



JANET QUINN &lt;janet\_quinn@msd.k12.wi.us&gt;

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## Letter to the school board

2 messages

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**TAWNY NELSON** <tawny\_nelson@msd.k12.wi.us>  
To: JANET QUINN <janet\_quinn@msd.k12.wi.us>

Mon, Oct 11, 2021 at 2:52 PM

Menomonie school board members,

I am writing to you as a mother of children in the school district, an employee of the school district, a respite care provider of children who are students in the school district, and a gymnastics instructor for children in the Menomonie area.

I am asking you to consider the proposal put forth by Angela Skillings. She has requested that masks become optional for all students. She also included that the board can not revisit this item. I believe this would be the best choice for the school district.

The children of Menomonie started the school year with masking optional. After only a few weeks of school they were then told they would become mandatory, and could possibly become optional again after a vaccine became available to them. The children and families deserve more consistency than that. It is very difficult for such a young child to remember the rules when they are always changing. Parents of these children decided to enroll their children in school expecting that masks would be optional. These families made plans for the school year that would enable their children to learn with their peers.

I would like you to consider a child who has sensory issues. This child can become bothered by a tag on their clothing, a seam on a sock, denim jeans, things that many people are not bothered by. Even things we may consider quite easy to ignore, can not be ignored by a child who is sensitive to them. I believe everyone can agree that to suddenly wear a piece of fabric over your nose and mouth is quite uncomfortable. It makes it difficult to concentrate. A child who is forced to wear one is not going to receive as much education out of their day at school as they should.

Elementary age children are often still learning about speech. They are learning how to pronounce words, and how to read. Often it is necessary to see the mouth of the student to make sure they are forming the words correctly. Masks make it impossible to know how they are holding their mouth while speaking. Masks also make it very difficult to hear students while they speak. Many children are soft spoken and when their mouths are covered by a piece of fabric it muffles their voice even more. It is also helpful to be able to see facial expressions as children are learning how to communicate with others. A smile can mean so much! I have also witnessed masks making it difficult for children to breathe. Young children often learn through repeating rhymes. This requires extra breaths to be taken, having a piece of fabric over your nose and mouth does not allow fresh air in.

I respect the families who feel school is more safe for their children if they wear a mask. I encourage them to continue to make the decisions they feel are best for their family. I would like all families to have the ability to make those important decisions.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I hope that as you place your vote tonight you keep in mind the many children who hold a place in my heart. They all deserve a quality education, consistency in

made plans for the school year that would enable their children to learn with their peers.

10/11/21, 2:54 PM

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routine, and to feel comfortable at school. Thank you for caring for the children of our community as much as I do.

Appreciatively,

Tawny Nelson

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