get ready for bed. 4) A later release will also cause a later bus drop off time and possibly even later because traffic is getting more and more congested through out the treasure valley. <u>In my opinion the bell schedules for elementary students and high school students should be switched.</u>
5/8/2021 12:27 AM	Mask policy	Please leave the current mask policy in place. We have less than a month until the last day of school, and it would be a shame to quit following Covid-19 prevention protocols now. Our students deserve to be kept as safe as possible so they can keep coming to school in person. <u>Why jeopardize what parents, educators, and students wanted all year - to have students in grades K-12 safely attend school full time in person? We need to finish out the year strong and wait till later in the summer to discuss the 2021-22 protocols.</u>
5/8/2021 12:56 AM	School schedule	I started the school year in your school district, and have since moved. However, based off of previous years I painfully knew the daily schedule your school district chooses. I am sad to see you repeat this decision to make elementary school end so late in the day. We would come home, have dinner, clean it up and get ready for bed as kids in young elementary school grades need 12 hours of sleep. There was little time to even talk. Zero time for any extra curricular activities or a playdate with friends. There was zero time for my middle schoolers to do homework. I HATE your schedule getting out so late. It feels like you cater to babysitting for the working parents. Not to productive education. Your job is not to take control of my child's entire life! It is ridiculous, kids don't need to be in school that long. If they do, it should be a Special Ed after school program. More than Covid, this was the reason I homeschooled this year. Please respect our children's time and freedom.
5/8/2021 07:03 AM	New schedule for elementary students	DO NOT CHANGE THE BELL SCHEDULE!! My son already gets out of school way too late as it is and it's ridiculous. we don't have any chance to do any extracurricular activities because he gets home so late, and it's disappointing. We get out the latest out of any other district in the valley and it makes no sense! If it's a driver shortage problem fix your advertising and campaigning for bud drivers instead of making our kids pay AGAIN. You keep advocating you're about the students and doing what's best for students, you think making them get home at 5pm only to have to eat dinner and go to bed without playtime or family time is really what's best for them? I'm so frustrated with how West Ada does things and it seems to get worse and worse. At this rate I will have no choice but to pull my kids out and either homeschool or move to another district because this district is abysmal. I'm so sick of the incompetence this district has displayed for years and it hasn't improved at all. It was a pain when I was a kid in the district and it's still a pain. <u>Stop messing with our students and fix the problem!</u>
5/8/2021 08:20 AM	Bell schedule	Late start Wednesday needs to be removed permanently. If there need to be a collaboration time then do an early release. Even in high school and middle school practices can wait to start for 15/20 mins after school, in fact the kids wouldn't feel so rushed to get to practice. Late start Wednesday has been a pain since it started and the majority of parent felt the only positive things that happened this school year was NOT having late start Wednesday. There has to be a plan that can easily be made to accommodate this as an early release instead of late start. Everyone has managed this year and I believe <u>there would be less unhappy parents and teachers with early release opposed to late start.</u>
5/8/2021 08:33 AM	Elementary school time change	It has come to my attention that the elementary times have changed by 10 minutes on both ends, making the release time 4:05. As a parent of 3 children currently enrolled in West Ada, and two in elementary, I find this time to be too late for young children. The current time of 3:55 was too late as well, and 4:05 is even worse. My children currently don't get home until 5pm if they take the bus. This new time will make it even later. It makes after school activities nearly impossible, and often they even feel pressed for simple downtime. I moved here from the east coast 6 years ago and never experienced an elementary school that let out so late. Please consider shifting the elementary schedule for an earlier release and reinstating the Monday early release instead of the late start Wednesday.
5/8/2021 09:08 AM	Mask Mandate	I have two children enrolled at West Ada. One of them is an 11th grader that has been fully vaccinated, the other is a second grader that has not been vaccinated. Keeping the mask mandate does not hurt anyone but removing it would create unnecessary risk for working families. I am a working mom that can't afford to stay home for two weeks with a sick child if my kid contracts covid at school. I don't have the luxury of working from home. The virus is still spreading in Meridian and most children do not have the opportunity to get the vaccine. Please follow the science and keep the mask requirement until all <u>kids and families can be protected.</u>
5/8/2021 09:47 AM	The proposed later start time and release time of elementary.	Our kids already have a hard time with how late school starts and ends, please don't make it worse. If anything we need the elementary schools to be earlier. Maybe a proposed plan to get more funds for more busses if that's needed. Just please don't start school any later.

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Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/8/2021 09:47 AM	Masks	<p>To West Ada School District Board Members, Personally, I don't think we should visit this issue of masks until next school year. I thought it had been decided that this is the school dress code. Decisions need to stay consistent and not be wishy-washy. If you make a decision quit changing it. My senior just got vaccinated and my other child isn't old enough. I've sent them with N95 masks and I've heard no complaints. They feel they are keeping the spread down. The smallest class is 40+ students. I think we need to follow the indoor science. Outside they are fine if not in big groups. Have you also considered the welfare of the staff? My wife is a teacher. I have personally been wearing a mask at work with asthma since March 2020. I think we should give serious consideration to limiting mask discussion for the 2021-22 school year. Don't change anything! Let's just finish the year in person learning in school with masks. We've come so far. Please do not let a few loud voices ruin our 20-21 school year. Make decisions that are sensible and stick to them. Parents need clarity. In addition, remember the hair salon? 2 positive cases, zero spread because of masks. https://www.cdc.gov/ Thank you for your consideration.</p>
5/8/2021 10:00 AM	Mask mandate	<p>Masks are the only safety precaution still in place. There is no way to social distance in classrooms. Keep the mask mandate in place until all school aged kids have an opportunity to be vaccinated. Elementary kids can get Covid and spread Covid, it's not fair to put them at an unnecessary risk. Keep masks until kids can get vaccinated!</p>
5/8/2021 10:47 AM	The mask mandate	<p>I am a healthcare provider and get to witness the physical damage this virus can cause first hand while on the job. There is a great deal of data to support the fact that masks work when worn consistently and correctly. Even our ability to contain spread within the schools with mask mandates supports the research data. Please continue to enforce the mask mandate until all ages of children have had an opportunity to get vaccinated. I've really appreciated you keeping our kids, teachers, and staff safe through this pandemic and just ask that you continue to keep our kids safe.</p>
5/8/2021 03:08 PM	This falls bell schedule	<p>I'd like to support elementary kids going to school later in the morning and have no problem with a 4pm end of day. My youngest children always need more sleep and breakfast at home is a good thing</p>
5/8/2021 03:44 PM	New elementary bell schedule	<p>Please do NOT change the elementary bell schedule to later. Taking into consideration parents' work schedules, traffic later in the day, older siblings' sports and activities schedules, and how long it takes busses to currently get our students home, changing to an even later start and release time is ludicrous. Our 5 year old kindergartners won't be getting home until close to 5 or later, leaving absolutely no time for family time/dinner let alone the mandatory homework they are assigned. Our elementary students should get out earlier, not later. And not starting until 9:20 or 9:45 on Wednesdays? In households with both parents working (let's be honest, that's most households) this is near impossible. This should not even be on the agenda to talk about. No one should consider voting yes on this item. There is no reason and no logical or realistic way to explain this or make it happen.</p>
5/8/2021 04:48 PM	Face mask mandate for next year	<p>Setting a mandate for next year now is a mistake. Things can change very quickly and no one knows what next year is going be like. We need to wait until August to make a decision for the next school year.</p>
5/8/2021 08:21 PM	The change in bells schedule.	<p>I do not approve of the proposed bell schedule. The later start time for elementary is not best for student learning. It seems that it's created just for working parents and not for students best interests. Shouldn't the focus be on the students and what is best for their learning and development? It will also create issues with parents who have elementary school students as well as middle and high school students who participate in extra curricular activities unless the start time of those activities is also part of the proposed changes. Please don't make these changes and return the focus of your proposal as well as future proposals to the students learning rather than the parents needs.</p>
5/8/2021 08:49 PM	21-22 Bell Schedule	<p>It is absolutely ridiculous that you are pushing the start time and release time later for the elementary students. As a parent and teacher of elementary age, the young ones do better in the morning. As the day progresses, they tire quickly. So frustrating. Try reading the research!!</p>
5/8/2021 09:42 PM	Masks	<p>Studies from Stanford, Oxford and Dr Ryan Cole have now all said that masks don't work and are more harmful to kids. If you aren't willing to remove them the last two weeks of school when cold and flu season is at its lowest, than you will never remove masks from schools. There are schools in the Treasure Valley that have operated without masks all year and some that allow kids not to wear masks outside or during PE. If you aren't willing to remove masks, I and many other parents will find another schooling options outside of West Ada.</p>
5/9/2021 07:29 AM	Proposed Bell Schedule	<p>I would like to propose continuing with early release rather than late start for the upcoming school year. As a teacher and from my experience, the late start doesn't allow for real, genuine collaboration as I was more worried about making sure the classroom was ready for students. When great ideas or thoughts were rolling on a topic, there had to be a hard stop for continuing because students were arriving. And busses came at or near the regular start time anyway, which meant no collaboration most weeks. Children NEED consistency and a schedule everyday. There are families juggling outside services and school, which gets hard when they can't just squeeze in a therapy in the morning on Wednesday before school, but could go after school as there is more time. As a parent, my child gets up around the same time every day, so having an extra 15 - 20 minutes in the morning only means that there is more time to get distracted by what is around him, instead of just getting up, getting ready and going to school. We are coming to West Ada from a local charter school for a few reasons including being on the same schedule and transportation as he can walk to our neighborhood school. Our previous local charter he attends does early release Wednesday and I love it! We get to keep the regular routine every morning and then he gets an extra hour at home with dad. It is perfect! I really, really, really hope you consider moving to early release instead of late start.</p>
5/9/2021 08:02 AM	Mask mandate	<p>I support maintaining the mask mandate through the remainder of the 20-21 school year. I am a teacher and parent with the district. Masks work. My family has been exposed to the virus at least a couple of known times this year, but the masks protected us and we did not get sick. I would hate for any of my students, especially seniors, to get sick at the last second and miss graduation or other events. We will have to withdraw our 3rd grade daughter from school if the mandate goes away.</p>
5/9/2021 08:12 AM	Masks	<p>As a parent and educator in the WASD, can you please just let us get this through this year without one more change. You have been relatively consistent at not staying true to your word/decisions this year. Every meeting is a "wonder what they will do to turn the tables today.". I know the world around us is pretty much "return to normal," but you have families whoade decisions (like VSH) based on your decisions to add masks to the dress code for the remainder of the year... Please don't make it optional for the last few weeks of the year - please only discuss changes for NEXT year.</p>
5/9/2021 08:36 AM	Mask mandate	<p>Please change the mandated masks to masks optional for the rest of the year. I am a teacher and I would love to see my students faces for the rest of the year. Please listen to the science about masks and the science about kids not being spreaders. ☐ Thank you for your time.</p>
5/9/2021 10:04 AM	Masks in schools	<p>Please do not take the school mask rule away. Not when we are so close to the end of the school year. Let them finish it safely. Masks are the only reason I am ok with my child being in school. They have been proven to work. (Unless you believe fox "news"). They have kept us safe. That, and the fact that our school is committed to being responsible. It would be nice to trust that the board has the same concerns for health and responsibility. It would be nice to believe the board is putting our Children's safety first. It would be reckless to take the mask rule away with weeks left of school. It would be dangerous to listen to the loud minority. The anti-Vaxxers. The ones more concerned with themselves than others. Please! Don't rush the mask rule change. Why can't a revision wait until the start of the next school year, after more people have been vaccinated? Why is there a rush to do this now? Because of pressure? ☐ The loud few, the bullies, the inconsiderate don't speak for the majority. They definitely don't speak for our household.</p>

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Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/9/2021 12:14 PM	Bell schedule	<p>I am an Elementary teacher in West Ada. I am against changing the bell schedule. The current bell schedule for elementary is already way too long and late of a day for these kids. My 5th graders even complain about being in school so late. I have worked in 3 other school districts that all get out between 2-3. Students were present and alert early in the morning and did not complain about being in school too long ever. Parents did not have to take their kids out of school early (I have never had so many kids leave early on a weekly basis) for appointments, nor did I as a teacher. I was able to book my appointments for later in the day and still had time for my family. With the current schedule, I have little time with family after school before bedtime and my daughter and friends who are in sports are out way too late past their bedtimes. I support research that states that High School kids are the ones who need the extra sleep in the morning and stay up late anyways. The way I see it, the schedules need to be flip flopped. I know there is a concern always around sports, but isn't there a current and future focus on mental and emotional health in West Ada? Good mental health starts with good sleep and family time.</p> <p>I also am so disappointed in the board taking away our Monday early release time. That extra time has been invaluable in helping our mental health through this year. Again, every other district I have been has had an early release day. Teachers participated in staff meetings, collaboration, and planning committees. We were much more willing and positively engaged in more district committees when we have that time to do it within a normal school day.</p> <p>I moved to Idaho and was told by numerous community members that Idaho is all about family and community. I have not felt that at all because of the late West Ada bell schedule. I can't imagine taking away more of our time with our families. My morale is already down and next year isn't even here yet.</p>
5/9/2021 04:34 PM	Face mask mandate	<p>I believe we should continue to enforce the mask mandate indoors. Children are less likely to die of Covid19 and yet there ARE cases of death and permanent injury among infected children. There is no vaccine for children at this time. Poorer countries have little to no access to vaccines. American's are reluctant to get vaccines due to lack of trust in the healthcare system. These factors (and others) mean that Covid19 cases are still a major threat. More infections mean the virus will continue to mutate. There have already been cases of more infectious strains of Covid19 and strains that are more deadly for children. Even if the threat to our children stays the same, I don't think a single child should die just so I can go mask free indoors. Our kids are worth protecting. Our elderly and disabled population are worth protecting. Wearing a mask WILL prevent deaths and it will prevent new Covid19 cases. Individuals have short attention spans and it is difficult to maintain safety precautions as this pandemic continues. We can't trust individuals to protect themselves and their families without a mask mandate. If Idahoans don't care about disabled, elderly, or immune compromised folk perhaps they are concerned about public cost. Covid19 is causing permanent disability in many folks who have recovered from the virus. The cost of this will be much more significant than the cost of enforcing indoor mask wearing.</p>
5/9/2021 06:22 PM	Mandatory mask policy	<p>I am a teacher and a WAEA member who believes that the board should lift the mask mandate and make masking optional immediately. At this point, every staff member who wants it has had ample time to get vaccinated, as have older high school students (16+). Data has shown that children aged 5-17 are at very low risk from COVID-19. The recovery rate is 99.986%, much higher than the seasonal flu for their age group. Because of these two factors, I believe that the mask mandate is unnecessary. Optional masking should be allowed for those who are still concerned, but those who have been vaccinated should be able to make their own decision about masking, as should parents of children who are (by the science) at very low risk.</p>
5/9/2021 06:55 PM	Mask requirement	<p>As a parent with two kids in the district, one a high risk individual, i'm asking you not to change the mask requirement at this time and to wait to even consider the fall until later in the year. There are no vaccines available yet for our children and while we all want things to go back to normal, the pandemic is not yet over. Please keep the mask requirement in schools in place until health officials advise it is safe to lift it. I recently went into two high schools and observed numerous students and some adults wearing their masks below their nose, under their chin's, improperly and there's clearly no enforcement anyway. For the students whose health and safety is jeopardized being indoors in school all day, mask requirements is a lifeline. Please don't take that away.</p>
5/9/2021 08:09 PM	Next year bell schedule	<p>Please do not approve this bell schedule change for next year. 4:05 is way too late for little elementary kids to be getting out of school. 3:55 is already too late to be getting out and 4:05 is absolutely crazy to consider. An important part of childhood is play and using their imagination, they need to have time to unwind and to actually be a child. Getting out at 4:05 does not provide this opportunity that is vital in their development. Please keep the schedule the same as this year, with early out on Mondays. It has been so good for my elementary age children. It gives them a day to look forward to, to plan play dates and to be kids. It helps them focus the other four days they are at school. They grow up so fast. I don't want the memories of their childhood be held up in a classroom all day until dinner time, doing homework, and then going to bed. We need to let them be little. Please think of your childhood, remember what it is like to be a child as you consider this change. Remember the fun you had after school. We need to remember that being home is just as important as being in school for their well-being. Early out has been a life saver for my first grader. She already feels like she is at school too much and Monday gives her a day to look forward to. I know our elementary school is losing students. More and more parents are deciding to move their kids to other educational options, this may make me reconsider what I do with my children. I will always be an advocate for what is best for my children and this is something that I believe is detrimental for my children's love of school and love of learning. We are firm believers in education. My husband has his doctorate and I have my bachelors. I can't risk them getting burned out at such a young age. They still have so much education ahead of them. They need Monday early release and to get out of school no later than 3:55. Please.</p>
5/10/2021 06:36 AM	Mask requirement item C	<p>This school year has seen change time and time again. What has been a constant all year is the language surrounding masks. That being, that masks will remain a part of dress code and be required to be worn for the entirety of the 2020-2021 school year. Despite all that has happened, this is the one thing has given me some comfort as an employee and as a parent in the district. ☐ Masks work. I have never been so healthy in all my 24 years of teaching. I think our ability to control the virus in our schools has absolutely been aided by our mask requirement. ☐ Change causes disruption to learning. Both staff and students are exhausted of the constant change. Please maintain the consistency of masks being worn in the buildings for the duration of this school year. CDC guidelines have changed for mask wearing outside. Following the science makes sense. If we need to reevaluate outdoor mask wearing because of the latest scientific guidelines, then let's do it. But indoors we are not even able to maintain 3 feet distance, much less 6 feet. Most classrooms in our secondary schools do not have windows that open for fresh air. And the science is still showing that indoor spaces are the most likely places for spread of the virus. West Ada does not need to be the cause of a kick off to summer surge. ☐ And finally, respectfully, having a discussion about what should occur during the 2021-2022 school year in May does not make any sense at all. Any decision about masks for next year should be discussed in August when you can see the current numbers and look at the science as it pertains to those numbers. We are an educational, not emotional, institution. We need to listen to those educated in the fields that pertain to viruses and epidemiology. If we don't follow the educated world, how can we claim education is important to us?</p>
5/10/2021 07:20 AM	Mask Mandate	<p>Please do not release the mask mandate in our schools until the younger students have had at least the chance to be vaccinated. I have a 7th grader who was really close to having an exposure. The ONLY thing that saved him from being considered exposed by CDC guidelines was the fact that he was wearing a mask. Please, do not make our students feel unsafe. You already forced them to come back to full classes even when they felt uncomfortable. Please do not take away the only thing that is considered security for many of our students. If you remove the mandate, you are opening up our students for the potential of bullying if they choose to continue to wear their masks. When it is required everyone wears one no questions asked. We only have a month left of school. I implore you to focus on more important tasks at hand and leave the masks alone.</p>
5/10/2021 09:37 AM	West Ada mask mandate	<p>Removing the mask mandate as West Ada schools during the last two weeks would negate the entire message and purpose of the mask mandate. If children are exposed in a classroom to someone who is sick and people are not masked SO many students will have to quarantine. Students will miss so much. Some students have health conditions so in the spirit of inclusion students should mask. If the pandemic gets worse in the fall (think virus mutation) and the mask mandate has been removed people will go nuts if it has to be reinstated, why open yourself up to that? Public schools should follow the advice of public health experts. Not doing so may harm children and open the district up to litigation. Do not can to the few VERY loud voices who push anti science views.</p>

