

U.S. Rep. Gallagher: We cannot shut down schools again

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GREEN BAY, WI – Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-WI) today addressed announcements from school districts in Wisconsin that state they are switching to remote learning due to COVID-19 cases in their districts.

In a video statement, Gallagher said, “We cannot shut down schools again. This was our biggest blunder and shame on us if we repeat it again. We can’t afford to inject that fear into our kid’s classrooms or allow them to fall further behind. And I’m sorry but remote learning is not a substitute for being in the classroom, especially for young kids. Remote learning is a euphemism for school shutdowns and that is a recipe for student failure. Sitting in front of a screen all day is not learning.”

Watch the congressman’s video [HERE](#) or read the full transcript below:

“Omicron is spreading. It seems like everyone has it — even those who have been double and triple vaccinated. It’s fair to say that President Biden has failed to “shut down the virus” as he promised and has seemingly squandered the trillions of dollars allocated for coronavirus relief, turning down efforts to ramp up the production of rapid at home tests and failing to make it easy to get treatments like monoclonal antibodies. Instead, the administration spent the last year just demonizing the unvaccinated, pushing unconstitutional mandates, and allowing Dr. Fauci to further shred the credibility of our public health establishment, which was all unproductive. And the fact is that more people have now died under President Biden’s coronavirus watch than President Trump’s. And remember as a candidate Biden said “Anyone who is responsible for that many deaths should not remain as President of the United States of America.”

“Because of all this, many institutions are now considering shutting down again or they are reimposing mitigation strategies that didn’t work before. For example, in

DC they just announced a city-wide vaccination entry requirement for indoor facilities. We've also had college football bowl games canceled, NHL games postponed, colleges that are 99% vaccinated and filled with young people shutting down.

"You can almost feel the fear again. And the media are stoking the fear, they are pushing the narrative that this feels like March 2020 again, because that is how they profit. But here is the thing: it's not March 2020. We have way more weapons in our arsenal than we did back then. We have treatments, we have vaccines, we have hospitals that have protocols that work, and we now have a good deal of immunity (natural and otherwise) built into the population.

"So please, don't fall for the fear game. We have the tools we need to continue to live our lives while protecting the vulnerable. And if you disagree with me, at the very least, can we agree that we cannot shut down schools again. This was our biggest blunder and shame on us if we repeat it again. We can't afford to inject that fear into our kids' classrooms or allow them to fall further behind. And I'm sorry but remote learning is not a substitute, especially for young kids. Remote learning is a euphemism for school shutdowns and that is a recipe for student failure. Sitting in front of a screen all day is not learning. Milwaukee Public Schools is shutting down schools. Same with Madison. I've heard reports in Racine. Thankfully not yet in Northeast Wisconsin.

"And when it comes to remote learning, talk about a policy that punishes the poor relative to the rich. Rich people can do remote work. Rich people can run away to their beach houses with a bunch of iPads and high-speed internet and probably hire private tutors, while they sit there wondering who stocks the shelves at Whole Foods. Working-class people have to work, in person. And their kids need to be in school, in-person, with teachers, and with other students. Not even Biden's education secretary wants to shut down schools.

"So please, at a time when this country seems divided on everything, can we at a minimum agree on the fact that schools must stay open. We can't live in fear, or allow this fear to mess up our kids. At this point in the pandemic, we should be trying as hard as we can to teach our kids courage, not fear. They've learned fear for the past two years. Courage is confronting the problem, not running away to Rehoboth or blaming someone else.

"So to end where we began. President Biden ran on the idea that he had a federal

government solution to COVID-19, but we're now a year into his presidency, and it is obvious that his plan, such as it ever existed, failed. Even Biden was forced to admit it failed. He recently admitted that there is no federal solution to coronavirus.

“That’s actually a step forward. You see part of courage is admitting when you’ve failed. We need the courage to see that going back to the top-down, shut down, lockdown strategy that failed before will fail again. There is no federal solution for coronavirus and for most things in our lives. Recognizing that is a cause for courage, not fear. We need to take charge of our own health, our own lives, and our own children, and not spend the rest of our lives locked inside because of fear.”