



Bridgett Heinrich <bheinrich@panaschools.com>

Update from the IASB Executive Director

3 messages

IASB Executive Director Tom Bertrand <cmontrey@iasb.com>
To: bheinrich@panaschools.com

Mon, Aug 9, 2021 at 3:01 PM

Click [here](#) for a mobile/web version



Throughout the pandemic school boards have wrestled with the challenges resulting from changing guidance from the CDC, IDPH, and ISBE in response to increases in cases of COVID-19. The recent and rapid increase in the Delta variant – which impacts children more seriously – of COVID-19 has added to these challenges.

Governor Pritzker's August 4 Executive Order mandating masks in all K-12 public schools to start the school year forced many districts to reverse course with the opening of school plans. This Executive Order effectively eclipses the local authority of school boards to adopt mask-optional plans for the upcoming school year. The Governor cited both the potential liability exposure for any local school board disregarding the mask mandate and the authority of ISBE to change recognition status of a school district and, by extension, impact school district funding as possible means to enforce the mask mandate. The Governor also said he would take action to enforce the mandate as needed.

While we believe in local control, we also rely on expertise and clear guidance in public health. We also rely on legal guidance. Once an executive order is issued, it has the effect of law, and boards should work with local counsel to comply with it. Failure to do so may result in sanctions against the district and expose the district, its employees, and the board to unnecessary liability.

We know that everyone involved with education is passionate about the steps necessary to safely return to in-person learning this fall. We know you are frustrated and tired as you face changing guidance and emotional community members who have strong opinions about mitigations, especially masking. We will continue to advocate on your behalf, and to share your experiences from the field with both ISBE and the Governor.

Thank you for your commitment to the safe return to in-person learning of nearly 2 million K-12 students served by Illinois' public schools.

Tom Bertrand
Executive Director
Illinois Association of School Boards

Illinois Association of School Boards

Springfield: 2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, Illinois 62703-5929 Phone: (217) 528-9688
Lombard: One Imperial Place, 1 East 22nd Street, Suite 20, Lombard, Illinois 60148 Phone: (630) 629-3776



The vision of the Illinois Association of School Boards is excellence in local school board governance supporting quality public education.

Click [here](#) to unsubscribe and/or manage your subscriptions.

2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, IL 62703-5929