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Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/10/2021 11:16 AM	Potential Mask revisions	<p>I have spent a significant amount of time reviewing the data regarding masks. I am a physician in a local ICU & spend time daily reviewing publications & data around the best treatments & public health measures for COVID. ☐</p> <p>A significant point has been missed about masks from the public understanding. Many believe, & will likely testify, that if people want to wear masks, that is their individual right. The evidence of masks, however, is not about individual protection. ☐</p> <p>When masks were studied prior to this pandemic, the evidence showed lack of benefit when the general public wore them to protect from respiratory infections. These studies looked at individual protection with typical respiratory infections at that time. ☐</p> <p>Since 2020, studies have looked at COVID specifically, which has a high level of asymptomatic spread, & where viral load spread has a significant impact on illness. Studies have found that there is a small amount of personal protection provided by wearing masks, but a significant amount of protection when the person with the virus is wearing the mask. The greatest benefit is when both parties are wearing the mask. ☐</p> <p>If we remove the requirement for all to wear masks, then we lose the vast majority of the benefit of masks, & the individuals wearing them receive little protection. ☐</p> <p>When the school presented the plan to return to in person classes, we looked at the plan & I reviewed the studies that applied to the plan the district created. We felt that, even though 6ft distance could not be maintained, universal masking provided adequate protection with the lower viral loads found in children. We chose to the in person option. ☐</p> <p>If the school is changing the plan on which we made the decision, we would ask them to also consider those of us who would feel obligated to pull our children from school. I believe removing the universal mask requirement is not medically advisable, but would ask the school provide a virtual option for those last two weeks.</p>
5/10/2021 11:37 AM	Mask mandate for schools	<p>Masks make a difference☐</p> <p>Infection rates are still elevated ☐</p> <p>Maintain course as is</p>
5/10/2021 11:46 AM	mask mandates	<p>Please continue the district wide mask mandate for students/staff during school hours. Until we are able to vaccinate children, its important to protect students as well as outside family members who may not be able to be vaccinated and/or are medically compromised. ☐</p> <p>As a parent of a 4th grader, I can say that most of the kids are completely comfortable and now used to wearing a mask to help protect others. Wearing a mask is not impacting learning; what does impact learning is having to pivot from in class learning to virtual for quarantining after exposure. ☐</p> <p>Having had three exposures this year, I can confidently say that my child wearing a mask helped her not to contract COVID. ☐</p> <p>Please continue the mandate for the remainder of the school year and revisit in the fall.</p>
5/10/2021 12:15 PM	Mask Policy Revision	<p>Dear Trustees,</p> <p>I am disappointed to see that you've arranged tomorrow's comments to take place in a 50/50, pro mask vs. anti mask fashion.</p> <p>First off, to label us as "anti-mask" is misleading and incorrect. Our request is that wearing masks become OPTIONAL, not that we rid our schools of masks completely. What we are really asking for is the freedom and responsibility to make our own health choices for our families.</p> <p>Second, to arrange these comments in a 50/50 fashion does not allow for accurate representation of the majority of the community. You're assuming that we are equally divided on this issue. I strongly believe that is not the case!</p> <p><u>The agenda, as it is currently set, appears biased and discouraging. Parents deserve to be heard. Based on tomorrow night's agenda, I fear that you have not been listening.</u></p>
5/10/2021 12:43 PM	Mask mandate and vaccines for schools	<p>Masks should remain required for all school-aged children and staff. Preventing disease is the responsibility of all adults. Until children can be vaccinated, human concern demands we protect them. Vaccines in public schools should be required. Those who do not choose to vaccinate their children should provide education of their children as a result of this choice. I remember vividly as a child seeing children in iron lung machines and going to school with kids wearing metal leg braces. Today's children are not under threat from Polio because of vaccines and overwhelming participation of the public to end that threat.</p>
5/10/2021 12:45 PM	Lifting school mask requirement for last 2 weeks	<p>I am concerned with the possibility of allowing students to not wear face coverings in the last 2 weeks of school. Precautions have been taken and should be followed until Summer break. This sends a message that the steps taken were important rather than diminish the cooperation every family had in following face covering requirements. The kids will have all Summer to play with their friends without masks and the school year should finish with the same policy. I believe this will help ensure that in the Fall lighter restrictions can occur.</p>
5/10/2021 12:53 PM	Changing the bell schedule	<p>In considering the bell schedule, PLEASE DO NOT move the start and/or release times for elementary schools ten minutes later. The elementary age kids are already getting out late and do not have time for homework, family dinner and any other extra curricular activities. If there is a reason the time needs to be moved due to busses or another issue, consider starting and releasing ten minutes earlier. This is a much better option for many of the families, especially since many kids are awake and ready early anyway. There is no need to keep the kids at school later and later. Let them get out of school and be with and influenced by parents at home. They need this! I understand not all kids go straight home to family but it is beneficial for the kids that do.</p>
5/10/2021 01:04 PM	Keeping the Mask Mandate in Schools	<p>West Ada School District Board of Trustees:</p> <p>As a school board, you have made safety guidelines/requirements to help keep kids in school for in-person learning. As a parent, and an ICU Nurse, I support the safety requirements for in person learning and want to be able to trust that your recommendations and/or requirements are truly in the best interest of our children and the school staff's safety.</p> <p>Since the students are not able to physically distance from one another, now more than ever, the mask requirement needs to still be in place and required from ALL students and staff. A student deciding not to wear a face mask doesn't just put themselves at risk, it puts all the students at risk. The mask requirement supports student safety, helps keep kids in school for in-person learning, and helps ensure that the greatest number of students will be able to participate in some of the most memorable milestones of their lives.</p> <p>Parents and students who did not want to wear a mask had the option of attending VSH for the year. Parents, students, and staff who are concerned by the removal of the mask mandate will have no recourse; students won't be able to transfer to VSH for the last three weeks, and teachers/staff will not be able to request new accommodations if they have concerns.</p> <p>With the FDA about to authorize the Pfizer for emergency use in students 12 to 15 years old in the coming weeks, waiting until next year will allow middle and high school students who want the vaccine to have the opportunity to be fully vaccinated before the mask requirement is lifted Middle school and high school students are the most "at risk" of spreading the virus, as they cannot be contained in pods like elementary students.</p> <p>With cases in Oregon and Washington surging this is not good news for Idaho. There are significant increases in 7-day moving average of daily new cases per 100,000 in a number of the counties that border Oregon or Washington, including Canyon County.</p>
5/10/2021 01:08 PM	Keeping the Mask Mandate in Schools	<p>We have a child who is a senior and one in middle school, both, want masks to remain in school. They have also expressed that all of their friends want masks and are afraid to attend if masks are not required anymore. ☐</p> <p>The CDC states that "When you wear a mask, you protect others as well as yourself. Masks work best when everyone wears one. A mask is NOT a substitute for social distancing. Masks should still be worn in addition to staying at least 6 feet apart, especially when indoors around people who don't live in your household."☐</p> <p>In not following the guidelines, students are not able to physically distance at school. Please give them the same respect as you gave Teachers, allow them the opportunity to get vaccinated before masks are made optional.</p>

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Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/10/2021 01:31 PM	Masks	Please allow masks to be optional. Let parents choose what is best for their children.□ Thank you
5/10/2021 01:32 PM	Keep the Mask Mandate	Please Keep the mask mandate in school. NOT optional, but required. □ A student deciding not to wear a face mask doesn't just put themselves at risk, It puts all the students at risk. The mask requirement supports student safety, helps keep kids in school for in-person learning, and helps ensure that the greatest number of students will be able to participate in some of the most memorable milestones of their lives. □ Parents and students who did not want to wear a mask had the option of attending VSH for the year. Parents, students, and staff who are concerned by the removal of the mask mandate will have no recourse; students won't be able to transfer to VSH for the last three weeks, and teachers/staff will not be able to request new accommodations if they have concerns.□ I am a Physician Assistant and fully support keeping the mask mandate. Allow the students the opportunity to get vaccinated, before making masks optional.
5/10/2021 01:32 PM	C Masks Current School Year	I feel like we have made it this far through the school year and 2 more weeks is not too much to ask for continuing to wear masks. As a West Ada employee, I feel it is important to finish strong and keep our students and staff safe before the summer break by keeping masks on until school is over for the year. Thank you for your consideration.

To whom it may concern,

Please take the mask requirement off of the dress code. I recognize that you originally put it there to help you to enforce wearing them at school, but the time has come for that to end. We now know that covid has a 99.997% survival rate for the 0-19 age group. Teachers and older students have had the opportunity to receive the vaccine if they want it and the teachers who want to be are now protected. At what point is this mask requirement all going to end? When we are 100% sure that no one will ever get sick?! That will never happen and that is not the school's responsibility. You are trapping our kids in a forever pandemic!! Give parents back their rights as parents to make the decision to mask our children or not. Will you send out a survey to parents to see if the majority are in favor of lifting the mask requirement? Children should not be required to wear masks all day, every day. It is unhealthy to not be allowed fresh air all day. Other school districts have removed the mask mandate and they have not seen a surge in cases. Why not at the very least do a phased-in approach like you did in the Fall with in-person school? Keep the plexiglass dividers in place, but allow Kindergarteners to not wear masks and move up grade by grade? This seems like a reasonable way to test the waters and get this mask requirement where it belongs-at the decision of the PARENTS.

Thank you for your time,

I hope this is the right email to get to the West Ada School Board.

I was watching the channel 7 news and heard an item about parents wanting to do away with mandatory masks. My concern is the health and safety of the students. Last i heard there is no vaccine yet for Elementary age children, of which my daughter is a 3rd grader. Children can and have contracted Covid19 some with severe cases and even death in some cases. I honestly don't believe we should stop precautions until there is a vaccine for ALL ages.

Please continue all precautions in all the schools until we have a better way to combat Covid19

