

AFFIDAVIT of Jessica McComb

I, Jessica McComb, do depose and state:

I Jessica M. McComb am the biological mother of five-year-old (DR) who attends Slade Elementary School and 17-year-old (AR) who attends Laramie High School in Laramie, WY. Both minor children have documented disabilities and medical conditions and were approved for a mask waiver by Dr. Jean Allais, the Albany County Public Health officer on March 25, 2021. Additionally, DR was granted a religious waiver to mandatory immunizations required to attend school signed by the Wyoming Department of Health on May 24th, 2021 (Wyo. Stat. Ann. 21-4-309 and 14-4-116). However, the long-standing mask mandate, shut downs, fear driven campaigns and extreme political tensions surrounding COVID have caused measurable physical, emotional, spiritual, social, developmental and cognitive harm to my children. The mandates have encouraged a hostile and discriminatory environment.

School personnel have engaged in discriminatory and divisive actions in their communication via public Facebook posts and turned the school into a hostile and abusive environment for my children and other children who have differences (political, religious, disability). Ms. Ariane Eicke, AR's math teacher posted to her Facebook page on November 4, 2020, a meme of a black individual crying stating "I feel like I'm in a horror movie where I'm realizing all my neighbors are racists" after watching the presidential debate. Other teachers and school staff liked this post to include Cory Scimeca at LHS. My son AR reports that teachers have brought and tried to force their personal and political beliefs onto students.

After AR was approved for a mask waiver by the public health officer, I received an email from Jeff Stender the assistant principle on March 30, 2021 asking that he still wear a mask at specified times during the school day. They did not want to honor the waiver. In addition, AR reported that teachers still harassed him in the halls and threatened him with disciplinary actions. AR reports that some of his teachers also shamed him for not wearing a mask and while some were aware of his waiver, still requested him to wear one.

Emily Siegel-Stanton, a voting member of the school board posted on August 12, 2021 a quote stating: "Telling me you are proudly unvaccinated is like telling me you're a drunk driver. You're not a patriot. You're not a freedom fighter. You're a menace". Her post was made publicly one day after the Board of Trustees Regular Meeting on August 11th where Stanton voted "yes" to mandate masks for all children in Albany county. Emily Siegel-Stanton did not stop there. Her public Facebook posts as far back as a year include derogatory and discriminatory posts designed to shame differences in religion, political beliefs and abilities. Emily Siegel-Stanton posted a meme showing people jumping out of a plane, and those who wear masks are saved and those who do not are destined for death

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by suicide. These examples are provided to show how extreme and detrimental the views are within the school.

The school psychologist, Jacqueline Grimes participated in the shaming and discrimination through acts of “liking” Emily Siegal’s post relating those unvaccinated as “menaces” and “drunk drivers”. Jacqueline Grimes was working with me and AR to get him on an IEP to help him get the supports he needs to complete school. AR has not gotten the supports and care he needs as a result of biased and discriminatory actions of school personnel because my children have mask waivers as a result of qualifying disabilities, have different political beliefs and because they have religious objections to vaccinations. I fear for my children in this environment when school personnel are spreading information that likens my kids as dangerous “menaces” and “drunk drivers” who are committing suicide. My children feel unwelcomed and unwanted in the current school environment and they have become targets for bullying and mistreatment. It has led to significant attendance issues for AR, a decline in his physical and mental health and a lack of interest of school personnel in helping AR.

On Friday, September 10, there was an organized nationwide student walk out to protest masks and their negative effects on student learning and wellbeing. AR did not attend school at all on this date. As students prepared to exercise their right to free speech and assemble peacefully, students were threatened by coaches (Coach Ronga text message), teachers and students. They were threatened that they would not be able to play in their respective sport, in homecoming and threatened with suspension. Teachers stood by exits on this date and discouraged students from participating. A video on Facebook shows a group of students throwing items out of their car at fellow students on the sidewalk protesting the mask mandate. Other text messages show students sharing in bullying of those who do not wear masks telling them “making urself look real fuckin dumb rn lmafao” and showing their middle fingers. Other students held up a sign stating “I want your sick relatives to die.” The environment was and still is toxic and discouraging of anyone who wants to speak out about the abuses inside schools.

