

**JEFFERSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF HEALTH**

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January 28, 2022

Dear Chairwoman Skinner and Superintendent Gibson:

Members of the Board of Health's governing board have received several letters and phone calls over the past several weeks concerning the on-going mask mandate installed by the Jefferson County Board of Education (JCBOE) in August 2021. While the Board of Health does not have jurisdiction over the Board of Education's decision to implement and continue the mask requirements for children in school, we do take issue with reports that staff and faculty have "blamed" our agency for the mask mandates in schools.

Our board would like to inform the members of the JCBOE that on August 28, 2021, the Board of Health convened a special meeting and passed unanimously a resolution supporting parents' rights to decide whether their children wear masks in school. The resolution concluded with the following:

"Be it resolved that the Jefferson County Board of Education acted unilaterally and completely on its own in its decision to implement a mask mandate in Jefferson County Schools and that the Jefferson County Board of Health does NOT recommend a mask mandate for children attending Jefferson County Schools. The Jefferson County Board of Health recommends that the decision as to whether or not a child is to wear a mask rests solely with the parent of said child."

A copy of the full resolution is included with this letter.

We respect the autonomy of the Board of Education and its decisions. We also request that you do the same for the Board of Health. We request that you please cease and desist the use of any language that suggests the Board of Health instituted the mask mandate in schools or in any way supports this mandate. We also request that you share this communication with all staff and faculty of the Jefferson County schools and BOE administration so that it is abundantly clear that the mask mandate decision was that of the JCBOE board and no other entity in this county or the state of West Virginia. Likewise, we will be posting this letter on the JCBOH's website and social media and sharing this letter with any further inquiries we receive on this matter.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,  
Jefferson County Board of Health