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August 4, 2021

JIM DURKIN
STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 82ND DISTRICT
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

Dr. Carmen Ayala
Illinois State Superintendent of Education
100 N. First St.
Springfield, IL 62777
Via Email

Re: Executive Order 2021-18 Education Funding & School District Assistance

Dear Dr. Ayala:

Governor Pritzker issued Executive Order 2021-18 this afternoon, which mandates all public and nonpublic schools in Illinois serving pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students require the indoor use of face coverings, regardless of vaccination status. A press conference held in conjunction with the filing of the Executive Order included statements from the Governor that threatened a school district with non-recognition by the State Board of Education if it does not comply with the face covering mandate.

These statements, which allude to a reduction or elimination of State education funding through non-recognition, has greatly alarmed House Republican legislators. We are urgently writing you for clarification on whether you, as Superintendent of Education, or the State Board of Education, are in agreement with the threat to education funding.

An additional statement by the Governor indicated PPE resources funded and provided by the State would be made immediately available to school districts to encourage compliance with the new mandate. Will these resources be provided equitably to public and nonpublic schools, and in what time frame?

The new mandate unilaterally imposed on elected school boards and nonpublic schools has an immediate effective date, so a concise and prompt response to the questions posed in this letter is necessary.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Durkin".

Jim Durkin
House Minority Leader