

Education Minnesota comments on HF 604

Education Minnesota's membership includes 86,000 educators in over 300 school districts across the state. This includes Education Support Personnel, teachers, school nurses, school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, and more licensed professionals who are all dedicated to the success of their students. On behalf of these members, Education Minnesota supports House File 604 which would codify Governor Walz's Executive Order requiring masks in public spaces.

COVID-19 is the flashlight illuminating the inequities within our schools and broader communities. We already knew they existed, but this pandemic has renewed our understanding that schools are the center of their communities. Many elected officials have said recently that their number one priority is for all schools to be open for in-person instruction. In order for this to be feasible, people must continue to wear masks as long as recommended by federal health officials. We have seen too many schools shut down due to community spread. Minnesotans must share in their duty to protect the public health.

Minnesota's students and educators are strong and resilient. Lawmakers should equip them with the resources they need to not only open school buildings safely, but work to help our students and educators bounce back from COVID. This includes each of us doing our part to prevent community spread of COVID-19.