

Eastport-South Manor Central School District

149 Dayton Avenue • Manorville, New York 11949 • (631) 801-3000 • Fax (631) 874-6750 • www.esmonline.org

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September 10, 2021

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

We are writing to you today on behalf of the Eastport-South Manor School District in Suffolk County, Long Island, to reiterate our concerns and frustrations over recent actions and make a call for change in support of our students, staff members and community.

Last week our district, like many others throughout New York State, welcomed our students back to school full-time. Our careful planning and preparations made our opening day a success, and the excitement for the return to the classroom was palpable.

Nevertheless, many in our community remain concerned about the lack of local control over certain decisions that govern the operations in our schools. Among these concerns is the requirement that all individuals, regardless of vaccination status and social distancing, wear a mask when indoors. We understand some blanket requirements are needed to ensure equity among school districts across the state. However, we implore you to give local control to school districts so that they can develop operational plans, in concert with their stakeholders, that align with the concerns of their individual communities.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to running a school district, and therefore we believe all districts should be granted greater autonomy with regard to their daily operations.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Byrnes, Board President

Francesco Ferraro, Board Member
Jeffrey Goldhammer, Board Member
James Governali, Board Member
Christine Racca, Board Member

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