



RPNM ECHOES REPUBLICAN CALLS FOR GOV. LUJAN GRISHAM TO END MASK MANDATE IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS

Albuquerque, February 10—The Republican Party of New Mexico is joining a GOP legislative call for Gov. Lujan Grisham to terminate her mask mandate for students in New Mexico schools.

The Governor's decision not to budge on this policy is merely political theater. The facts are simple: COVID cases are falling, and there's no science that proves masks work. Studies show such a mandate for children is unhealthy and could adversely impact their learning.

Even Governors in blue states get it.

New Jersey, Connecticut, California, Oregon and Delaware--all are lifting indoor mask mandates for schools and other public places in coming weeks, but New Mexico Gov. Lujan Grisham continues to keep the masks over the faces of students.

These other Governors acknowledge COVID cases are declining, and they are seeking a return to normalcy. They are shifting toward policies that treat the virus as part of everyday life.

NM Senate Republican Leader Greg Baca has called for the mask mandate to end in

schools.

Even more disturbing is that in a response to a letter from Republican Sen. David Gallegos calling for an end to the school mask mandate, New Mexico's Education Secretary said the state follows guidance from New Mexico's *Medical Advisory Team*.

That shadow agency lists no members or pertinent information about what's happening or who does what to follow sound medical advice for the state. It appears to be some sort of clandestine panel. It's a ghost agency with no government transparency for the public.

"The Governor's administration appears to have set up a secret task force that calls itself a Medical Advisory Team. Who's in control? Who are the members of this team and what are their qualifications? There's no logic or any transparency here," said RPNM Chairman Steve Pearce. "The Governor's lack of action regarding masks in schools is political grandstanding. There's no justification to keep the masks on students, and Lujan Grisham's COVID policies are having a devastating impact on our schools and student learning. She fails to accept there's no proof that the masks work to slow the spread of COVID. Meantime, New Mexico has one of the highest vaccination rates in the nation with almost 70 percent of the eligible population fully vaccinated. It's this kind of governing that's hurting New Mexico children, schools and the state as a whole. We must unmask our students and try to fix the crisis the state is experiencing as a result of the Governor's illogical COVID policies of the past 20 months."