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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**MASKS ARE MASKING THE REAL PROBLEM**

**UTAH PARENTS UNITED PRESS CONFERENCE: APRIL 15, 2021, 12PM  
FEATURING: KANE COUNTY COMMISSIONER, CELESTE MEYERES  
FRANKLIN DISCOVERY SCHOOL FOUNDER, JENNIFER BERRY**

**Salt Lake City, April 14, 2021** – Utah Parents United (UPU) will hold a press conference April 15<sup>th</sup> at noon, at the Provo Historic Courthouse, 51 S University Ave, Provo, UT 84601. Despite the recently lifted state mask mandate, school districts across Utah have chosen to continue imposing mask wearing on the scientifically-proven, least vulnerable population – children. Anti-bullying measures appear to have gone by the wayside as shaming children and families persists across the state in use of masks in schools.

Kane County School District parent, Amber Bowman, worked with the district to modify student exemptions as provided for under the currently governing State Health Department order relating to masks in schools (Public Health Order 2021-2). Published April 13<sup>th</sup>, the order provides that individuals prevented from wearing a mask, (medically, mental health condition, intellectual or developmental disability) are exempt from the requirement. Although the order permits schools to require a documented medical need from a health care professional, it does not mandate schools require any documentation. The district has concluded it is appropriate to grant student exemptions with documentation of conditions provided by a student's parent, on a district provided form.

<https://kane.utah.gov/gov/dept/clerk-auditor/amended-executive-order-e-2021-1a/>

Jenn Berry, MBA, M.S. Instructional Psychology/Technology, will also reveal data from her school at which all health orders and laws were followed, though without masking students.

Utah Parents United's (UPU) 'SEE MY SMILE' campaign, a statewide effort to end the mask mandate in schools, held a day without masks, Monday April 12<sup>th</sup>. Students and parents went to school without masks, as a mass rejection of the K-12 mandate. Parents have since inundated UPU describing scenarios where principals and other school personnel have suspended, isolated and removed their children from classrooms and denied them education and recess for not wearing masks, without notifying parents. "Now people can bully, shame, and intimidate?" said founder and president, Corinne Johnson. "Some teachers are instructing children to police each other in classrooms, which is inane and amounts to bullying and fearmongering." Children have been threatened with not being able to participate in graduation and other activities, lower grades, including injured and special needs students who are unable to wear masks. In one case, a 13-year old deaf girl who broke her leg, relies on seeing people's lips to communicate. "She called me in tears because she is struggling so much", said her distraught mother. **{Statistics on # maskless 4/12}**

Formed by a group of Davis County parents, UPU is an advocacy group for parental choice across Utah. "It's not only un-American, but it's wrong to expect our children to take care of teachers", said Dalane England, a high school history teacher and member of the United Women's Forum and Utah Eagle Forum. Representative Steve Christiansen (R-West Jordan) agrees and attended an April 10 'See My Smile' rally at the Jordan School District offices in support of these efforts. "Under the state Constitution, every child has the right to an education and an equal education under the law," Johnson said. "We are exploring legal injunctions to support parents in this fight for their rights."

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Utah Parents United is a non-profit group of parents committed to protecting the parent-child relationship in law and education. Children are more successful when their parents are involved and engaged in their lives and education. UPU monitors state and local legislation, promotes legislation that supports parents in their role of parenting and speaks against legislation undermining parents in policy and education. UPU intends to empower parents in a non-partisan manner, as the best person(s) to advocate for their child(ren) and family. Recognizing not all parents agree on all issues, but agree they love their children and want what's best for them, UPU provides parental tools and resources to empower parents. Parents are needed in every school district.