Public Comment 5/10 1:45pm through 5/11 11am

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/10/2021 01:47 PM	May 11, 2021 Agenda Items III.C and D (mask updates)	Regarding student mask-wearing policy updates: please make the wearing of masks optional for the remainder of the 2020/21 school year. And, do not mandate masks for the 2021/22 school year. Our son has developed staph infections as a result of mandatory masks, and like it or not, medical professionals are finally tumbling to the fact that COVID-19 (and its variants) are pretty much "flu-like" in nature. There is no one-time vaccine (such as polio, measles, mumps, etc.) and there never will be due to COVID mutations. We never had mask mandates for flu season, and COVID is no different. Please stop making COVID out to be more than it is. It was novel for a period of time, not in perpetuity. With time, and continuing, recurrent exposure annually, the virus is what is and our immune responses will adjust and react accordingly; like the flu. The sensationalism and politicism needs to stop. Thank you.
5/10/2021 01:47 PM	Masks Removal for the last two weeks	Thank you to the board for reading this comment. I mentioned to my husband that the board was considering removing masks for the last two weeks of school and my 11 year old heard me. She said, "Cool! But why? It is only two weeks to summer." This was not promoted. It was the first time I had mentioned it. And I agree with her. It is only two weeks. I understand the point of the kids seeing each others faces but we aren't living in the movie where taking away masks is going to change the damage of covid in a short amount of time. It's not Footloose...where dancing (or masks in this case) fixes the whole district. Actually, taking away masks does the opposite in some respects. It allows for confusion and anxiety. It allows for super spreading right before end of the year activities. Would the kids rather remove masks or would they rather have yearbook signings, graduations, dances and other fun activities? Would the kids rather remove masks or add a layer of safety to their immediate summer activities and vacations? I guess my question is is this really about our kids at all? My daughter showed me this in her comment. Please stop listening to adults fight over what matters for our kids when we aren't really asking them. Allow the children to transition to summer without contention. Revisit masks for August of 2021.
5/10/2021 01:57 PM	C. Potential Mask revisions	Please begin a phased in approach to eliminating the mask requirement. The issue that was emphasized in the Fall was that teachers wouldn't be safe and needed to be vaccinated. Now that has happened, those who wanted to have been given the opportunity. Those 16 years of age and older have also had the vaccine available. I hear time and time again from those that are adamant that we keep masks to be "safe" and that without them Covid will spread. Do they not recognize that as soon as kids leave school grounds they are going to extracurricular activities, sports, and playing with friends and neighborhood kids and no one is wearing a mask!! It is a false sense of safety!! Outside of school kids are not wearing masks!!! Kids are not at the risk that we once feared, we now know that kids ages 0-19 have a 99.997% survival rate. Please stop this mask requirement and let parents have the right to decide what they deem necessary for their own children. This should be a personal decision, not something that the district is forcing on everyone. The last few weeks of the school year is a perfect time to test the waters and try a phased in approach starting with Kindergarten and going on up. Please give parents back their rights!!
5/10/2021 02:46 PM	Masks in School	I am very concerned about removing the mask requirement in West Ada Schools. I have 2 children in West Ada schools, and my husband and I are also both teachers in the district. As teachers, we are to the point of not trusting a word that is said from leadership and the board. As a parent, I am concerned about the anxiety this change will create for my kids. The group that wants to make masks optional speaks about wanting to see their kids smiles. That is a horrible reason/excuse and contains nothing in the way of science and facts. It is a few more weeks, the students will be better off with masks than without, and until the CDC says that schools don't need to require masks, they should continue to be a requirement. We have already thrown in the towel where social distancing is required. Stop changing what is working. We need to go the rest of the year just as it is. In August, we need to follow CDC guidelines for schools.
5/10/2021 02:51 PM	Bell Schedule	As an elementary school teacher in the West Ada District I oppose extending the school day any longer than it already is. By 3:30, little kids are done. They are so tired and ready to go home. How is it that Boise schools are able to go to school for shorter days, and still meet the requirements needed? Little kids need to be done earlier, not later in the day.
5/10/2021 02:57 PM	C. 1. Potential Mask Revisions	Please keep the mask requirement! I teach 5th grade at Barbara Morgan STEM Academy. Opponents to the current policy say teachers have had a chance to be vaccinated. Yes, I am fully vaccinated but my 11-year-old students aren't eligible to be and won't be for some time. This isn't about me, it's about protecting them from unnecessary infection and keeping to the plan that parents agreed to in the fall (deja vu!) and the semester break when deciding to keep students in the classroom. We only have 5 weeks left - please let us finish as strong as we can and don't throw another change at us. Thank you.
5/10/2021 03:37 PM	C	I am writing this as a concerned parent. We moved into the district from Colorado 5 years ago and all three of our sons have attended Rocky Mountain High School. We have been very pleased with the academics that the district has offered. Our oldest son is now back East attending a top 5 engineering school. Needless to say, we are very supportive of public education and hope that our children decide to be life long learners. That being said, we also are aware that a certain group is demanding that the mask mandate be dropped for the last few weeks of school. This is utterly ridiculous for any district that claims to be listening to science. The CDC still recommends wearing masks in any indoor setting. We have been VERY understanding until now. It seems like the rules of the game are changing constantly. But I urge you to follow through with the mandate for the rest of the semester. If the mask mandate is dropped, please provide options for the children that do not wish to expose themselves to stay home and learn remotely. You are a district whose primary purpose is to educate. Please DO NOT ignore science. We can do better...Jennifer Miller
5/10/2021 03:45 PM	Optional Masks. Please remove from dress code	I ask that you please REMOVE facial coverings/masks from the dress code. Please REMOVE THE VERBAGE. With the vaccine readily available, I personally feel like the need for masks has gone away. However, those who wish to wear them should still be permitted to. I can give examples of how masks have been emotionally harmful to our students. One example being my daughter who has some test anxiety. She's admitted to crying before tests. Now put a mask on her, ask her to breathe through the tears and fast breathing, focus, and do well on her test; NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE!!!! I have withdrawn her from school for all but 2 classes this year because of this specific issue. Please consider the positive effects of the vaccine and the negative effects of keeping our kids faces covered. We need free faces for MANY reasons. I've sent emails with detailed scientific data, so I won't address that here. But please, help our children and remove the mask mandate.
5/10/2021 04:07 PM	Masks at school	I want to voice my concern that there will not be masks required next year. So many things can change in the next 4 months that I do not think it's appropriate to vote on this now. I wanted to come to the meeting but I do not feel safe and afraid this will turn into a mob mentality. I believe you are a school district that teaches science, which means we need to follow science and the recommendations. Please consider keeping masks in place until the CDC says it is safe to not. I will not allow my children back into the classroom with no masks and that is really not fair for those kids either.
5/10/2021 04:28 PM	C 1. Potential Mask revisions	I am asking for our children to please be able to remove masks for the rest of this school year and next.
5/10/2021 04:52 PM	Bell schedule	Leave the schedule alone. The elementary kids go let enough and already get out late! The kids don't get anytime to do extra curricular activities. Fix the mask mandate and worry about something that needs attention!
5/10/2021 05:18 PM	Mask Mandates	Please do not change the mask requirement for the remainder of this year. I believe it is an unnecessary risk since majority of the kids are too young to have the option to be vaccinated. Masks are an easy way to keep more kids healthy and in school. My child is so used to masks at this point that I have to remind him to take it off after school. Additionally, please don't make any decisions about masks for next year at this time. We don't know what vaccines will be available this fall and for what age groups they will be available for. We also don't know what variants may be prevalent this fall, what age groups will be susceptible to them, how severe they will be, and how effective the vaccines will be against them. Much of the dissatisfaction with West Ada's response to COVID has been with sudden changes in policy. Making a decision now regarding masks this fall is setting West Ada up for more frustration.
5/10/2021 05:26 PM	Elementary bell schedule	Please don't consider extending the school day an additional 10 minutes. Also, please consider keeping the Monday early release/PLC schedule. The school day is too long as is, making it impossible for staff and students to attend appointments without taking a day off in order to do so. The Monday PLC day lends itself to attending and keeping appointments without losing instructional time for both staff and students.
5/10/2021 05:41 PM	Masks optional for students and teachers!	Please make masks optional for students and teachers. I removed one kid out of West Ada because of the way this year was. My other one is excepted to another school for the next year as well. She doesn't want to leave, but will if you guys don't start listening to parents and students. MASKS OPTIONAL FOR ALL.
5/10/2021 06:42 PM	Mask Policy Change	I am strongly in favor of keeping our mask policy in place unchanged through the end of the year. We do not need another experimental change so close to the end of the year. My children are happy to do their part to reduce spread and wear a mask to school. We've been doing it all year and removing them now could precipitate an outbreak right as we have been given approval for more school age children to be able to be vaccinated. Children are proven vectors of Covid virus spread. Let's not make West Ada a super-spreading school.

Public Comment 5/10 1:45pm through 5/11 11am

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/10/2021 06:48 PM	Masks	Take the masks off our elementary kids now! We deserve the option to chose what is best for our own children.
5/10/2021 06:52 PM	Bell schedul	Please do not do late start again keep original schedule for elementary. With early mondays and same start time every day. Please do not push our start time back and get out later when kids have other activities it makes it hard to fit it all in.
5/10/2021 08:16 PM	Mask policy for next year	Vaccines have been available to all teachers for MONTHS. There is no excuse anymore. Get our kids out of masks and back to normal.
5/10/2021 09:02 PM	Masks	Please lift the mask requirement and allow us to choose for ourselves. Our kids and youth need to connect and they can not do so in a mask! Mental health issues are worse than they've ever been, removing the mask requirement will help restore healthy mental health!
5/10/2021 09:02 PM	Masks	Please consider making masks optional before the end of this school year to give parents the choice of what their decision will be this fall. We cannot wait till the start of school to find out the decision. It's not fair to anyone! The mandate has gone on for an entire year. People need their choice back.
5/10/2021 09:02 PM	Unmask the children	I do not recognize your authority over our children, and my child does not wear a mask. For those who believe in your power, since our schools are teaching critical thinking, surely students can now think for themselves and choose what is best for their own bodies. If masks work, then only those who believe in their power should be required to wear them, as they will be impervious to those who choose to free-breathe. Fresh air has always been a pillar of health and development, while face coverings have always been a tool to divide and suppress. The Teacher's Union has no authority over our children. The school board has no authority over our children. The Central District Health has no authority over our children. Parents—take no heed to the vote or mismanagement of this meeting. Simply unmask the children.
5/10/2021 09:06 PM	Masks	Remove the mask mandate now!!!! This is child abuse. Some one has to stand up for those kids. Don't be on the wrong side of history!
5/10/2021 09:06 PM	Mask mandate	Our children are being asked to bare a burden that was never theirs! Case numbers are down. Vaccines are available to all staff and teachers. Social distancing is in place when appropriate. What else are we looking for? Children should be allowed to be children! Parents should be given a choice about the safety and health of their own child. Masks need to be optional in our schools.... now.
5/10/2021 09:08 PM	Masks	Take these masks off of our children! There is no need to continue to mask our children/ teens. Bring back the freedom of choice! Those that want to continue to mask up are welcome to do that! You realize that all those kids remove their masks as soon as they are off the school grounds, they go out and hang with their friends, compete in out of school activities and sports without masks, what good are they doing them? I am homeschooling my son because he can no concentrate with a mask on, it is too much for him, they give him headaches. Idaho's covid numbers are consistently dropping, kids 12 and up will soon be able to be vaccinated, it is time to remove the masks, let our kids be kids and let them see each others smiles again!
5/10/2021 09:08 PM	Masks	Please make masks optional for the last two weeks and make them optional for next year as well.
5/10/2021 09:08 PM	Masks	End the mask mandates now!! If a kid and their parent chooses for them to wear one, great let them wear one. Leave the decision up to each family. The board has overstepped their authority in keeping this ridiculous mandate going. You have no right to mask healthy children. You have no right to decide what's right for my child and what decisions are being made between my child and their doctor.
5/10/2021 09:09 PM	Mask Mandate	Please remove the mask mandate for children. They are not super spreaders. I need to be able to connect through smile and facial expression. You don't know the future damage that could do. It's not worth it! Especially with a Vaccine.
5/10/2021 09:13 PM	Mask mandate	Masks need to be made optional NOW and done away with next school year. If someone still wants to wear one, give. This mask wearing is causing so much anxiety from the students. It is now 90 degrees outside and they are required to wear masks for PE and for recess as well. How many school board members have put on a mask and went to PE and recess in the 90 degree weather with these kids? If you haven't then you have no right to suggest that they wear one. I would suggest grabbing a thick mask... like you want them to wear and heading on down to your local elementary school to join a PE and recess class when it's 90+ degrees out. Then, maybe you can report back about how amazing this is for these kids.
5/10/2021 09:15 PM	Masks	I would like the parents to have the right to choose whether or not to mask their children. Our children don't understand what is happening. Children have never been a source of spread. Please let us exercise our parental rights and let these kids smile and breathe freely.
5/10/2021 09:15 PM	Unmasking our youth	This political insanity has gone on long enough. 99% recovery rate! Children hardly affected. 99% recovery rate! Look at the actual statistics 99% recovery rate doesn't support the ongoing agenda of keep our kids masked. People have been led & driven to be fearful. There are more deaths from tuberculosis and we never shut down or masked up COVID has a 99% recovery rate. Get these damn masks off these kids.
5/10/2021 09:15 PM	Masks	Regarding mask mandates for next year, I ask why have there not been large outbreaks in Idaho school districts where masks were "encouraged" or not required? I believe the mandate should be optional for staff and students. I am teacher in West Ada and I would love to have the mandate lifted. Also, if a staff member has concerns, they can ask their students to wear masks. Honestly, by now everyone who has wanted to get a vaccine has done so. The survival rate for kids is 99+%. Please let us see our students smiles.
5/10/2021 09:16 PM	Masks	No masks please the last two weeks of school. If masks are mandated for this fall, we will find an alternative to west ada. And it will not be the west ada virtual school program. No more masks
5/10/2021 09:18 PM	Masks	There is no mask mandate in the state of Idaho! Take the mask off of our children! Let them breathe fresh air! My daughter has scoliosis and wears a back brace 20 hours a day. It is pure torture! She has endured this disability so well over the past three years! Not only is she in pain for the 20 hours that she is in her brace it also causes her to struggle to breathe deeply. Now imagine her wearing a brace for 20 hours and then being forced to cover her mouth and nose while at school... It is utterly ridiculous! All for a virus that if she had, she would recover from. It literally pains me to send her off to school every day with her mouth and nose covered in a mask. I am so disgusted with West Ada school district. The board does not represent the voices of parents well. Let the parents and children who want to mask, wear them. But let the rest of the children be mask free.
5/10/2021 09:19 PM	Mask Mandate	Please allow masks to be optional. Immune systems help individuals stay healthy. Not fabric or paper masks.
5/10/2021 09:20 PM	Mask wearing	I have two elementary school kids. They have been compliant with masks this year. But it is time to move to the next step. There is no data supporting the mandates of masks any more. In fact they are not mandated in Ada County therefore should not be mandatory in Ada County schools. Make mask wearing optional. The vaccine is available for all teachers and staff now. There has never been evidence of spread among the kids. I implore you to stop requiring masks in schools immediately!
5/10/2021 09:20 PM	Mask optional	Masks need to be optional the last 2 weeks of school. This isn't one side against another - pro-mask vs. anti-mask. This is about choice. Removing the mandate from the dress code and providing everyone with a choice is what's best for children, teachers and staff members. Teachers and staff have had the choice to be vaccinated and we know that masks are not 100% effective. Give everyone a choice and make masks optional.

