

**JOHN RAY CLEMMONS**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
DISTRICT 55

CORDELL HULL BUILDING, SUITE 408  
425 REP. JOHN LEWIS WAY NORTH  
NASHVILLE, TN 37243  
(615) 741-4410  
rep.john.ray.clemmons@capitol.tn.gov



**State of Tennessee**  
**House of Representatives**

**COMMITTEES**  
CIVIL JUSTICE  
EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION  
HEALTH

**SUBCOMMITTEES**  
CIVIL JUSTICE  
K-12 EDUCATION

August 2, 2021

Dr. Adrienne Battle  
Director of Schools, MNPS  
2601 Bransford Avenue  
Nashville, TN 37204

RE: COVID-19 and Facial Coverings

Dear Dr. Battle:

We write to respectfully request that you mandate facial coverings for all MNPS students while indoors as long as recommended by appropriate health professionals to protect the health of all students, teachers, paraprofessionals, and everyone else inside our MNPS schools.

We make this request as parents and grandparents of students, as well as lawmakers. Like all parents and grandparents, ensuring the health and well-being of our children and grandchildren is our number one priority. As lawmakers, we have a duty to help ensure that the children of our community are able to return to and remain in school where they can best learn and grow in a safe and equitable environment. While MNPS and teachers did a tremendous job working to educate our children virtually during very challenging circumstances, we can all agree that learning in a classroom provides the most effective and equitable learning opportunity for the children of Nashville. To this end, we would encourage you to take all possible steps to ensure that our schools remain open and our children remain safe and healthy.

Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") and American Academy of Pediatrics ("AAP") have now recommended that all students over 2 years old, along with staff, wear facial coverings regardless of whether they have been vaccinated against COVID-19. Universal masking is recommended because of the various legal and logistical limitations on tracking the vaccination status of students and staff. The CDC recommendations state that children do not need to wear facial coverings when outdoors for recess or physical education unless they will be standing in a crowd for long periods of time. As stated by the AAP, the wearing of facial coverings protects unvaccinated individuals and could reduce transmission of other respiratory illnesses that tend to keep students and staff home sick.

Following the recommendations of the CDC and AAP, the Chairman of the Metro Board of Health and Chairman of the Metro COVID Taskforce, Dr. Alex Jahangir, has stated that he hopes everyone is aware of the new recommendations with regard to children returning to school this Fall. When asked about mandates for schools, he says there shouldn't be much debate, because the recommendations of the CDC now match with the AAP. Dr. Jahangir has clearly stated, "Masks should be worn indoors for schools.... I would recommend that children who go to school indoors wear masks.... Wearing masks in-person makes sense and is what should be done."

Research shows that wearing facial coverings is one of the most effective health measures to stop the spread of the coronavirus. Please heed the recommendations of experts and do what is necessary and appropriate to protect our students, teachers, MNPS staff, and families and make this school year a success.

Thank you for your leadership and all that you have done and will continue to do to educate our children. We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Ray Clemmons". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Ray Clemmons  
*State Representative*

/s/ Senator Heidi Campbell  
/s/ Senator Brenda Gilmore  
/s/ Representative Bill Beck  
/s/ Representative Bob Freeman  
/s/ Representative Darren Jernigan  
/s/ Representative Bo Mitchell  
/s/ Representative Jason Powell  
/s/ Representative Mike Stewart

cc: Metro Board of Education