

PHILOSOPHICAL EXEMPTION

To Whom It May Concern,

I am seeking an exemption from _____'s requirements related to the COVID-19 virus. I have philosophical objections that make it impossible for my child to comply with your COVID-19 policies related to vaccines and mask wearing.

Louisiana law offers robust and broad protections for students' and parents' philosophical objections to certain state public health policies, and I write to assert my philosophical objections to the COVID vaccine, which are explicitly protected by state law. La. Rev. Stat. §17:170 (E).

In addition, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, protects students with disabilities, including students with autism, learning disabilities, and social-emotional agnosia. *See* 29 U.S.C. § 794. The Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education enforces Section 504 in the context of educational institutions through its regulations, found at 34 C.F.R. Part 104. These regulations require a school district to provide a "free appropriate public education" to each qualified student with a disability who is in the school district's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. *See, Protecting Students with Disabilities*, U.S. Department of Education (last visited on July 26, 2021), <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>.

I also write to state my philosophical objections to your mask mandate. I do not consent to forced immunization or face coverings on my healthy child, who is at minimal risk of hospitalization or death from COVID. *See, e.g., Denise Roland, In Children, Risk of Covid-19 Death or Serious Illness Remains Extremely Low, New Studies Find*, Wall Street Journal, (July 8, 2021), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/in-children-risk-of-covid-19-death-or-serious-illness-remain-extremely-low-new-studies-find-11625785260>. ("Children are at extremely slim risk of dying from Covid-19, according to some of the most comprehensive studies to date, which indicate the threat might be even lower than previously thought. Some 99.995% of the 469,982 children in England who were infected during the year examined by researchers survived, one study found.").

Your mask policy imposes risks on my child's mental and emotional health by hindering his verbal and nonverbal communication with classmates and teachers for up to 6+ hours a day. Experts worry about COVID's effect on the mental, social, and emotional wellbeing of children for whom social interaction is so important, and your mask mandate only furthers these worries. *See, Jeffrey Kluger, The Coronavirus Seems to Spare Most Kids from Illness, but Its Effects on Their Mental Health Is Deepening*, Time Magazine, (July 23, 2020), <https://time.com/5870478/children-mental-health-coronavirus/>.

Experts admit that cloth masks do not stop the transmission of viruses, including COVID-19, that spread through very fine droplets because cloth masks stop only large droplets. *See, Stanley Young, Young: COVID-19—Are Masks Really Helpful?*, The North State Journal, (July 26, 2021), https://nsjonline.com/article/2020/10/young-covid-19-are-masks-really-helpful/?fbclid=IwAR2SPi1mz8nO3Ffr_1AEwI8X7i1WwNYI6lEcm6WVcF8_58wCrvGoA34UuA, ("Transmission through very fine droplets cannot be stopped by ordinary masks. Most recently, the CDC has confirmed that the [Corona]virus can be transmitted through fine droplets.") Any protection cloth masks provide is additionally diminished by the fact that most children lack the ability to refrain from touching their own masks, faces, and nearby surfaces for the 6+ hours they are at school.

Please note that I do not object generally to schools setting forth public health requirements, such as those requiring students to receive certain childhood vaccines, because those requirements are supported by long-term and rigorous testing before states put such requirements into place.

Meanwhile, twenty-seven states, accounting for 51% of students in the U.S., currently do not require universal masking in the classroom. *See, Asher Lehrer-Small, New Data: 27 States Abandon Universal Masking in School, Representing 51% of U.S. Students* The Seventy-Four Million.org, (May 24, 2021), <https://www.the74million.org/article/new-data-27-states-abandon-universal-masking-in-school-representing-51-of-u-s-students/>.

In conclusion, for all of the foregoing reasons, I object to your COVID vaccine and mask policies and my child cannot comply with such policies.

Sincerely,

Name