Public Comment 5/10 1:45pm through 5/11 11am

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/10/2021 09:23 PM	REMOVE MASK MANDATE	Please for the mental health and well being of our children, remove the mandate. Allow parents to decide for their children. Optional is best, not mandatory.
5/10/2021 09:23 PM	Mask Mandate	At this point in time, any adult who wishes to have the Covid vaccine has had the opportunity to obtain it, and because of this I highly suggest masks should be optional. Parents should have the right to make this decision for their child(ren). Children should certainly not be forced to wear a mask while doing physical activities, or while outside, but ultimately it should be at the parents discretion.
5/10/2021 09:24 PM	Mask mandates	Please visit the mask mandate and make it OPTIONAL. By making it optional you are not taking away anyone's right to continue mask wearing if they feel the desire. But by pushing everyone to wear one has made families make very difficult decisions that has seriously impacted their health and well being, and will continue to impact them if masks are kept in the coming school year. Please stop listening to science experts shut up in a room making guesswork. Parents and students are LIVING the science. We can tell you with certainty it is not what's best for everyone, and continuing to mandate them could put a lot of families in a tough position, such as homeschooling and/or quitting jobs to support the homeschooling. Is the school prepared to lose thousands of students over this mandate?
5/10/2021 09:27 PM	Masks	I am in support of making masks optional. Let these kids have some normalcy back, like we do at grocery stores. Teachers are vaccinated, there should be no worries since there isn't any statistical data of kids passing it to teachers. Let's see their smiles at school. Most of my kids teachers have told they want masks optional too.
5/10/2021 09:28 PM	Mask mandate	I would like to see kids have a choice to wear a mask or not at school the remainder of the year. Everyone that wants to get vaccinated has had the chance to do so, why do we still need to masks? It isn't healthy to be wearing a mask all day. Kids need fresh air and need to be able to see others expressions. Let's do what is best for our kids please!
5/10/2021 09:30 PM	Remove mask mandate	Please remove the mask mandate for children in schools. Masks should be optional and definitely should not be required. Thank you.
5/10/2021 09:30 PM	Masks	Please remove the mask mandate now for this school year and next. I am a student and urge you to allow masks to be each persons own choice. You have no business making medical decision for me or anyone else ... you have no medical degree and even the science is mixed on whether masks work or not. Quit being biased and a dictatorship and allow us to make our own educated decisions. If for some reason you still decide to unfairly flex your power on poor innocent children, then I at least urge you to allow medical mask exemptions which were written into the law for a reason. Who are you to say a medical doctor or mental health professional is wrong when based on their years of training and experience have identified that masks are not healthy for some individuals. You are creating an unhealthy and unsafe learning environment for these students. Mental health issues and suicides are on the rise due to this pandemic and when you are not fighting to get things back to normal and give students a choice in wearing a mask which keeps them stuck in the situation and socially isolated, then you are responsible for the lives lost both physically and mentally. You are damaging this generation. We want to learn, we want to be social, we want to freely attend school and events without fear and shame and dictatorship, we want to see smiles and we want to exchange hugs and high fives, because, you know what, this is what is age appropriate for our development. Unmask the children! Do the right thing and give us a chance to enjoy school and friends again. I miss my friends and interacting with them in the way we should be allowed to. The numbers don't lie ... the curve has been crushed, the pandemic is over, there are plenty of places we can look at for an example of where making masks optional has worked. Ada County and Canyon County don't even have mandates and people are living and interacting daily with masks optional in many public places. Make masks optional!
5/10/2021 09:32 PM	Making masks optional for this current school year	My vote is to remove any mandatory mask rules, and make it optional for students. Mental health is becoming much more concerning for our children than this virus ever was. How is my kindergartner supposed to learn social cues and empathy when she can see other faces? Please do the right thing and make masks optional! If not, I will be removing my 5 children from West Ada. This has gone on too long.
5/10/2021 09:32 PM	Masks	Please let our kids have the option of going without a mask. For those who are still uncomfortable they can choose to wear a mask. I think it has been shown that the transmission levels in schools is very low and the recovery rate for school aged children is extremely high. Those two factors, in combination with the fact that teachers have had the chance to be vaccinated, should be reason enough to allow our kids to choose whether or not they prefer to wear a mask. It is time to allow our kids to return to a sense of normalcy...the state of their education and mental health demands such!!
5/10/2021 09:32 PM	Mask Mandate	Our children have worn masks for way to long. I understand why they were required in the beginning but my kids (4 in westada) have now been in school all year and wear masks in classes/class rooms where they know they have to where them, but then take them off in other rooms where they know the rules are more relaxed. They take them off to each lunch with all their classmates, take them off at every recess and play, after school they get play with the whole neighborhood (no masks anywhere, go to stores and restaurants, play sports and on and on...the masks don't do anything!!!!!! Please allow our kids to be free from make!
5/10/2021 09:33 PM	Masks	As a West Ada parent I would like to offer some insight to shed light on what effects masking can have on a small child. As if being a child during this last year hasn't been hard enough socially and emotionally, masking has taken a major toll on developmental and mental health issues. I have a first grader that has suffered so much with self esteem, social cues and has even gone so far as to mention killing himself. As a mother, this absolutely breaks my heart! He's having a hard time reading social cues through masks and has had a very hard time socially and emotionally because of it. He doesn't complain about wearing a mask and we have gone with the flow all year as a family, but I see the toll it's taken. He is now in therapy but still struggling. Enough is enough. It's been a year! Children are not at risk and all of the staff have had the opportunity to be vaccinated if they so choose. I have a second child set to start in West Ada in the fall. If they are still expected to wear a mask or are expected to receive the vaccine before returning in the fall our family will leave West Ada entirely! I will not allow this narrative to continue past this school year! So many parents feel the same. I am not alone. We failed our kids this school year for something that wasn't a risk to them. They need a proper, unmasked education for the 21-22 school year. They deserve the right to be children and do developmentally appropriate things like seeing each other smile and play without distance. This is how they learn!
5/10/2021 09:35 PM	Masking	I would like us to make masks optional for the remainder of the school year and next school year. We can learn from other school districts in Idaho that have not had masks mandatory all school year and there have been no significant outbreaks related to school age children. Our hospitals are not overwhelmed and all adults have had the opportunity to be vaccinated. Pfizer is also making its vaccine available for those 12 and over. It is time to let these kids experience traditional school and the science and medical advancements surrounding Covid 19 can back that up. Please remove from the school dress code. It is time. If our medical community was overwhelmed as it was the end of last year I would agree with keeping the masks but we are no longer there. Please consider this for the sake of our children and their education. I think we can all agree that their education has suffered this past year. Thank you!
5/10/2021 09:35 PM	Masks	The lack of oxygen my daughter gets because of masks is causing her to have headaches daily. My son has trouble with his hearing and the masks make it even harder for him to hear and understand his teacher. I would like the mask mandate to be completely removed or at the very least give parents a choice if their children wear them or not.
5/10/2021 09:35 PM	Mask	Please unmask our children. The numbers are so low. All people have had the chance to be vaccinated, let it be up to the parents and the children. I am also an employee of the district. I miss seeing faces and smiles. Kids need this. Thankyou!
5/10/2021 09:36 PM	Mask mandate	It'd time to end the politics. WAEA has no say in our children. CDH has no say in our children. Only us parents have a say in the health of our children. Everyone else is a service provider and we are your customers. Stop the mask mandate and show us you are listening and really care. We have lost all hope in you, WAEA, CDH...Prove to us you are hearing us and stop the insanity. No more masks.
5/10/2021 09:38 PM	Mask mandate	My son suffers from asthma. The masks make him unable to breathe. He had to come home early because of it I am a substitute teacher. I see kids from all schools and all ages. Staff and students touch their masks all day long. They touch lockers, desks, doors, etc and then touch their masks. The same mask they wear everyday that they take out of their pockets rolled up and dirty. Masks have no point any more. As a person on the front line of classrooms. Take them off. They are dirty and worthless. As a mom free my son. Let him breathe Let him love school again. He hates it because of his mask.
5/10/2021 09:39 PM	Masks	Please let us make the choice for our children if we want them to wear a mask or not. I do not think it is OK that children should be wearing masks. The entire idea for kids to wear masks were for protecting adults from spreading it. Now that adults and teachers have the right to get a vaccine we do not need to have our kids wearing masks anymore! Leave the kids out of it!!
5/10/2021 09:40 PM	Mask mandate	Please remove the mask mandate and make it optional. The data does not support children needing to wear masks. It is also not psychologically healthy for children to be wearing these masks. They need to breathe oxygen versus their own expelled co2.. there was a report of a young girl fainting cause of not receiving adequate oxygen levels... plus it's now reported that 1/2 a million Idahoans have been vaccinated, the justification no longer holds weight.

Public Comment 5/10 1:45pm through 5/11 11am

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/10/2021 09:40 PM	Face mask should NOT be required in school	I have already pulled one of my kids from the West Ada School District due to schools going online. I have another one in 3rd grade and may pull her as well. The face mask requirements are a mess. These kids need to breathe. They are getting headaches, rashes, anxiety..the list goes on and on. If the teachers are scared have them get vaccinated. Let our kids breathe! The risk is low, the death rate low, the spread risk low....SO WHY ARE THEY FORCED TO WEAR MASKS! If you have high risk kids, let them go virtual or wear a mask, but don't force all the kids and teachers. Let our kids breathe! Please make the masks optional!
5/10/2021 09:43 PM	Masks are a health decision for parents	Masks have a real impact on the health of some people, both mentally and physically. Requiring masks equally for all children ignores the health impact on my children as well as others. Please let parents make health choices! This is where responsibility has always been and should always be!
5/10/2021 09:43 PM	Mask Mandate	Please make masks optional for our students. Wearing masks may have physical side effects. Face masks impair face recognition and face identification. Face masks impair verbal and non-verbal communication. Face masks block emotional signaling between teacher and learner. Please do the right thing and make masks optional. Thank you!
5/10/2021 09:43 PM	Masks	Please allow masks to be optional at this time for our children. Enough is enough. It's time to start progressing towards normalcy. Remove it from the dress code policy and allow parents and children to do what is right for them .
5/10/2021 09:46 PM	Masks in Dress Code	Since the mask requirement was put into the dress code there is now more information available supporting a decision to make masks optional. As we all know the virus is not easily transmitted by children. Our teachers, parents and staff now have not 1 but 3 vaccines available to them if they choose. The CDC has announced masks are no longer needed outside. We have local private schools that have been masks optional the duration of the year and there has not been one outbreak. Schools in neighboring counties have changed their stance from mandatory masks to optional masks. Kids have been gathering mask free for sports, social activities and extracurricular activities for months without an outbreak. Ada County no longer has a mask mandate. Restaurants and stores are no longer requiring their employees or patrons to wear masks. I'm asking to please let our teachers and students have the OPTION to be mask free for the duration of the school year. Those that want to wear a mask still can.
5/10/2021 09:47 PM	Masks	Please give my 2 elementary aged children the chance to go to school without a mask. Let's at least give it a try!! Any adult who works at a school has now had the opportunity to get vaccinated if they so choose. There is not any evidence based data to force mask wearing in schools. There is no evidence that schools are a major transmitter of covid.
5/10/2021 09:49 PM	Masks being made optional	It is time we made masks optional for the kids. Let parents make the choice if they want To send their kids to school with masks. We now know kids are not major spreaders of the virus and the physiological damage we are doing to our kids is immeasurable. Time for choice.
5/10/2021 09:50 PM	Masks	Masks-- time to make them OPTIONAL. The 14 day average daily case rate is .002% only 13 out of 42,405 students and employees. It literally can't get much lower. This is NO indication that masks are responsible for this low number as private schools have been mask free all year and have the same spread rate. Please do the right thing and give our children back their bodily autonomy.
5/10/2021 09:51 PM	Keep masks until end of school year	Please keep masks through end of school year. There is only 1 month left. We are not out of the woods just yet and it is premature to remove them right now. With only 1 month left, it's prudent to wait. With the recent allowance for 12-15 year olds to get the vaccine, this next month is important to curtail the spread and allow the vaccinations to play through. If masks are removed, spread is more possible, which will push back many kids from being able to get the vaccination because you can't get vaccinated while sick. And spread will increase. We are almost there, but it is prudent to maintain masks for this last month, especially with the close contact kids have in school. Thank you.
5/10/2021 09:52 PM	The Masks	I feel like it is time to drop the mask. It's has been shown that they are not spreading it. Also with the opportunity for All teachers to have received the vaccine it shouldn't be an issue. Our children need to breathe fresh air!! To see their teachers face and be able to hear when they are talking to them. Enough is enough.
5/10/2021 09:52 PM	Mask mandate	There is nothing to back mask mandates in schools anymore. This nonsense needs to end! The mask actually working is SO LOW! And the benefit of wearing a mask compared to not wearing one is not worth it. Look at EVERYTHING! The mental and physical abuse you're putting our kids through needs to stop!!!! You have no reasoning to keep this up. Do not let the teachers union control anything! Take care of our kids!!!
5/10/2021 09:53 PM	Mask	As a West Ada employee and parent Masks should be a choice. I personally get headaches from the mask pulling on my ears! My sons, in middle school and High School, have issues being forced to wear them during PE and are causing all sort of acne issues, as I know this may not be important to most people but for a preteen and a teenager it's devastating. They also complain of headaches too and get anxiety when they forget their mask to school. It is time to make it a choice and for everyone to respect everyone's individual choice. It has been proven scientifically and locally by other schools not wearing mask that they do not help reduce the spread of COVID.
5/10/2021 09:53 PM	School children and masks	With our Covid numbers down children should not have to wear masks to school anymore. Stop the mask mandate for public schools.
5/10/2021 09:53 PM	Mask policy	Please remove the mask mandate from the dress code! My daughter comes home from school regularly with headaches from wearing a mask all day. Wearing a mask is not healthy for my child. Make masks optional. I am the one who makes medical decisions for my child not the district. Ada county no longer has a mask mandate and neither should West Ada. Make masks optional!
5/10/2021 09:54 PM	Masks	I am a teacher at Galileo. The union does not represent my opinion or feelings toward masks and covid. Also, there is an underlying division between those for masks and vaccinations and those who aren't for them. From what I've heard schools in the district are doing things their own way. For example, some grades still do recess as a pod. Others let an entire grade level mix. Some teachers are super strict about masks and others are more relaxed and don't snap at a student if it falls under their nose. And some teachers who have been vaccinated are more relaxed with others than with those who are not getting vaccinated (like myself). I am done with masks. I never wear them unless I'm at school. My life is normal until I'm at school. Let's try no masks for the last two weeks of school to help decide what the first weeks of school will look like in August. If teachers want to wear them, they can. If a student wants to still wear the mask, that's fine. Let's make the last two weeks of school optional for masks. Those who are concerned can wear a mask. Those who aren't concerned can choose not to wear a mask. Data is being collected. Can see if having masks off changes the numbers and to what degree they change. We won't know until we try.
5/10/2021 09:55 PM	Mask mandate	I am requesting that the mask requirement be removed for the students in West Ada. The mask mandate has been lifted by the CDH and therefore should be on the district level. My son cannot attend his local school because he is deaf/hard of hearing and I was told by his principal that the teachers were not comfortable without a mask. No one asked my son if he was comfortable with one ear. My child has the right to an equal education. Please lift the masks so my son can return to school and hear his teacher.
5/10/2021 09:55 PM	Masks	There is ZERO reason our innocent children should be forced to wear face coverings any longer! The vaccine is readily available to those who wish to receive it, it's been proven by numerous studies that this SARS virus does not affect children in the same ways as adults, AND it is detrimental to the mental well-being of their developing psyche. MAKE MASKS OPTIONAL. YOU HAVE A CHOICE TO BE VACCINATED TO MITIGATE YOUR RISK OF HOSPITALIZATION. After all, that's why these measures were put in place, correct? To ensure the health system was not overrun, which it is currently not. How many of you are eating at restaurants?
5/10/2021 09:55 PM	Masks	Now that the vaccine is readily available and counties throughout the state have dropped their mask mandates it's time to drop the mask mandate for our schools. Make masks optional.

