



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

## Joint Statement from Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt and Assembly Republican Leader Will Barclay

ROBERT G. ORTT June 16, 2021

| ISSUE: **MASK MANDATES**



Yesterday, the Governor's announcement of New York officially reaching 70 percent partial vaccination rate and the lifting of most COVID restrictions to reopen the State was welcome news for New Yorkers. However, he failed to address the most important constituency, our children.

The Governor still has his unilateral power, but failed to lift mask mandates for school children. The Senate and Assembly Republican Conferences have repeatedly called on the Governor to loosen the mask restrictions in our schools, particularly in light of recent high summer temperatures. Parents throughout New York State have asked for this decision to be left to local school districts, but these requests have fallen on deaf ears in Albany.

We have two options: The Governor can heed the concerns of parents and school officials and leave this decision to local school districts and health officials, or the state legislature should immediately reconvene to repeal these unnecessary restrictions on school children.

Governor Cuomo and Albany Democrats may be content to ignore pleas from children, parents and school districts; the Senate and Assembly Republicans are not. We need action to unmask our children now.

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