

# POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

## It's all unnecessary

In a special "town hall" meeting last week, Pottstown schools superintendent Stephen Rodriguez said the current year is the most stressful he's experienced in more than two decades as an educator.

The constant testing for COVID-19, and quarantines, and switching between virtual and in-person, and mask wearing, makes every school activity more difficult than ever before.

"If we don't do something to relieve the pressure in the system, something is going to burst," Rodriguez said. One step approved by the school board is making selected Fridays half days (in-school/working at home), and scheduling more early dismissals.

The stress is not confined to Pottstown. It's everywhere.

And it's all unnecessary.

COVID-19 took off in the spring of 2020 because a significant percentage of the population refused to wear masks. Even after several vaccines were developed and approved in record time, a significant percentage of the population refused to be inoculated.

Our schools are dysfunctional, our lives have been upended, and 750,000 Americans have died because a significant portion of the public continues to thumb its nose at science.

At the time my wife, Frances, and I were born, polio was the scourge of the nation, crippling about 35,000 Americans each year, including President Franklin Roosevelt, who was left permanently paralyzed from the waist down in 1921.

My wife's older sister, Mary, con-



Commentary by  
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tracted polio when she was 14 and spent three months in an iron lung. She was one of the lucky ones, making a full recovery.

When Dr. Jonas Salk developed a polio vaccine in 1953 after six years' research, millions of parents willingly submitted their children to testing in 1954. The follow-

ing year, Frances and I joined tens of millions of our classmates to be inoculated at school. Today, polio has been eradicated in the United States.

But COVID-19 will linger on, thanks to the science-deniers.



**POLIO SURVIVOR** — My wife, Frances, left, with her older sister, Mary, in 1954, the year Mary contracted polio. Mary spent three months in an iron lung.

**POLIO PIONEERS** — The polio vaccine developed by Dr. Jonas Salk of the University of Pittsburgh underwent massive field trials in 1954, involving 1.8 million school children known as "polio pioneers." The vaccine was licensed in 1955, and widespread inoculations followed with gratitude for science, not denial.