Public Comment 5/10 1:45pm through 5/11 11am

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/10/2021 09:57 PM	Optional Masks	My kids chose to homeschool this year because masks and distancing requirements ruin what they enjoy about school: seeing friends and connecting with teachers. It is very difficult to understand teachers who are masked. It is sad never to see a smiling face. It is isolating not to have human connection. There is no sound science or logic supporting the forced masking of children. Why are kids being forced to carry this burden of fear, especially when case numbers are low and teachers are vaccinated? Masks or no masks, West Ada has lost a lot of trust in the community by not putting kids first. That won't be fixed no matter what is decided this evening or next fall or perhaps ever.
5/10/2021 09:57 PM	Masks at school	I feel that masks should be optional at this point in our schools. Let our kids finish out the school year in a normal setting. Anyone who wishes to continue wearing their masks should do so. The amount of new cases and cases spread through the schools do not warrant the continuation of mandatory masks. It is ridiculous that we can be out in public, eating at restaurants and our kids are still wearing masks in their classrooms.
5/10/2021 10:02 PM	Masks	Allow choice for masks at school. I have three children in this District and we as the parents deserve and demand the right to choose. I do not want my children in masks any longer.
5/10/2021 10:04 PM	Unmask our kids!	Stop with the masks already. Our kids mental health is just as important.
5/10/2021 10:04 PM	Masks	I do not want children to be required to wear a mask in school next year. All people 16 and older have the option to be vaccinated, so Please make masks optional.
5/10/2021 10:04 PM	Masks	The original purpose of wearing masks was to limit spread/exposure. The primary threat has passed, so to should the requirement to wear masks. Give children and teachers a choice. The risk is so low in school-age demographics. The statistics of transmissions for this age don't support the requirement. My children have struggled to understand teachers and peers this year compared to others. Not being able to see facial expressions has been difficult.
5/10/2021 10:05 PM	Masks	The kids should not be in mass. The science proves This is not needed for our children. The harm of wearing it outweighs the benefit per science.
5/10/2021 10:07 PM	No more mandatory masks for kids, make it optional.	It's time to remove the mask mandate for kids, make it optional. This is affecting children significantly, it needs to stop, the repercussions of anxiety and depression from this are real.
5/10/2021 10:07 PM	Mask Mandate	I am in favor of relaxing the mask mandate for the last two weeks of school. Here's why: -When masks are worn, wearers are *rarely* following CDC guidance (e.g. not a substitute for social distance, not fitting snugly, hands not washed/sanitized after touching mask). So it's more theater than anything else. -Evidence suggests the student population is more resilient to, and less likely to transmit, COVID. -Human interactions are better when you can see someone's face. Mask-wearing isn't normal or healthy (emotionally, phylogenically, or physically). The sooner we get back to normal, the better for everyone in the school community. Give it a shot, do the experiment, for the last two weeks of school and (hopefully) set a precedent that masks aren't needed, and West Ada can get back to normal when we go back in the Fall.
5/10/2021 10:11 PM	Masks at school	At a minimum there should be no masks during recess, PE, and any outside activity. More so though is the psychological effects the masks are having. Anxiety, depression, unable to hear clearly the teachers instruction. I left California to be rid of all the unions ruining that state. If I need to homeschool my children, I will. How have you LOST enrollment during the MASSIVE influx of people moving here?
5/10/2021 10:11 PM	No masks	Please unmask these kids. They are not spreading covid. The science tells us to unmask For those who are comfortable wearing them please continue as your right. But please allow those who are ok with no mask to have the freedom to breath.
5/10/2021 10:11 PM	Masks	My grandchildren attend West Ada Schools. It is emotionally and physically taxing for them to wear masks at school. The science says masks don't stop Covid spread, Covid is not easily transmitted between young persons, and Covid is predominately not dangerous to the health and of young people. That's real science not political manipulation science. Please end all mask requirements as soon as possible. Be of my grandchildren has had to come home from school several days because he became physically ill due to CO2 buildup from playing energetically at recess. It's time to end all this and let children be children. The masks are worse than the disease. Kids need to be able to sit their friends at lunch and play in groups at recess. Please!
5/10/2021 10:13 PM	Mask mandate in school	Masks need to be optional NOW! There is evidence that masks do not prevent the spread of viral infections and are causing more harm than good. As a nurse at St Luke's children's hospital, I have seen first hand the devastation that masks and isolation have caused. There are more beds being filled in the pediatric units due to suicide attempts than from illness caused by this virus. If you want to "follow the science", take a good look at Eriksons theory of psychosocial development and see how not seeing faces, losing autonomy, not having any control over their social interactions, and being isolated from their peers will affect them. This has been studied for decades. There are long term effects from masks that are affecting our children's development. There is proof that children are not affected from this virus. There is proof that children are not super spreaders of the virus. There is proof that wearing masks are harming our children mentally and physically! Stop living in fear! Stop harming our children! Give our children the choice to wear a mask or not.
5/10/2021 10:14 PM	Masking of Children	Please consider letting the grade school children remove their masks, especially during recess and PE. These young children are suffering not seeing facial expressions and cues. I observed the elementary children holding PE last week outdoors on an 80 degree day... wearing masks. It was completely ridiculous and seemed unsafe in such warm conditions. The numbers of confirmed cases in our grade schools is currently 41 Please let the children be able to breathe and see their friends and teacher's faces.
5/10/2021 10:14 PM	Masks	As a parent of 2 kids in the west ada district I am asking for the board to lift the mask mandate enforcement on our kids. Staff have had the opportunity to be vaccinated , sanitation within the schools have been established and distancing has been enforced. The time for options is now, these children have suffered both physically and mentally from having to wear masks for the duration of the school day. The weather is heating up and for them to be forced to wear these masks outside and in PE is absurd. Please allow these kids to once again see each other smile .
5/10/2021 10:14 PM	Mask wearing	I believe masks should be optional for all students. We know that this virus has virtually no effect on children, they don't get it and they don't spread it. The reason we did it in the first place was to protect grandma and grandpa. Well, grandma and grandpa have all had the chance to get vaccinated so at this point there is no reason to be making kids wear masks. I would like to see parents/volunteers back in schools. Again everyone has had a chance to vaccinate at this point. It is now time to get back to normal life and to no longer let the media drive fear into us for the sake of winning an election.
5/10/2021 10:16 PM	Make masks optional	My 6 year old can NOT wear a mask all day! We should have the right to choose. I respect the decision of others to wear a mask if they feel safer but to force it on everyone, especially a child so young, is ridiculous. I am 100% positive this will alter her learning. Please make masks optional!
5/10/2021 10:17 PM	No more masks for children	It's time to stop the mask mandates for our children. The warmer weather and fresh air is best for all, and the virus isn't prominent in warmer weather. Please effective immediately, it's time to remove the mandate for our children.
5/10/2021 10:17 PM	Masks	Please, remove the mask mandate.
5/10/2021 10:21 PM	Mask option	Our children should in no way be forced to wear a mask any longer. Study after study has come out now proving that children do not spread COVID. Schools have been open Nationwide and even in our local area with no masks mandates all year and have been perfectly fine. Our children deserve better! Parents deserve the choice to do what is best for their children. It is NOT the boards or the districts right to determine what is best for the health of MY CHILD. That is my God given right as their parent. You do not know better than I do as to what is best for my children! Put politics aside and do what is best for the children's health and social emotional growth and make masks optional for the remainder of this year and all of next school year.

Public Comment 5/10 1:45pm through 5/11 11am

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/10/2021 10:22 PM	Masks at school	Masks should not be mandatory at school. They should be optional. Please remove the mask mandate and allow them to be optional.
5/10/2021 10:22 PM	Mask Mandates	As a science teacher (degree in microbiology) and a parent, I implore you to remove the requirement for masks in school. Continuing to require masks simply cannot be supported with actual scientific evidence at this point. Masks should be optional for those who wish to wear them but not required. Policy decisions had to be made last year in an environment with a lot of unknowns. However, it is past time to adjust current policies based on what we now know. There is an overwhelming body of evidence that shows that children are not at a significant risk from COVID-19 and that they are NOT a significant source of spreading the virus either. Fears that schools will become spreading centers or that teachers are at a higher risk in a classroom are simply unsupported by current data. Worldwide, there is no significant difference between the cases in children or adults in schools that require masks and schools that do not. In short, mask mandates provide no measurable benefit in a school environment but can carry a significant risk of harm to the respiratory systems of children. There is mounting evidence that masks are not effective at preventing the spread of this or other Corona viruses. Some preliminary data even suggests that masks may make the spread worse because a mask creates more concentrated particles that leak out from openings in the mask, like the sides. As a teacher, masks are actually unhygienic in many cases, especially in elementary aged students. I teach almost 300 different students in each week. In every class, students are chewing on their masks, masks are often visually soiled or wet, Students wipe and blow their noses into their masks. They rarely wear them in a proper manner. Soiled masks have been shown to increase bacterial and fungal infections. One hearing impaired student cried this week as another student wrote her a note. It was the first conversation she had with a peer for a YEAR since she can't read lips through masks.
5/10/2021 10:22 PM	Masks and distancing	Remove the masks on our children and let them be kids. They have gone through enough and they deserve to get back to normal life. They have suffered enough.
5/10/2021 10:24 PM	Making masks optional	Per the data posted on the districts website - there are 4 active covid cases among all high school students and staff, 5 cases among middle school and 5 among elementary school. That's 0.000366% of all students and staff in the district with active covid cases. How many zeros do you need in the percentage before you remove the mask mandate? My elementary age child is very active and has come home several times complaining that he couldn't catch his breath or felt dizzy and nauseous. My middle school age daughter has mentioned that some of her teachers don't properly wear their masks while they are at their desks but demand the children to do so. My freshman son has been harassed and verbally abused by teachers and staff that feel that they can treat my children however they feel but I know they would never say these things in front of parents. It's time to remove the ridiculous mask mandate along with the negative fear mongering and divisive culture that has accompanied it.
5/10/2021 10:24 PM	Remove Mask mandate	In a nut shell mask mandate should be removed as there is no scientific evidence proving they work, it is not the school board/district job to make decisions for my child or other children regarding medical decisions and/or choices, children rarely get the virus, other schools have already removed the mask mandate, and vaccines are available for those that choose, it has been year it is time to go back to normal and kids are doing activities outside of school with no masks with no issues!! West Ada School district isn't following science or the CDC. West Ada is making up their own rules with no supporting evidence and with no regards of how this is effecting children in the the long term. The schools say they care about the kids when actions show otherwise. Truly disappointing Last I recall the United States Constitution gave us freedoms to make choices that fits for our personal situation not be controlled by some the government and education system which I pay with my tax dollars!!
5/10/2021 10:28 PM	Optional masks for the rest of the school year and next year	We are currently facing an extreme health crisis in our nation, and no, it is not the Covid-19 virus. We are facing a severe mental, emotional, and social health crisis in our schools. Adults in charge are abusing their power, and continuing to place children in harms way; choosing to ignore the science that has been laid out. Over the past year, we have been our own case study. Schools have reopened all over the nation with minimal spread amongst children and symptoms have proven to be similar to any flu season. We know now our children are not super spreaders and are rarely harmed by this virus. And yet, unelected people in power continue to force our children to cover their faces. Children are being forced to bear a burden, while everyone else in Idaho has been given a choice. We know how important it is for children to be able to use facial expressions for social cues, those facial expressions are also needed to help with speech and language development. We have taken away human connection amongst our young people and teenage suicide, depression, drug use, and self harm have skyrocketed. With everything we know about children and the coronavirus, choosing to keep kids masked against their will is causing harm to children. As a person of power, on the board, you are choosing to harm children by not giving them a choice. We are not asking that masks be outlawed! We are asking for choice. We are asking that you stop using a one size fits all for our children. A mask is a medical device and should not be mandated in the dress code. That was a loophole West Ada used, and you should be ashamed of yourselves. Listen to the cries of our children who are begging to breathe fresh air, begging to see their friends and teachers faces, begging for a choice. Your job is to protect the well being of all CHILDREN. Your job is not to bow down to the WAEA in fear, when they represent a very small portion of the teaching community! Please listen to what the masses are saying!
5/10/2021 10:29 PM	Masks	Seriously, what the hell is wrong with you people??? Use your brains. There is absolutely no medical or scientific reasoning for children wearing masks. It is outright child abuse. We have enough statistics about covid to know children are at extremely low risk as are any teachers under the age of 65. The secondary health risks to kids wearing masks are far greater than the risk of covid-19. I think you know this. You people are SICK SICK SICK!!!!
5/10/2021 10:29 PM	Masks	I would like my children to have the option to be able to go to school and breathe at the same time. I want masks optional or gone!
5/10/2021 10:29 PM	Remove mask mandate	Please remove the ridiculous mask mandate. Not only are masks ineffective at preventing any sort of viral spread they are extremely damaging to children and adults alike. Psychologically and physically. Ada county does not have a mask mandate so why should children continue to suffer? Especially if they can eat at a restaurant unmasked but not at school?? No logic. Our children deserve better. Stop allowing fear to dictate decisions impacting children for generations to come.
5/10/2021 10:30 PM	Masks	The school district has NO place to make my children wear a mask. Please remember that even though most teachers are liberal and are pro mask, we are in a very RED state. That means the majority of us don't take lightly others telling us how we should live our lives and protect our children. It's pretty simple, let the parents who live in fear of Covid either keep their kids at home or send them to school with a mask. The rest of us should be able to send our children to school with the ability to breathe without restriction. It's unhealthy, it puts them at greater risk for respiratory infections and decreasing their immune system. For a virus that you have to take a test to know you have it, with a 99% recovery rate the enforcement of masks is asinine. We are sick and tired of this board thinking they can tell us what is best for our children. You have robbed our children of so many things, increasing depression, increasing anxiety, increasing fear, isolation..... I could go on. We the parents are the voice and should be heard. Your place is to listen and vote based on our opinion, not your own. Idaho is not California, stop blurring the line.
5/10/2021 10:30 PM	Mask Requirements	Hi there. I would like to give some feedback on our experience with the mask mandates. I have 2 elementary students in West Ada who were so excited to return to school finally this year. But now they hate school, they have anxiety, it is a fight to get them there every morning. Then when I pick them up they have headaches & are over heated on the days they come from PE. I am told of stories of teachers yelling at kids when they need a break. They can't breathe, they're heads are pounding but yes let's punish them for advocating for their own health. Masks need to be optional. These kids come out the front door every single afternoon, take their masks off and are all together, no social distancing & there hasn't been outbreaks. You drive by the middle and high schools after school and the sports teams are all out together in the fields practicing, no masks - no problem there. You go to the restaurants that the high schoolers go to at lunch, they're all crowded in together, hardly any of them wearing masks, no problems there. These kids are around each other all the time outside of school without masks. If they're going to cause a huge outbreak it should've already happened. Let our kids breath, they're suffering mentally, socially and physically. We cannot go through another school year with the mask requirements that we have now. I'm not going to keep punishing my kids. We will be pulling from the district if masks are in the dress code for next school year. We need to use the last 2 weeks of this year to do a trial for next school year. There is no County mandate in place, vaccines are available to all who want them. Let's get our kids back to something normal again.

Public Comment 5/10 1:45pm through 5/11 11am

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/10/2021 10:34 PM	Keep The Mask Mandate or Compromise	<p>Good evening, my name is Angela Voll. I am a West Ada substitute, and most importantly, mother to an 11yr old 6th grader in one of our middle schools. The face mask debate has torn our community in half. I have really struggled to find some sort of middle ground on where I stand. I have seen most students at the schools I sub wearing their mask correctly and they have had no issues following the rules surrounding them. The COVID-19 vaccine is now available to those 16 and up. Hopefully, this week, it will be available to those 12 and older. My daughter won't be able to receive her vaccine until after the school year begins, because of her late August birthday.</p> <p>One of the biggest issues this school year has been the constant change in policy. With only 5 weeks of school left, it is reckless to change the plan that's been agreed to, ONCE AGAIN, to appease the loudest few. The current dress code in the student handbook is that face masks are required. PLEASE STOP CHANGING THE RULES ON US!</p> <p>While I would prefer to continue a full mask mandate until all students, in all grade levels have the opportunity to be fully vaccinated if their parents choose. Let's COMPROMISE - If students are outside for lunch, PE, recess, or afterschool sports, let them choose to take off their masks. HOWEVER, if they are in the school building, please continue to require masks. You have brought in local medical experts throughout the year for their advice and disregarded what they have said. Because of this, several of you have lost the respect of this community. I know this is a difficult decision to make, and one where no answer is going to please everyone.</p>
5/10/2021 10:39 PM	NO MORE MASKS!	<p>Masks aren't changing the numbers! Look around the country and you'll see that when schools lift the masks, the numbers DO NOT rise. And kids can breathe naturally. And be social. And smile. And see expressions that are so important in adolescent development. Stop pushing your political agenda on our kids! Look at the science behind masks and look at the mental health issues they're causing!</p>
5/10/2021 10:40 PM	Making masks OPTIONAL	<p>I feel it is time that we allow masks to be optional in our schools. Not only for the emotional and social health of our children, but their physical health as well. Both my son and daughter have battled headaches due the lack of oxygen because of masks.</p> <p>Over a year now we have noticed that this virus rarely affects kids under the age of 18. Every teacher and adult who wants, has access to the vaccine. It is criminal to keep kids bound up in masks. This SHOULD not be a part of the dress code. We as parents have a right to determine what is best for our kids health, a school board or teachers union.. It is time that their little faces are free.</p> <p>Other districts in the treasure valley have freed the kids from masks....now it is our turn. Parents and kids should have a choice.</p>
5/10/2021 10:41 PM	Masks	<p>Our children should not be masked the rest of the year or next year. With vaccines available to those who want one and local cases lowering there is no need to keep pushing this on the students. Please unmask our children! Those that would like to continue to mask up can choose to do so but leave the decision up to the parents and students.</p>
5/10/2021 10:42 PM	Potential Mask Revision	<p>Please remove the mask requirement. A child should have the option to wear a face covering or not.</p>
5/10/2021 10:42 PM	School mask mandate	<p>The state of Idaho does not have a mask mandate. Schools funded by the state of Idaho should not have a mask mandate either. Please let masks be optional for our kids.</p>
5/10/2021 10:43 PM	Masks	<p>I don't care if it's district dress code to have kids wear masks outside, this is ridiculous! They are sweating and can hardly breathe out there as they try to play! They are not going to die from covid but they sure as heck will from heat exhaustion!</p> <p>You have been given charge, please use some sort of common sense and decency in your judgement call on this. The schools are the only place anywhere in Idaho requiring masks outside, and at that only a few districts have the requirement at all anymore! Please, please, please use common sense and stop punishing our children!!!</p> <p>In addition to that, what happened to following suit with cdh? They removed the masks long ago! There is no real reason to keep them any longer!</p> <p>Our children are thriving as best they can but with this heat comes the time to drop this ridiculous dress code adage that you allowed to happen!! It needs to be undone and undone now! You have the power to so remove this mandate! Stop making our kids suffer!</p> <p>Other districts are thriving without the mandate! Those in the district who still want to wear their masks are still allowed, it's not like we are taking that away from them.</p> <p>This needs to end here and now!</p> <p>The adults who want to be vaccinated are and there will be no change on that before the new school year! Change this now!</p> <p>We cannot let the new superintendent be tasked with this off the bat. Finish strong and free our children from this oppression that is actually causing more harm than it is supposed to be protecting them from.</p> <p>Unmask our children now!!! You set the codes! Do what is best for the kids! For real, they have been failed enough! We are their parents and know what is best for them! Not a bunch of bureaucrats!!!</p> <p>Thank you! Parent choice for masks!</p>
5/10/2021 10:43 PM	Mask mandate	<p>Please allow for optional masks for next school year! My kids cannot tolerate masks and so we have virtual learned all school year and their grades and education has greatly suffered! They need to be in a school setting to stay focused and on track and I fear another year of virtual learning, which has turned into basically self teaching, will significantly hinder their education for the rest of their school years. I would love to be able to send them back to school next year to enjoy music and all that our great schools have to offer. Thank you for your time.</p>
5/10/2021 10:45 PM	Mask	<p>Unmask these children please. There is no reason for it anymore. I work in a Drs office and see kids all day with depression , poor grades, thoughts of suicide and just pure sadness. It breaks my heart. No more for these kids. It is more harmful on their psych than the actual disease. There's virtually almost no chance of kids transmitting or getting sick.</p>
5/10/2021 10:46 PM	School mask mandate	<p>There is no mask mandate in Idaho. Let parents decide whether masks are good for their children. Left the school mask mandate today!</p>
5/10/2021 10:47 PM	School mask mandate	<p>Take the masks off our kids now!</p>
5/10/2021 10:47 PM	Please consider allowing elementary school children to discontinue the use of masks.	<p>Please discontinue the use of masks for elementary school children. They need to be able to see and read facial cues.</p>
5/10/2021 10:51 PM	Mask Mandate	<p>I would love to see the mask mandate ended. Teachers have all had the opportunity to be vaccinated and our children are low risk. Time to stop living in fear.</p>
5/10/2021 10:56 PM	No more mask mandate	<p>Masks wearing should be optional for students and staff</p>

