



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
Ways and Means Committee

EDWARD P. RA
Assemblyman 19th District

June 15th, 2021

The Board of Education of the Garden City Union Free School District:

Thank you for your recent correspondence to me with your concerns and requests regarding Covid-19 guidance in our schools. I understand many of the frustrations you have highlighted and I echo your sentiments.

Schools have adhered to Covid-19 guidance and have done exceedingly well in maintaining a safe, sanitary environment for our students. Despite unclear directions from the NYS Department of Health (DOH), and often mismatched guidance from DOH and the Governor, schools have proven not to be a place of any significant Covid-19 spread and have truly adapted well, often on a whim.

With the summer weather getting even warmer, and infection rates in New York State at an all-time low, restrictions need to be lifted, especially on healthy, non-symptomatic children. I have always supported and advocated for Covid-19 guidance to be made on a local level. Our County Department of Health, local governments, schools, and towns know their communities best- and should therefore be making these decisions that directly impact us.

I agree with your request that events such as graduations should not be under control of the State. I pushed for in-person graduation ceremonies last year, and I will continue to advocate for these events to be determined and handled by local input. DOH must announce any other guidance in a timely manner- unlike last year with many last-minute advisories, ongoing changes, and lack of guidance in certain situations.

I, along with many other colleagues in the Assembly Minority Conference, have called on the Governor and DOH to revisit many of their regulations, and to repeal the mask mandate on our youth. We have held press conferences, written to the Governor, and even introduced legislation aimed directly at these issues. Although the legislative session has concluded, these issues have not gone away and I will continue to work with you and work to ensure that your requests and needs are met on behalf of the Garden City Schools.

I appreciate your efforts and all you do for the Garden City Public School District. Please do not hesitate to reach me on any other issues, and if there is anything I can assist you with.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward P. Ra".

Assemblyman Ed Ra