A group of female students on the volleyball team wanted to participate in the protest but were threatened by coaches so they walked out and stood away from the crowd protesting in fear of being retaliated against. I was a first-hand witness to this and sat with this group of students as they discussed the threats they received. This is direct evidence that the mask mandates are creating a hostile and abusive environment. Mr. Lee, AR’s school counselor set up a time to meet with AR via email to discuss getting him on an IEP at this September 10 student walk-out date. This was not a coincidence. It sends the message that if you want to attend school and be supported, you must obey and not question or exercise your rights. Despite numerous pleas to get my son assistance and evaluated for an IEP, Mr. Lee has ignored them. Last year we sent in evaluation requests from AR’s doctor to be completed and returned by Mr. Lee. These were never filled out and returned

despite numerous reminders and inquiries. My concerns about AR's wellbeing and the toxic environment have been shared with teachers, the superintendent and special education director and school board. Nothing has been done to address my concerns of discrimination and the toxic, hostile environment even after emailing the Title IX coordinator, Scott James.

My children have experienced trauma and my oldest has completely shut down and stopped going to school all together. The school system has completely failed my children and ignored my request to have my oldest evaluated for an IEP. There has been a constant barrage and focus on domination, force and power when it comes to masks, social distancing and shaming and the needs of individuals with a disability are being completely ignored. The hyper-focus and extreme measures taken have caused disproportion harm to my children. The mask mandates have created the opposite of a safe, healthy and thriving learning environment for my children. Despite AR having a mask waiver he has continuously been threatened in the halls to be taken to the principles and been singled out and shamed for not wearing a mask. It has become an exhausting battle that he no longer wants to fight so he has stopped attending school and his mental health has declined. He doesn't want to stick out from his peers and not wearing a mask, screams he has a disability to all.


DR, my five-year-old son has an IEP and a variety of social, emotional and developmental needs. Despite requesting a reasonable accommodation for his teachers to wear clear mask, this has been ignored. His main teacher, Ms. Purcell has refused to make this accommodation and as a result, DR has been negatively impacted. DR struggles with emotion & behavior regulation, fine motor, sensory processing and communication skills. Additionally, DR has a medical diagnosis of encopresis. Under normal circumstances, he struggles to learn and manage stressful life events. The mask mandate has caused further delays, stress and relapses in his conditions. His teachers and everyone around him are masked, void of emotion and forced to create isolating environments. He has responded with behavioral outbursts and has visible stress and accidents. He reports not liking school when asked. On the contrary, he thrives at his daycare where masks are not mandatory and children can appropriately socialize and engage with each other without fear and shaming.

I am seeking an immediate intervention and cease of this trauma inducing mask mandate. This is a lot for adults to witness from the side lines but our kids have been center stage in this dysfunctional and disruptive fight that is leaving emotional, developmental, social, spiritual and physical scars. This must stop, our liberties must be given back to us, the parents as we know our children best and are much more capable of directing their care when it comes to medical decisions. A one size fits all approach has never been the approach in education or health. Where there is risk, there must be choice and my

children as well as myself have never been given the opportunity of informed choice and consent when being subjected to the harmful practices being forced upon them.

The school board in their mask mandate have failed to provide and allow Albany county citizens to make informed choices and informed consent when it comes to weighing risks versus benefits of the mass use of medical devices on our children and citizens. The boards decision to mandate masks have violated rights, laws and freedoms and have directly and negatively impacted student wellbeing. The mask mandate has undermined a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The mask mandate undermines the promise to provide education and learning in the least restrictive environment and has not allowed for consideration of other damaging effects psychologically, socially, emotionally, spiritually and developmentally of mask mandates. Parents and students have been stripped of their rights to make informed consent. The board has failed to provide risks versus benefits of the mass mandates of masking. Instead the board and schools have encouraged and fed the mass shaming and discrimination of those who do not mask up.

As a parent, mine and my children's rights, freedoms, safety and needs have been maliciously attacked and disregarded. The Albany county school mask mandate has caused catastrophic damage and destruction disproportionate to risks posed by COVID-19.


Jessica McComb

Signature and Seal of Notary

I, Susan Larson, on this 19 day of October, 2021 witnessed
Jessica McComb affix her signature hereon.



Notary

My license expires: 6-14-2025



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