Public Comment 5/10 1:45pm through 5/11 11am

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/10/2021 10:58 PM	Mask Mandate	I would ask the board to please remove the mask mandate for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year. Hopefully in ALL the schools, but mainly at the elementary level. As a mother with a child who deals with Sensory Processing Disorder and Anxiety I feel like my voice is being ignored and my child's needs are being dismissed as invalid. My son thrives in an environment where he can have consistency and the ability to interact with his peers. This year has been so difficult for him to be away from the school. He has watched his friends go to school all year without him and it has nearly broken him. Because of his SPD wearing a mask literally drives him crazy to the point of distraction. Then because he has issues with masks his anxiety kicks in at the thought of having to wear a mask and getting in trouble if he so much as pulls it down to get a quick breath. It has been so hard watching my happy child slowly become more and more depressed because he cannot be at school. I fear that another year away from school will break him completely. It hurts and frustrates me to think that the very people who I trust to have my child's education and well being in mind have chosen to outright show me that my child and other children like him do not matter. With all the data and with a vaccine in place for several months now I cannot fathom why there is a need for a mask mandate for the coming school year. Please show me and my child that you care and that you are brave enough to be the voice and stand up for those of us who so desperately need you. Thank you for your support in this matter.
5/10/2021 10:58 PM	Mask Mandate	This virus has never been a serious concern to our children, in particular. The narrative has gone from the potential benefit outweighing the potential risk to simply being a placebo to placate those with a unsubstantiated fear or an agenda. We know better today than when these decisions were originally made and it's no longer a question of safety for our children. It's also no longer a question of our teachers safety as every adult who desires a vaccination has had more than enough time to receive it! I whole heartedly believe we should end the requirement of masks and tangible data supports that. The schools across our country who have allowed their children to be mask free show it safe! Close to home we have Middleton mask free and safe! Not only now but throughout this school year while West Ada kids were forced to hide their faces, large private schools in our own town have not been required to wear masks and they have not had any more incidents of the virus. We should not have to pay private school tuition for our children to be allowed to breath unfiltered air. It's cruel to continue forcing masks on our kids when we know the truth. As a substitute teacher who has worked with Special Ed students, I've seen kiddos chewing on their soaking wet masks and teacher continually reminding them to pull them up over their nose. How is that stopping the spread of any germ? As a parent of a special needs child with a speech delay, having her mouth covered with a mask has weakened her intelligibility and negatively effecting her ability to learn and connect with her peers, which is already difficult. Our special needs kiddos do not need the education system mandating the school day and learning environment be more difficult for them. I can not stress this enough! Stand up for our kids. Put them first. They've unfairly bared the burden for far too long. Show them you care. Allow families to decide what's right for them. Children should be free to wear or not wear a mask.
5/10/2021 11:00 PM	Masks optional	With adults vaccinated, and know data that children are not at risk for this virus, masks should absolutely be optional. Every parent should have the choice to make medical decisions for their own child. A mask is a medical device, covering their face for 8 hours a day, including running around at recess and PE. There are no standards for making sure this is safe on our children, who are fearful of even taking breaks when they are anxious & short of breath, for fear of getting in trouble. They view their own friends as a potential threat with a mask on. They are starting to feel more "confident" wearing a mask, than not. They are muffled and silenced. They never see smiles from their teachers or peers at school. They suffer from headaches and anxiety. They do not feel welcome and safe at school any longer. The damaging effects of masks on our kids' physical health, mental health, and social health cannot continue to be overlooked. They cannot be sacrificed to feed the paranoia and anxiety of a minority of adults any longer.
5/10/2021 11:00 PM	Mask Mandate	I am a teacher and I believe the mask mandate should be removed. Masks should be a personal choice and a parent's right to choose for their child. There are plenty of schools that have been open all year without mask mandates and have had little to no spread of Covid. We should be looking at these schools and seeing what has helped them to be successful, instead of contemplating the continuation of masks. Teachers and at risk individuals who wanted the vaccine have been given the opportunity to get it and there is no longer a need to keep masks on kids unless it is a personal choice to wear them. As a Kindergarten teacher, I have many concerns with forcing masks on 5 year olds or any child for that matter. Masks prevent the mirroring of facial expressions, a process that facilitates empathetic connections and trust between students and teachers, and also between peers. I believe we are missing the big picture by not looking at the social/emotional damage this is doing to our youth. Just take a look at the dramatic increase in anxiety and depression among children and teens. Just try to get into a psychologist right now and you will find that most of them are not even accepting new patients because their caseload is full. Suicide among teens has skyrocketed through all of this. These kids are crying out for help and no one is listening to them. Lastly, there is no direct evidence on the effectiveness of masking healthy individuals to prevent infection of respiratory viruses, including Covid-19. What I have seen is they are a breeding ground for bacteria and germs and are worn and handled improperly 99.9% of the time, thus making them ineffective. There have however been many negative side effects of masking healthy kids, including an increase in headaches, stomachaches, nosebleeds, difficulty breathing, bacterial lung infections, and most concerning students losing consciousness. The need to unmask our kids outweighs any evidence of keeping them in masks.
5/10/2021 11:01 PM	Masks	I am against mask wearing in schools. The numbers don't support continued mask wearing, and kids should not be wearing them outside or during PE.
5/10/2021 11:10 PM	Masks	I would encourage the board to discuss removing the mask mandate for the rest of this year and allow parents the CHOICE to mask or not mask their children. This is our right to choose to have our children wear or not wear a mask. Being that Ada County has removed the mandate and cases are at an extreme low, it would make complete sense to remove the mandate and give parents the CHOICE!!!
5/10/2021 11:14 PM	Unmasking our kids	Our kids need to be without masks. They health risks of continuing to force them on kids is beyond any sort of good they might be doing. The kids are done with it, parents are fine with it, even the health districts let it go. West Ada needs to get with the ball game and really do what's best for the kids. And what's been scientifically proven.
5/10/2021 11:16 PM	Making masks optional	Masks need to be optional. They are causing more harm than good for many and parents should have the right to chose for their children. The masks are causing many health problems and are a distraction to learning. Plus it is illegal to force a medical device on any individual in the state of Idaho. Forcing masks on our children is literally against the law. Parents and kids are fed up. The science no longer supports these mandates. Let's drop the political propoganda and do what's best for our kids by giving them their right to breathe fresh air, give them their right to chose!
5/10/2021 11:17 PM	Mask mandate	Should kids be wearing masks at school? It's a heated and very politicized question right now. The nice thing about science is that it's just truth, not political. I'm a man of science as I am an anesthesia provider. So let's ask science. 1st question: Do kids touch their face? Yes. Do they still touch their face UNDERNEATH their mask? Absolutely! Go watch them for an hour and count! Here's a Pubmed study from 2015 looking at how many times/hour kids touch their faces. 23 times/hour and 44% of the time it was nose or mouth. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25637115/ So if a COVID + kid at school touches their face then touches anything in the classroom and/or playground, masks have failed and are useless. The ONLY way you can prevent kids spreading disease is to put them inside a bubble with a HEPA filter or to homeschool. Masks don't work with school age children if they are still touching their faces, and that's the reality. Do away with them!
5/10/2021 11:18 PM	Masks	Masks need to be optional. The vaccine is available to those who are concerned and families have a choice to do online school if they are unwilling to have their child attend without others wearing mandated masks. Allow our children to breathe!!!!
5/10/2021 11:19 PM	Removing the mask mandate	Masks are not effective. They are also causing great distress for children. I hear the statement that kids are doing fine wearing them at school but any respectable adult teaches their kids to obey their teachers and adults so they wear them but the negative effects are seen at home. It's isolating, has negative health effects, cause anxiety, kids touch their masks often to adjust and then touch other things. The masks are a breeding ground for bacteria especially when they are moist. Our students are at risk for increased heart rate, nausea, dizziness and headaches and several other symptoms. Anxiety and depression in our students has increased significantly! Make it stop!! Stop trading the mental well being of the children for this virus. If you are at risk stay home and mask up or voluntarily mask up at school but the rest of the healthy community needs to be released from this oppressive mandate.
5/10/2021 11:21 PM	Masks wearing	End the mask wearing. It is not effective and not necessary. The numbers do not justify this mandate. Stop the tyranny and allow our children their freedom.

Public Comment 5/10 1:45pm through 5/11 11am

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/10/2021 11:29 PM	Mask mandate	I would like the district to transition to masks optional for the remainder of the school year. My son has at times developed rashes on his face from the masks. And I've heard so many horror stories of children getting dizzy, especially during physical exertion in PE. I'm sure you've seen the many cases of teens participating in sports, especially running in track, where they are passing out from lack of oxygen during events. These masks are dangerous for our children to wear for so long every day. And there's absolutely no scientific basis for needing to wear masks when recess is greater than 10 minutes, but then no masks when it's less than 10 minutes. Plus, all teachers have now had the opportunity to be fully vaccinated. The risk of serious illness to children is less than the flu and they are more likely to be in a car accident on the way to school then to become seriously ill from covid. Everyone makes risk decisions in life every day. Nothing in life is without risk. Parents should be the one to make those decisions for their children. Parents can still choose to send their children to school with masks if that is what they would like for their children. Let our children see each other's faces and smiles for the remainder of the school year!
5/10/2021 11:36 PM	Masks	Based on current infection rates reported on the West Ada website, mandatory masks for everyone is not warranted. Kids are at significantly low risk and all teachers that want a vaccine have had one. Let's make masks optional. We have increased awareness to stay home when sick, increased hygiene and lots of natural and vaccine immunity in the community. It's time. It's time to make masks optional and accept that life has risks.
5/10/2021 11:42 PM	Mask mandates	It's way past time to eliminate the mask mandates, and the mental abuse that goes along with them. For a long time West Ada insisted they would follow the guidelines and recommendations of the CDH. When the CDH finally recommended that mask were no longer required in Ada County, you created your own rules. It's time to stop the lies and honor your word. Our kids are not in danger, they never were. If a few are afraid, let them wear their masks, but stop forcing the rest of the kids to live by your unhealthy ideals.
5/10/2021 11:46 PM	Mask mandate	Please change the mask mandate to optional. Let parents and kids make the decision of what is best for their own child and themselves. My 3rd grader got in trouble the day it was 90 at recess because he got overheated and didn't walk away to pull his mask down. He should be able to breathe especially when it's so hot. Let the kids see each other's smile!
5/10/2021 11:49 PM	Mask wearing /this should be a choice!	No masks for school. My son had to go to the ER with labored breathing. Phneummomediastim what what he had to be treated for. With warmer weather especially HE COULD NOT GET FULL BREATHS with his mask on. THIS IS WRONG! He is a 4th grader. Masks should be a choice to wear now. NO MASKS. This is so unhealthy and causing more damage to not only him.
5/11/2021 12:01 AM	Mask mandates	There are no studies that show a benefit to community members for wearing a mask. There are NO randomized, controlled trials with verified outcomes. However, we do have information documenting the potential health consequences of wearing masks. Please protect our children and their future and remove the mask mandate.
5/11/2021 12:17 AM	Masks	I am writing in support of wearing masks through the remainder of the school year, especially in secondary schools. There is no possible way to keep socially distant at school and masks have proven to be effective at keeping COVID infections down over the course of this school year. I would certainly hope that masks will still be required at graduation ceremonies as well. Thank you for the difficult decisions you have made due to the pandemic.
5/11/2021 12:33 AM	Kids wearing masks	There is zero reason innocent children should be forced to wear mask at school. Our kids need to breath freely and see facial expressions. This is damaging and pure child abuse.
5/11/2021 01:07 AM	masking children	We need to get the masks off of our kids. It is not healthy physically or mentally. Now that every teacher/staff has had the opportunity to be vaccinated there is no excuse to keep our kids masked. (honestly they never should have been masked in the first place, but since we are being sold and told how great the vaccines are, why are we still masking??) To develop properly and learn properly they need to be able to see facial expressions and clearly hear what is being said and taught. It is time to end this madness and do what is best for our kids.
5/11/2021 05:59 AM	Masks Optional!!	Please allow masks to be optional! Those that want to wear one can. So many have already been vaccinated in addition to wearing a mask. It's overkill!!!! Let children's and parents decide for themselves if they want to wear one just like those who wear one are choosing to do so!!! Freedom to choose!!!! Let us have our rights back. America! Conservative Idaho! Enough is enough!
5/11/2021 06:02 AM	mask wearing	Please make mask wearing optional! My granddaughter used to love school now she does not like going because of the masks!
5/11/2021 06:27 AM	Remove mask requirement for all students!	There is no longer a need for our students to wear masks now that vaccines are available and those that want the vaccine have had time to get it.
5/11/2021 06:34 AM	Masks	Please un mask our children.
5/11/2021 06:38 AM	Masks	The board needs to get rid of the masks.
5/11/2021 06:52 AM	Masks optional	Masks must be optional! Allow parents to decide what is best for their children. Enough is enough. We all know the science says that the risks is so low for children. Allow parents to decide how to mitigate their risk. Our kids have gone through so much this year and to start off next year with masks give them little hope things will change.MAKE MASKS OPTIONAL!!!
5/11/2021 06:56 AM	Optional masks	Stop masking our kids!!!!!!
5/11/2021 07:00 AM	Unmasking our students	With most teachers and faculty having been vaccinated, it is no longer necessary for the students to be masked to protect them. It is unhealthy for the students to not have fresh air to breathe all day at school. We have had an entire year to see that the kids aren't the ones who are getting or passing the virus on to others. But they are suffering from the effects of wearing masks daily: depression/anxiety, lack of oxygen for their growing brains, break outs and rashes, etc. The negatives far outweigh the positives. Unmask our children!
5/11/2021 07:03 AM	Mask off please!	Let our kids be kids!! This virus isn't going anywhere! Do we expect our children to wear these masks forever!! How is this not a form of abuse! My child is starting to struggle with speech issues now, how is this okay! I respectfully ask you to please let our kids have a choice in this matter!
5/11/2021 07:06 AM	Mask removal	Please remove the mask mandate from all schools. I don't feel it necessary to copy and paste data to demonstrate that the "science" points to liberating the children, so I won't. I will ask, that the board remove mask and eliminate the inconsistencies that run rampant through each school concerning the mask. If anything let the parents decide what level of safety is necessary for their children. It's not your job, that resides with the parents. Thank you.
5/11/2021 07:07 AM	Mask optional	Let parents and students have a choice to wear a mask or not for the remainder of the school year! It's been a rough year between virtual, every other day, to just getting back to school full time for some. Let's see their smiling faces FINALLY! Our children should not be masked there are schools all over this valley that have not worn masks and they are not spreading the virus, no outbreaks!!
5/11/2021 07:13 AM	Masks on children	I have two autistic brothers and a mother who has worked with special needs children for over 15yrs. The affects of not seeing faces and expressions is detrimental to the development of our children. If a smile is important to a literal monkey in science/social experiments, why then are we acting like they don't mean anything for children to develop properly? Our children should NOT have to suffer long term psychological effects because of a few adults fear of getting sick. Please be more selfless and think of the children. TAKE THE MASKS OFF OUR CHILDREN! Be on the right side of history When will it end???????? Who is calling the shots? I hope you make the right decision. Please

