

Illinois Education Association reacts to Gov. Pritzker's mask requirement in schools

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SPRINGFIELD - The Illinois Education Association is thankful that Gov. JB Pritzker put into effect a “mask required” order for schools starting this fall.

The pandemic is not over. The numbers in Illinois [are going in the wrong direction](#). We need to keep our students in the classroom and keep them, and those who teach and work with them in schools, safe. Masks, along with other mitigation, such as ventilation, testing, appropriate cleaning and protective gear, are proven tactics.

The number one key to controlling the spread of the virus is vaccination. We encourage all who are able to get the vaccine to do so. It is the clearest path back to “normal” that exists and only about half of those eligible to receive the vaccine in Illinois have done so.

“We all want to get back to normal. Let’s pull together and take care of one another. Vax up and mask up. We owe it to our students and we owe it to each other,” said Kathi Griffin, president of the Illinois Education Association. “We’re so thankful to have leadership in this state that won’t let the virus fester and grow. But, it is up to all of us to bring COVID-19 to its knees.”

At 135,000 members strong, the Illinois Education Association (IEA-NEA) is the largest union in Illinois. The IEA represents PreK-12 teachers outside the city of Chicago and education support staff, higher education faculty and support staff, retired education employees and students preparing to become teachers, statewide.