



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on August 4, 2021

## Public Schools: Masks, Vaccines, and Usurpation of Parental Authority

With COVID leading the news and dominating so much political discourse just weeks before the start of the school year, parents will have some tough decisions to make about the safety and well-being of their children. But in some parts of the nation, parents whose children are in public schools will have many of those decisions — such as whether their children should wear masks for hours on end or receive experimental vaccines with questionable efficacy — made for them. And the people making those decisions answer only to themselves.



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It is, by now, an indisputable fact known to anyone who has been paying attention that schools assert authority over the lives and decisions of students. Parents who try to push back and assert their God-given authority and responsibility are quickly informed that school policy is the final rule. This has been demonstrated in “sex education” classes pushing everything from masturbation to abortion and from pornographic reading and viewing assignments to accepting and celebrating the full range of LGBTQ+ ideology. It has also been demonstrated in instance after instance of schools indoctrinating kids in radical, anti-American ideologies — the most recent and prominent example of which is Critical Race Theory.

In school districts across the nation, parents who have tried to address these concerns are told that what happens in school is none of their business. The public-school system views the role of parents as subsidiary at best. Parents are expected to pay taxes, place their kids in the care of the school system, and butt out.

With the dreaded Delta Variant leading in headlines and political debates, the CDC, the White House, states, and local municipalities are all making decisions — either in the form of recommendations or regulations. But even many of the “recommendations” come dangerously close to carrying the weight of law. The oft-repeated mantra of “follow the science” doesn’t really act as a guide, by the way, since whatever the Church of CDC said last week (as interpreted by High Priest Fauci) does not necessarily apply this week. And as this writer noted in a [previous article](#), if what Fauci and the CDC say does not line up with the political agenda of the Ruling Party, liberal mainstream media are instructed by the Biden administration as to what to report and how to report it.

So, as the new school year approaches, parents across the nation will find themselves stripped of their authority to make medical decisions for their children. The landscape is difficult to navigate, since there are so many states involved and each has its own laws and guidelines. To make matters even worse, those laws and guidelines are subject to change without notice. The following is the best available information as of this writing, but it is up to the reader to verify whether it has changed.



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While it would be reasonable to expect that medical decisions for minors would fall to their parents, it is demonstrable that we are not living in reasonable times. As of this writing, 41 states do require parental consent for minors to receive vaccinations. But in one of those states — Arizona — the parents refusal for their minor child to get the COVID vaccine can be overridden by a court, if a doctor requests such. And in two cities — San Francisco and Philadelphia — it is possible for a minor as young as 12 to get the COVID shot without parental consent.

And four states — Alabama, Oregon, Rhode Island, and South Carolina — allow minors to “self consent” with certain age requirements that range from 14 to 16, depending on the state. Washington, D.C., also allows minors to “self consent” and amazingly sets the age for doing so at 11.

The remaining five states — Arkansas, Idaho, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Washington — apply the “mature minor doctrine.” This means that — as a matter of law — there is *no minimum age* for a child to make this medical decision for himself. In those states, providers have discretion to decide if a minor possesses the maturity to consent to a vaccine.

Before going any further, let’s spend a moment on the “mature minor doctrine.” Since this doctrine assumes no minimum age, it needs to be asked what exactly is meant by the word “mature” in this term. This writer would — *perhaps* — grant the use of that word to a small handful of 16 or 17-year-olds I have known in my half-century sojourn on this planet. But no one who has spent any real time here at all would use that word to describe the ability of most children to make informed medical decisions that could have life-changing consequences.

And yet, states that apply that doctrine (as well as states that set insanely low ages for children to “consent” to an experimental vaccine they cannot really understand) will be using school policy and pressure tactics to press kids into “consenting” without parental involvement.

The parents may not even know that their child is getting the vaccine until it has already been done.

An example of a “mature minor doctrine” state is North Carolina. So how is the [Old North State](#) applying that doctrine where COVID vaccines are concerned? Well, *for now*, the minimum age is 14. But — and this is important — nothing in the law prohibits schools from arbitrarily lowering that age restriction. If a child wants to receive the experimental vaccine (either because he has bought into the hype that he is at risk or because he wants to do what many of his friends have done), a lack of parental consent will not stand in the way. The state — and its schools — set that standard. Parents can sit down and shut up; it’s none of their business.

Of course, vaccines and their possible side effects are not the only COVID-related issues that deal with parental consent. As the CDC and White House continue to point to the specter of the dreaded Delta Variant (which has not been shown to be very dangerous, even if it is shown to be highly contagious), masks even for the vaccinated are back on the agenda. This, despite a year and a half’s worth of data on the lack of efficacy of masks and the detrimental effects of wearing them for long durations — especially for children.

As of this writing, states are all over the map on mandating masks for schools. *Forbes* [reported](#) in mid-July that Arizona, Arkansas, Iowa, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, and Vermont had banned schools from requiring masks. But that has already changed. As of August 3, the Phoenix Union High School District in Arizona said *everyone* must wear masks indoors. And Arkansas followed suit, with Governor Asa Hutchinson asking the state legislature to provide an exemption to the law and require masks for schools. Utah passed a mask mandate, but whether it will apply to schools remains to be



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seen. Probably, though.

And mask mandates at the state or local level — including and sometimes *specifically mentioning* schools — [have been reenacted all over the country](#). This means that a parent who is concerned about his child being masked for hours on end — with the incumbent problems related to physical, mental, and emotional health, social development, and learning — has no say in the matter in those places. The state — and its schools — will decide what is “best” for the child.

And while vaccines and masks are the immediate concern for many parents, they are really just symptoms of a larger, deeper, more systemic problem: The parent has no say in what does or does not happen at school. There is a basic principle that states “You can delegate authority, but you cannot delegate responsibility.” When we as parents stand — at the end of our lives — before the Great Judge, we will answer for the ways in which we raised our children. We will answer for the formation of their moral consciences. We will answer. And saying, “But the school said...” will not fly. Our Lord said to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to render unto God the things that are God’s. How will we answer in that dreadful day if we have rendered unto Caesar those things that we were to render to God, namely our children?

Over the last few decades — and considerably before experimental vaccines, masks, LGBTQ+ gender-fluid “sex education,” CRT, and the whole cornucopia of dangers schools push today — concerned parents who have taken seriously the formation of their children have elected to homeschool their kids. By taking to heart the responsibility to exercise their parental authority, these parents have removed their children from a godless system that lacks both the moral jurisdiction and a mandate to educate those children.

Homeschooling is much simpler now than it ever has been. Gone are the days when it meant thousands of dollars in textbooks, rigid schedules, and reinventing the wheel. Today, there are homeschool groups all over the country that are headed by veteran homeschoolers who helped pioneer the movement. They can help almost anyone find a version of homeschooling that works for them. And there are hybrid systems such as [Freedom Project Academy](#) that use live and recorded video lessons with qualified teachers who answer to the parents, not to a godless system.

The real question, then, is this: If a parent loves his children and wants to raise them with his values, morals, and religious ideals, what is keeping him from removing his child from Caesar’s schools and rendering that child unto God?

What is keeping you?

For a list of educational resources for parents and their children, visit [Save Our Children](#). And be sure to check out [Freedom Project Academy](#) for information on a fully accredited, Common Core-free, classical education for kindergarten through high school right in your own home.



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