Public Comment 5/10 1:45pm through 5/11 11am

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/11/2021 07:18 AM	Mask mandates	Please make masks optional in all classrooms. Unmasked children have never been shown to be threat to anyone. As a public health scientist, I can confirm that current data does not support the use of masks or distancing as effective measures in preventing disease transmission. Without this data, those who support mask mandates have resorted to politics to support their claims. I do not wish to force anyone else to remove their mask against their will, and I only ask that the board and teachers of West Ada do not force their political beliefs on to every child in the district. Please make masks optional.
5/11/2021 07:20 AM	Masks	At the beginning of the school year I had two of my three kids in rolled in West Ada. Within three weeks it was very apparent that the mask mandate and other Covid precautions were very unhealthy for my children physically, mentally, and emotionally. I pulled them from west ada. My oldest will be a highschooler next year, she really wants to go back to public school. However my kids physical, mental, and emotional health is most important and none of my kids will be going back to West Ada until masks are optional. Public schools are paid for by the public. Every citizen of this country has the right to public education by law. however unhealthy standards have been put in place that make it so many students cannot take advantage of this right. Please give parents back their rights to make this health decisions for their kids!
5/11/2021 07:21 AM	Removing the mask mandate	Please remove the mask mandate for the rest of the year. I have a high school and a middle Schooler. Like everyone, this is been a tough year, and they need some normalcy. Teachers have been vaccinated if they choose to, who are we protecting? It's time to get back to some kind of normal.
5/11/2021 07:21 AM	Mask mandate	Please remove the mask mandate. My son has had more headaches this year then he's ever had in his whole life. He needs to breathe.
5/11/2021 07:24 AM	No masks on kids!!	The idea that our kids are still required to wear masks over year into this virus is absurd. They don't do anything to prevent the spread of germs and every single study that comes out confirms that. It turns out that germs are microscopic, who knew? Not to mention that the kids aren't affected by the virus anyway, there is now a variety of vaccines to choose from. Teachers and admin have been vaccinated if they want to be. Move ON! Get over it already! Viruses always have and always will come and go and are a part of life. Masks on children should always have been optional - parental choice and with all of the aforementioned factors, they for sure should be now! Making them optional doesn't disallow them. If parents wants their kid to wear 1 or 18 of them because it makes them feel better, fine, do that but stop with shenanigans of requiring them for everyone else. We and our kids do not owe playing pretend into some else's paranoia. We all know that at this point, basically the only place they're wearing them is in school just because someone "thinks" they look like they do something. They don't other than collect bacteria, boogers and whatever else kids normally have on their hands because they're kids! Let them be kids for heavens sake! They're mental and physical health along with their education isn't a political football. The mask is a symbol of control and compliance which do NOT belong in education: You've done enough damage with your atrocious handling of this year. Get back to the true meaning of education, you have plenty to work on there. Enough with the insanity. One last thought, how about being an example of courage and common sense rather than FEAR?
5/11/2021 07:24 AM	Masks	It is time to unmask our children. The rate and severity of children has been found to be extremely low and those who would like to be vaccinated are able to. It is unhealthy, unfair and harming our children in so many ways. The collateral damage from this pandemic and the national response to mask and muzzle and take away so much for our kids is sickening and devastating. Give parents to the choice to mask or not mask their children. It is a perfect way to test the waters so all kids can be mask free next school year if their family so chooses. Mandatory Masking has become a way to control people. Parents not politicians should be making decisions on behalf of our children.
5/11/2021 07:29 AM	Unmasking our kids	Every person 16 or over, this includes EVERY teacher and staff member, can choose to get the Covid vaccine now; it's available to all of them!...so our young, innocent, victimized children who have carried the brunt of this pandemic and have been forced for a year now to change their entire lives and cover their faces for 7 hours a day, should UNEQUIVOCALLY be allowed to take the oxygen-sucking, morale-draining, smile-hiding masks off of their faces!! It's waaaaay overdue time to stop making our children suffer and pay for a virus that was never affecting them in the first place! It absolutely makes ZERO sense to have masks on our kids, especially now with an abundantly available vaccine!!!
5/11/2021 07:39 AM	Mask mandate	I would like to see the kids and staff go mask free for the last 2 weeks of school. It's time. The staff have had their chance to be vaccinated by now & kids chance of serious complications or spread of the virus is extremely minimal. The weather is warming up and masks make it harder to breath on active children. More and more businesses are not requiring masks so it's silly that schools do when everyone is around unmarked people all over town. I know that my kids like to wear the same mask over & over and it only gets washed once a week. I'm sure they are not the only ones. As the weather gets warmer bacteria can grow and they are directly breathing this into their lungs. Please let them ditch the masks!
5/11/2021 07:53 AM	Masks	Please take these masks off of my children!!! Requiring a child to wear a medical device in order to attend school is ridiculous and absolutely disgusting. Our kids' faces are their identities and when you cover them with a mask, they lose that identity. Wearing a mask should be a choice!! You DO NOT have the right to make medical decisions about my child. I'd also like to remind you that this board is supposed to represent the children and parents of the West Ada School District and NOT the teachers Union! If you continue to force our children to wear masks, in order to receive an education, you will only be proving to the parents and students that you bow down to the teachers Union.
5/11/2021 07:56 AM	Masks in schools	Masks need to go!! There are MANY reasons, but kids need face to face interaction for their mental health! kids are not a risk to spreading this and people are much more aware to just stay home if they're not well. Attendance will probably go back up if this is removed.
5/11/2021 07:58 AM	Mask Mandate	Hello, make mask optional so parents and kids can make their own decisions.
5/11/2021 07:58 AM	Wearing of masks	Wearing of masks should not be mandated. It should be a personal choice. If you want to wear one, then wears one! If you want to wear several at once then do so. If you don't want to wear one, then don't. Simple as that. Give the children and their parents back their own agency to do what's best for them? Is there a mandate to wear a jacket if the temperature is below zero? Is there a mandate to have an umbrella when it's raining? Give us your recommendations, and then let us choose what we would like to do with those recommendations. Stop the mask mandate please!
5/11/2021 08:02 AM	Face free	We will be choosing medical freedom for our children. Resend the mask policy. ASAP
5/11/2021 08:04 AM	Mask policy	Masks need to be eradicated from schools for the children. Science, data and facts need to be considered when it comes to masks and the effects covid has/doesn't have on children. Stop the social distancing, stop making our children suffer because teachers don't want to teach. Find teachers who do want to do their jobs if the ones you currently have on staff are unwilling. Otherwise their jobs will be obsolete. Moms and dads in the valley will form homeschool rings if you continue down this path of destruction of our schools in Idaho and west ada.

Public Comment 5/10 1:45pm through 5/11 11am

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/11/2021 08:06 AM	The mask mandated	All three of my kids have IEPs or 504 plans. I had to remove two of my children from the school district because of the mask policy. One child is severely dyslexic with a processing disorder. She already struggles so much and works harder than anyone I know but the masks we making it so much harder to focus. She would come home in tears saying she can't do this, it's too much. She was 9 years old. She wants so bad to go back to school but she can't do it with the mask. This isn't me forcing her and making this my agenda. She deserves a choice to go to school without a mask over her face. It seems so normal now to say that but something plastered over a child's face for 6-7 hours a day should not be normal. How can I send her back and expect her to get a fair education? My youngest child is 7 years old and is speech delayed. She is very hard to understand and is getting speech therapy twice a week. I had to remove her from the school district because no one could understand her!! Kids ignore her and didn't want to play with her because they can't hear her. She stopped trying and her grades were dropping, she would get off the bus defeated. This is unfair.. my children are not getting a fair education because of their disability and something as simple as a mask. They already have to work harder than most just to get by, why make it even harder on them? I don't want masks banned I just want the choice for them to be able to wear it or not. My oldest is in middle school, he is ADD, and he's been more successful than the girls. I really just want my girls to be able to get a good education and it's so obvious to me that that can't happen with masks that I had to remove them from the place I trusted to help them. I will fight for the right to allow those who want to wear masks to be able to. I just want someone to also fight for the kids who need to not wear them.
5/11/2021 08:07 AM	Removing Masks	We need to remove masks on our children! Having kids play outside with masks on while the weather is warming up is completely ridiculous. If you want to wear a mask inside that's your choice but at this point it should be optional like it is everywhere else in Ada County.
5/11/2021 08:08 AM	No masks / no later bell elementary	Masks must be optional !! Ww decide as parents what is best for our kids , not the school . Where will it end ? Do you decide if they take vitamins every day yo help their immune systems or what they eat ? Parents make those choices , not school boards or anyone else . It needs to be an option to wear a Mask . Parents decide on ANYTHING Health related . PERIOD .
5/11/2021 08:13 AM	Masks	The kids should have a choice to not wear masks the last 2 weeks. We have the choice to wear them or not everywhere else.
5/11/2021 08:15 AM	Masks Optional	Please make masks optional ASAP! I have four children in this district from elementary to high school. They are all suffering in these masks. They can't breathe, which makes it hard to focus and harder to learn. They feel anxiety all the time about getting yelled at if their masks fall beneath their noses. They live in fear and anxiety about these masks. They don't talk to anyone because it's too awkward to try to talk to people wearing masks. They have to yell through their masks and that's not something they want to do. They don't participate in class because the masks again hinder participation. They get headaches and sometimes come home nauseated. Please let these children breathe and therefore be able to learn. Masks are intended for the most vulnerable to wear. Children have proven to not be vulnerable to Covid. So let those that want to wear masks, and give those that are suffering the freedom to take them off!
5/11/2021 08:15 AM	Masks	Masks need to be optional. The mask is causing skin problems and headaches to my 9th grader. There is zero evidence that they help prevent the spread of anything. Healthy kids should be able to have the choice. If my kid is sick he will stay home. Period.
5/11/2021 08:19 AM	Mask requirement	Please remove the mask mandate on our children. There is so much information out now about the effectiveness of masks and how unnecessary they are for school age children. There is so much more information about the "virus", now too. There is a difference between what we believe to be true and what is actually true. If the school district would have someone do some actual research, they might find that the masks are pretty useless.
5/11/2021 08:20 AM	Masks	I would greatly appreciate if you would let the decision of masks be left up to each family as to whether they wear them or not. I have had my Kido get sent home because the mask made her head hurt and it slightly elevated her temp (100.1) after she was asked to cover her nose. I was then told that she couldn't come back for two weeks unless she got tested for Covid and it came back negative, so that's what I did (proving the mask was the issue). Not only that but all the bacteria and mask fibers that my kids breath in all day definitely are not good for anyone. I started letting my kids wear see-through mask just so they can breath and stay in school and not once have they been told they can't wear them, which proves it's not about safety but compliance. Those that want a shot and to wear a mask more power to them that's their choice as it should be our choice if we don't want them. Thank you for your time. Lacey Anderson
5/11/2021 08:21 AM	Masks optional for this and next year	Using current data about community spread and what we now know about the lack of spreading covid between children, should be optional for the rest of the school year and should not be considered for 2021/2022. Thank you.
5/11/2021 08:25 AM	Mask requirement	Please make masks optional for the remainder of the 20/21 school year and beyond. Our children deserve the freedom to breathe, to communicate with friends, and to be truly seen. I respect the families and children that opt to wear masks. That is always going to be their right and their choice. I simply want my children to have the freedom to choose as well. Especially since teachers have been vaccinated and the mortality rate for children is extremely low. Please consider the rights and freedoms of all your west ada families. Thank you for your time and consideration.
5/11/2021 08:26 AM	Masks in school	We respectfully request that any and all mask mandates be removed from West Ada Schools as everyone over the age of 16 has access and the ability to be vaccinated at no cost in the great State of Idaho. Electing not to be vaccinated is a personal choice that comes with personal responsibility. We are not asking those who wish to remain masked not to wear one, simply requesting that those who do not wish to be masked have an equal opportunity not to wear one. Mandates should be removed and masks should be optional. Thank you.
5/11/2021 08:26 AM	Masks	As a parent of three children who attend gradeschool in West Ada, I request that you modify the dress code to remove the mask requirement. Teachers and staff who want to be vaccinated have been vaccinated. We know this virus poses very little threat to children — for kids it's on par with the flu. We also have evidence that kids are much less likely to spread coronavirus than adults. For these reasons, our kids should not have to be in masks. Shelley, Melba, Madison — these are just a few examples of Idaho schools that have never required masks and have run successfully throughout the pandemic without mass outbreaks in the schools. I know that many people think masks are 'no big deal' but I know from my own experience wearing a mask that it greatly impedes communication. I am a naturally social person, but when I wear a masks I'm much less likely to engage in conversations because I find it really hard to hear and understand people, with a mask muffling their speech, not to mention that masks prevent me from being able to read facial expressions and social cues. When my kids come home from school wearing masks and try to tell me about their day, their soft voices are completely muffled by their masks. Communication is vital to education, in particular for my son who attends the early intervention preschool for speech therapy. How can our kids attain a quality education, as well as make friends and improve their social and emotional well being, when masks inhibit their ability to communicate? Covid numbers in our area have dropped dramatically. The COVID unit in the Meridian ER where my husband works has been gone for months. This is good news that we should be celebrating! And it should be reason to allow our kids end the school year without masks. Please allow them some semblance of normality. Thank you for your consideration.
5/11/2021 08:31 AM	Mask mandate	I am writing to ask that the mask mandate be stopped! Any research shows that they don't work, and are actually more harmful. The damage to kids health and emotional state is more important.
5/11/2021 08:33 AM	Mask removal	Please remove mask mandate for our teachers and children.
5/11/2021 08:35 AM	No mask mandate!	Please lift the mask mandate. This needs to end!
5/11/2021 08:43 AM	Mask mandate at school	I believe that masks should be optional in schools. Every family should be able to do what they feel is right for their children.
5/11/2021 08:54 AM	Make masks on children optional	Wearing a mask must be a choice! It is a ridiculous argument that everyone has to wear one. Those who want to continue MAY do so but those who do notify not be forced to. Our children need to connect to one another! Fun fact: they have play dates and are mask free at sports and on buses! This makes zero sense!!!
5/11/2021 08:57 AM	Masks	Please remove the mask mandate in our schools. They are causing more harm than good at this point, and our children should not have to wear them anymore!

