

From: [Chris Reykdal](#)
To: [Audra Byrd](#)
Cc: Shelley.Redinger@rsd.edu
Subject: RE: [External]Richland School District
Date: Thursday, February 10, 2022 1:56:17 PM

Director Byrd,

A law enforcement officer is not threatening you if she pulls you over and gives you a ticket for not wearing a seat belt. The health inspector is not threatening a restaurant owner when they cite them for unsafe conditions. And I am not threatening you by reminding you of law and order. I have a legal responsibility to follow the law. I took an oath, like you did, to follow the law. I have to remind you that willful violations are against the law. That's not a threat, that is responsible governing. Fortunately, we have not had to withdraw any funds to date, because the districts who have considered illegal actions have found a more rational and lawful way to express themselves. I deeply appreciate your passion, but you need to follow the law and the executive orders that have the power of law until they change. We are trying to change them to remove masking as a mandate. We are trying to shift contact tracing back to local health. We are trying to shift our resources and energy to teaching and learning and not public health enforcement. Until we can make more progress, please follow the law, follow your oath, and demonstrate the respect and civility that I know you want our learners to adhere to.

I would also remind you, that attacking me with words using your school district account is likely an ethics violation. It may be viewed as political speech. You are always free to share your feelings with me. If it is official school district business, or if you are representing your board, then use your district account. If you are expressing your passion or opinions in your personal and private capacity, I strongly suggest you use a personal email account.

Finally, on a point of factual clarification, as State Superintendent, I don't sue school districts. I do have the legal authority, and responsibility, to withhold apportionment payments if a willful violation of the law is occurring. This is a very important distinction.

Chris Reykdal
State Superintendent

From: Audra Byrd <Audra.Byrd@rsd.edu>
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2022 1:29 PM
To: Chris Reykdal <Chris.Reykdal@k12.wa.us>
Subject: [External]Richland School District

Dear Mr. Reykdal,
Sending out conflicting messages to the public and to the school boards is manipulative and dishonest. I am tired of this charade. I am tired of you continuing to threaten superintendents and

school board members. Quit being a coward and stand up for what is right for these kids. Instead of telling school board members to be patient while we deal with suicides and mental health crisis and protests in our schools every day, how about you get your act together with Governor Inslee and get our mandates released like every other state (besides one) has figured out. Quite sending threats. What kind of man thinks it is appropriate and healthy to straight out threaten to sue his superintendents and school board members?

Sincerely,
Audra Byrd
Richland School Board Director 1

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From: Shelley Redinger <Shelley.Redinger@rsd.edu>
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2022 1:09:54 PM
To: Jill Oldson <Jill.Oldson@rsd.edu>; Kari Williams <Kari.Williams@rsd.edu>; Audra Byrd <Audra.Byrd@rsd.edu>; Richard Jansons <Rick.Jansons@rsd.edu>; Semi Bird <Semi.Bird@rsd.edu>; Galt Pettett <Galt.Pettett@rsd.edu>
Subject: Fwd: Follow-up and Reminders on Current Mask Mandate

From OSPI

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone
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From: Chris Reykdal <Chris.Reykdal@k12.wa.us>
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2022, 12:57 PM
Subject: Follow-up and Reminders on Current Mask Mandate

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Dear Superintendents and Board Presidents:

As you are aware, the OSPI team is having healthy and important discussions with the Governor's Office and the state Department of Health (DOH) about the transition from pandemic response to endemic procedures. One of the major topics is the current statewide mask mandate. I am hopeful the statewide mask mandate for schools will be removed, but a specific timeline for that has not been announced by the Governor. He is expected to provide more detail, including a timeline for when the change would take effect, next week. We do not expect a change to take effect until at least a few weeks from now.

Please note, **face coverings for students and staff are still required at this time** per requirements by the Governor, Secretary of Health, and the Department of Labor and Industries. Until the statewide mask mandate is eliminated, it continues to be a willful violation of the law to

enact board policy or explicit practices that remove masking or allow for noncompliance within your buildings. As superintendents and elected officials, you are held to the highest standard of lawful behavior. We don't always agree with laws, or proclamations that have the power of law, but I hope we can all agree that we have moral and legal obligations to follow the law. Our children are modeling behaviors and forming opinions on our civil order based upon what they see and hear from leaders like you in their community.

We are very close! Please be patient and respectful. As soon as we hear more about masks, contact tracing, or any other changes to our mitigation protocols, we will share those with you. Until then, please remind your district leadership teams, building personnel, students, families, and community members that we are still under a masking order until DOH and the Governor determine next steps. Failure to follow the law and executive orders may lead to OSPI withholding, and eventually reducing, your funding; and you may have personal liability if you willfully violate a law, safety order, or executive order.

I deeply appreciate that these complex times test our will and our shared responsibility to each other, so right now is the time to double down and step into your leadership.

Thank you again for leading when it is most difficult.

Chris Reykdal
State Superintendent

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