Public Comment 5/10 1:45pm through 5/11 11am

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/11/2021 08:57 AM	Masks for students	Students should not be required to wear masks ever. They don't need it, and it is completely unnecessary and stupid.
5/11/2021 08:59 AM	Masks in school	I would like to formally state that I am against the mask mandate at school. Masks should be optional so anyone who wishes to wear one is able but no one is forced to wear one. If waivers are required to limit the school's liability, I will sign one, but I do not want my son to be forced to wear a mask at school.
5/11/2021 09:16 AM	No masks	Please, please give our children the freedom of no masks. Let their sweet faces and smiles shine for all to see. God created us in his image. I've never seen a mask on Jesus or God!! This is a good way to test if masks are actually doing anything other than harm. And the fact that you're still making them wear them outside when they're playing in this spring weather is absolutely absurd. Please use some common sense and do what is right for our children. All teachers have been vaccinated.
5/11/2021 09:20 AM	Mask optional for school children/ pandemic policies	Masking our school children has got to end. I pulled two of my children from your district in large part, because of this issue. There are ZERO studies on safety of long term mask use in children. I have heard horror stories from friends children who have had very negative experiences at school with this issue. This saddens me and I no longer trust the West Ada School district to have the best interest in my children's education. Until some big changes are made I will not be placing my children in your school district. The way in which the Covid-19 pandemic has been handled in our district has been appalling. You should really consider listening to parents before teachers unions. I will continue to support legislation that will enable school funding to follow the school children and to limit the power held by people in positions like yours.
5/11/2021 09:22 AM	Mask Mandate	Please remove the mask mandate. Make it an option for children in school. The parents and children who feel like it is detrimental to the children's health should be able to go without them. Mask foster bacteria in our lungs and hurt our immune system. Wearing a mask should be a choice.
5/11/2021 09:24 AM	Mask mandate	It's time for our children to see each other's and their teacher's faces at school. My son, who is in Kindergarten, has been effected by the huge disconnect happening while faces are covered. They are missing out on communication skills, and are worried about social interactions because facial expressions can not be read. Not to mention the headaches when coming home because of being forced to wear a mask outside at recess. All adults who would like to receive a covid vaccine are able. Children don't need to suffer any long. Please make mask wearing optional.
5/11/2021 09:25 AM	Mask Mandates	I am in favor of lifting the mask mandate for all WestAda school employees and students. Please remove all the requirements for masks and face coverings. The governor of Idaho has removed Idaho's mask mandates Please follow Suite. Many of Idaho's schools and school boards have removed all mask mandates Please follow Suite.
5/11/2021 09:25 AM	Mask mandate	Please promptly remove the mask mandate from the dress code. Stop damaging our children.
5/11/2021 09:25 AM	Mask mandate	Please end the mask mandate.
5/11/2021 09:28 AM	Masks	NO MASK MANDATE FOR CHILDREN. If you care about children's health at all, please rescind the mask mandate. So unhealthy, and also changes the behavior of the children.
5/11/2021 09:30 AM	NO More Masks for our children in school	Mask mandate for our children's school district need to be lifted in Ada County. Our children should not be wearing masking still at school, in classrooms, play grounds or gymnasiums. Let the kids breath in fresh air!! Enough is enough!! I have chose to homeschool my children this year due to the mask mandate in our schools. Kids are not spreading this virus & they definitely do not need to be wearing masks...let them breath!!
5/11/2021 09:34 AM	Masks at school	Please let our children have the option not to wear masks. Children all over Europe and other states in the United States have been going to school mask-free for many months. There is NO evidence of increased spread or clusters of spread or outbreaks!! I worked so hard to get a mask exemption for medical reasons for one son, but my older son, who has learning differences and an IEP still wears his mask all day. School is already so hard for him, and wearing a mask makes it harder to concentrate, harder to understand teachers, harder to communicate, and less motivating to be at school when he doesn't want to be there in the first place. Everyone acts as though it's nothing for these children to wear masks, but this is NOT true!! We are considering moving out of this school district SOLELY because of the mask requirement. If we go to a more rural Idaho district, our children will have a more effective, motivating, healthy school environment without masks.
5/11/2021 09:37 AM	Masking	My son goes to MMACHS and they need to get unmasked! He has suffered all year from wearing masks. Get rid of them!
5/11/2021 09:44 AM	Masks	Masks need to be OPTIONAL. This has gone on long enough and the parents need to be able to make decisions for their kids. Alton mandating masks.
5/11/2021 09:49 AM	Medical care in schools	Schools should not tell us how to take care of our children. They are there to teach them not make sure their medical is all taken care of. They are our children and we as their parents will take care of everything else.
5/11/2021 09:58 AM	Bell schedule	Why would you push school even later? Why are you not allowing children to be children anymore? We get out at 4 now and kids have time to play for maybe 1 hour and then do homework, eat dinner, or go to practice if they have sports...kids do not need a bed time at 10...also what about parents who work...please do what is right for the children and not yourselves
5/11/2021 10:02 AM	Masks optional	Our family of five supports 100% masks to be optional. Let those who wants to wear them to do so. And the same courtesy has to be given to everyone who chooses to NOT wear one.
5/11/2021 10:04 AM	Masks	Our medical doctor confirmed scientifically that wearing masks make my children hypoxic. Of course this makes sense because if you are covering up someone's breathing holes then they are being forced to rebreathe their own carbon dioxide. I have had to start homeschooling because I will not allow my children to be partially suffocated by the school board. Mask wearing is a personal decision that affects someone's health and should not be decided by the school board or anyone at the school. I think the school board should be responsible for all of the health problems caused by mask wearing and from this time forward allow children to breathe freely. If the school board is not going to respect parental rights and civil rights by respecting mask choice, then they should be removed from their places.
5/11/2021 10:04 AM	Mask mandates for students	Remove the mandate on masks for students, keep it optional. LET OUR CHILDREN BREATHE. This is child abuse.
5/11/2021 10:07 AM	Mask usage	Please eliminate the mask requirements! There is plenty of science to suggest they are ineffective and unnecessary! Stop being sheep, lead the way! Let's put this behind us.
5/11/2021 10:10 AM	mask	UN MASK our children. this is unnecessary and should be the choice of the people. If folks don't feel safe then they can stay home but not push their fears on healthy children

Public Comment 5/10 1:45pm through 5/11 11am

Date/Time	Topic:	Comment:
5/11/2021 10:18 AM	Masks	We need to un-mask our children - immediately! How can the school district mandate them when our own local health department removed the mandate, making them merely a recommendation back on February 19th? Furthermore, the recommendation is only for indoors with poor air quality, or where social distancing can't be obtained. To see the children wearing them outside (where the virus can't even survive due to increased temperatures and UV light) is an abuse of power, with absolutely no scientific backing whatsoever. Children are already struggling emotionally, physically, and psychologically due to the pandemic - but the pandemic is OVER. Children need normalcy to return. They spend the majority of their weekdays in the classroom and this continued abuse of power needs to stop. The literature on the outside of the box containing the very masks you are mandating state that they don't stop virus transmission - what do you have to say for that? Children have been PROVEN to not be spreaders of this virus - what do you have to say for that? Studies show that suicide rates amongst children have increased 1.5- 2.25 % since Covid. The place where they spend the majority of their daytime hours needs to return to normal - without fear mongering. Masking them with no scientific reasoning only creates more of a divide, more reasons for them to bully each other (let's not ignore teachers that are also part of that bullying now), as well as increased fear and shame. This abuse of power WILL be detrimental to not only their future - but also yours.
5/11/2021 10:27 AM	Wanting kids to be in school full time with no masks.	Please lift the mask mandate. These kids need to breath and see each other's smiles!!! Please put the children first as well as their quality of education!!!
5/11/2021 10:29 AM	Mask mandate	Enough is enough! Let our kids breathe! This is not healthy to cover our kids up and will only have negative effects down the road!
5/11/2021 10:30 AM	Masks	Board Members, We appreciate this discussion of masks on the agenda tonight. As parents of 3 school aged children, we are passionate about their education and well being. This year has been tough with decisions made and especially in regards to masks. After the strike out from teachers we ultimately pulled 2 of our children to a private school with masks optional. It has been very eye opening to see the difference in the kids that go to a private school vs the one child at West Ada. She suffers from anxiety that has only accentuated with this school year. All she wants is a "normal" middle school life and to try to achieve that, she has chosen to stay at West Ada for now. She comes home with daily headaches and once that happens it quickly turns to a migraine. She has been yelled at multiple teacher when she has taken her mask down to simply get a drink or get a breath because she feels a headache coming on. Our child is a straight A child and is the type that will do whatever a teacher asks to not be a problem. But when it's a daily struggle to simply breath or get in trouble it causes so much anxiety just to go learn. As children go to school to learn, we need to have an environment that they can flourish and excel! This has all been taken away with protocols upon protocols especially the masks. We urge you to consider to take the mask mandate off our dress code and make them optional. We understand and have family members that like the masks and we respect their point of view. We however would like our choice given to us as well. We hope to continue with West Ada schooling for our only child in the district, but when the parent's, teacher, students and staff choices aren't considered and come to a compromise with other opposing views we ultimately will leave to find schools that will respect freedom of choice. Thank you
5/11/2021 10:36 AM	Mask	Now that we have over a year of data to analyze regarding the effectiveness of masks and lockdown procedures, it is time to take a step away from the fear tactics. Masks have not been proven to save lives, and have actually been proven to cause more harm then good, especially in young children. Cases in elementary school children have never reached a point of concern and with cases in our district dwindling it is child abuse to continue to force these children to wear masks for over 6 hours a day, especially as we move into the hottest part of the school year. We need to set an example for our children and follow suit with other states that have eliminated masks mandates and lockdown orders. These states are showing the lowest number of COVID cases and their economies are booming. I understand there is a lot of pressure coming in from those who have been conditioned with fear and virtue signaling, but we must stand up for what is right and make the BEST decision for our children's mental and physical health. No more masks on our children!
5/11/2021 10:45 AM	Let Our Kids Breathe	It is time to allow our children the right to breathe!! We need to follow true science, not compliance. Every single person has had the opportunity to get the vaccine, if they wanted to. Who exactly are we protecting now?? It's time to stop the child abuse!!
5/11/2021 10:55 AM	Masks	I am a freshman at Centennial High, and believe that us students should have the right to not wear masks if we dont want to. Masks make it hard to concentrate in class and they are annoying. This past year has proved that the school board is incapable of making competent and smart decisions. The board continues to enforce a ridiculous mask mandate, and it is time for it to end. it is time for students and parents to make their own choices. It is time that the district stops messing with our lives. It is time for personal choice, and freedom.
5/11/2021 10:58 AM	Masks	It should be the parents choice whether our children wear a mask or not. I don't want my child to wear a mask.
5/11/2021 11:00 AM	Regular Board Meeting May 11th / Topic - Masking Children in Ada County schools	Please stop requiring masks on children to wear masks in West Ada schools. As I am sure you are aware the masks do not stop a virus. Forcing children to wear a mask all day is terrible for their mental health and physical health. The data on children under 18 is very clear. Children should have never been required to wear a mask in the first place. Continuing to push that agenda is not going to help the children. Why do people not talk about how to eat healthy and what vitamins and supplements will assist you to protect yourself via your immune system? Because it's not about health. Why don't they care about what material your mask is made of? Because it's not about safety. Why are there no special hazmat bins to put discarded masks in if the droplets are so dangerous? Did you know breathing through a mask actually makes particles more airborne, not less? It creates a lingering cloud of particulates that is worse than normal non mask breathing. Why has the death rate in the US not changed over the past few years if we are facing a pandemic? Shouldn't it be increasing if we are truly seeing more deaths? End the nonsense. Stop torturing the children with your abuse of power. If people are too scared to interact in society they should stay home and let the rest of the world keep moving forward.
5/11/2021 11:00 AM	Masks in schools	My kid is in West Ada and I want no more masks in schools. I understand you guys made a mistake but its time to do the right thing and follow all the data, science, and real world evidence that proves this is totally unnecessary. End masks on kids now
5/11/2021 11:03 AM	Masks	I want the right to decide whether or not my child wears a mask. I do not want my child wearing a mask.
5/11/2021 11:05 AM	Mask mandate	Please remove the mask mandate in the dress code.
5/11/2021 11:05 AM	Mask mandate	Please end the mask mandate.
5/11/2021 11:07 AM	No masks end of year and next year	No masks final weeks of this school year. No masks next year or beyond. My child did not attend this past school year because of the masks and wild rules. If masks are still required next year, we will not be returning. Texas never mandated masks for elementary age children and never had issues. Florida has been back to normal with no problems. Children are not at risk. Masks don't work. If they did, cases would have never climbed.

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: No Masks for 2021-2022
Date: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 9:14:21 AM

**WARNING: This email has been received from a source outside of the West Ada School District:
Please only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to ask that the West Ada School District cancel the wearing of masks for children in school. We now have 3 vaccines that are available to anyone 16 years of age or older and we have taken so many precautions throughout this whole year to ensure the cleanliness and safety of our schools. The children have stayed in line with the mask wearing and have followed the rules just to have the ability to go to school in person. The staff, teachers, and children have been amazing in their dedication to making it all work safely. We have made amazing progress and we have known for a long time now that children are not affected by Covid. They have been proven to not be spreaders of the virus and to continue the mandates, makes zero logical sense at this point. The teachers can be vaccinated if they choose. It is long overdue to let the kids breathe again.

I have a kindergartener who has had sores behind his ears and rashes on his face from a mask. He comes home with a mask that is covered in food, saliva, art supplies, dirt, and anything else a 5-year-old touches. This is most certainly counterproductive and not healthy for them or anyone else. He is having trouble socially with recognizing emotions because of covered facial expressions and hearing his teachers, friends or others is difficult. Everything is muffled and he can't see how his teacher pronounces words and sounds. These are critical things to be learning at this age. It is setting all our children back by not learning the basic things that help them evolve at this age.

I have another child in third grade who gets sores behind his ears and has to sit behind a wall of plastic with his mask on. He said it's very hard to hear and see his teacher or other kids. He always feels confined and has lost interest in going to school. He is finding it hard to make friends when you can't be too close to other kids. He and others are always getting scolded about distance, pushing up his mask and complying with the mandates. They get only two 10 min breaks in a 6-to-7-hour school day. Not even during the 30-minute lunch break can they take their masks off. He says that there are people who walk around the school and check in all classes to make sure everyone is behind their plastic walls and that their masks are on. During physical education, running, playing, or singing in music our bodies demand and require us to get more oxygen. This has become a real health concern and has been going on for over a year at this point. The overall health, mental, educational, and emotional wellbeing is being destroyed by wearing masks for this long.

The amazing teachers have been compliant and making the best out of the situation. They too, constantly complain that it is harder to teach and connect with the children. They notice direct developmental issues as a direct result of the mask mandates. The protocols were put in place for a good reason when we didn't understand what we were dealing with. Currently that is not the case and now they stay in place not out of fact and science, but of fear. Most parents are wanting the mask gone and share the sentiments of this letter. For those parents who still want their kids to wear a mask, let them do so. That is their choice and there are many options for children to get alternative schooling. West Ada has invested a lot into online schooling and keeping that option open makes sense for those who are interested. Let's give the option and let parents decide.

Private schools have been mask free this entire year and none have had problems. The children are happier, healthier, more socially developed and learning like they should be. Teachers and staff are healthy and well. How can you dismiss the success of ALL these private schools this past year? It is beyond negligent if the West Ada and Idaho as a whole, fails our children this next year. Other states have been opened completely and are thriving with health, economics, schools, and society as a whole. I think it is time to get back to life and wellbeing for all. Let families decide for themselves what is best and what they are comfortable with. Let's no longer penalize all for the comfort and fear of a few.

We love our school, staff, teachers, friends, and our community that we have built here. As a parent I can only give you my side of the story and hope you all make a clear choice for next year's mask mandates. Make the choice for our children and not for any other reason. We do ask that whatever your decision is, to please make it soon and before the end of this school year so parents who share the same sentiment that I do, can make plans accordingly. Thank you for your time and letting me voice my concerns. Your time on the matter is much appreciated.

Thank you,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the author.