

November 18, 2021

Governor Gavin Newsom
California Governor's Office
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Sent Via Electronic Mail

Dear Governor Newsom,

As County Superintendent of Schools and Superintendents of the 5 school districts in Yuba County, we have served our communities through each challenging stage of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have been relentless in our focus on the safety of students and staff and, during this time, we have observed overall minimal in-school transmission.

On October 1, 2021, your office issued a press release indicating that you are directing CDPH to require a COVID-19 vaccination for all K-12 students once the vaccine is fully approved by the Federal Food & Drug Administration (FDA). At this time, we are aware that this mandate may go into effect as early as July 2022. Currently, there are allowances for families to decline vaccination utilizing medical, religious, and personal exemptions.

It is important to understand the challenges these mandates are creating for our school community. As you are likely aware, many in our community have significant concerns regarding the continuance of mask mandates. The introduction of the vaccination mandate has created additional concerns. In listening to our community, we anticipate the implementation of a vaccination mandate, without an exemption for personal beliefs, will deeply impact schools as families leave for independent study programs or other alternatives to classroom-based instruction.

From the very beginning of the response to this pandemic, State regulations have been mandated, placing much of the burden for communication, implementation, and enforcement entirely on principals, teachers, staff, administrators, and school boards. With the responsibility to implement these mandates, school boards and administrators are left to manage the real frustrations of large portions of our public, taking time and focus away from our critical mission of serving students and supporting teachers and staff. The resulting divisions within some communities are eroding the trust and partnerships that are essential in public schools.

We presume that it is the State's intention to create a supportive structure for public schools, thus we are requesting that more be done during this very difficult time to support our work educating children and youth with the following:

1. It is critical to engage the public in a transparent and coherent manner by clearly reinforcing that the authority over these mandates lies with the State, and by clearly informing the public as to how they can engage with the correct decision-makers in these matters.

2. In addition, we request that the State identify what benchmarks must be met to end universal masking in classrooms.

3. Finally, it is vital that the State of California maintains the medical, religious, and personal exemptions with regard to the COVID-19 vaccination requirement. It is essential that we honor the voices of our parents.

In Yuba County, we believe in the importance of safe, in-person instruction for our students. We are asking for your support, to allow us to return to the business of educating our students in the safest and most normal way. Our students, our educators, and our communities need your support.

Respectfully,

Dr. Francisco Reveles, Yuba County Superintendent of Schools

Francisco Reveles

Patrick Brose, Superintendent, Camptonville Union Elementary School District

Patrick Brose

Dr. Fal Asrani, Superintendent, Marysville Joint Unified School District

Fal Asrani

Dr. Jeff Roberts, Superintendent, Plumas Lake Elementary School District

Jeff Roberts

Nicole Newman, Superintendent, Wheatland Union High School District

Nicole Newman

Craig Guensler, Superintendent, Wheatland Elementary School District

Craig H. Guensler

CC: Toni Atkins, Senate President Pro Tempore, California State Senate
Anthony Rendon, Speaker, California State Assembly
Jim Nielsen, California State Senator, 4th Senate District
James Gallagher, Assemblyman, 3rd Assembly District
Phuong Luu, MD, MHS, FACP, Yuba-Sutter Public Health Officer
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Andy Vasquez Jr., Yuba County Board of Supervisors, District 1
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Seth Fuhrer, Yuba County Board of Supervisors, District 3
Gary Bradford, Chair, Yuba County Board of Supervisors, District 4
Randy Fletcher, Vice Chair, Yuba County Board of Supervisors, District 5
Chris Branscum, Mayor, City of Marysville, California
Dr. James L.J. Houpis, Interim Chancellor, Yuba Community College District
Dr. Sonja Lolland, Vice Chancellor, Yuba Community College District
Dr. Tawny Dotson, President, Yuba College
Willie Whittlesey, General Manager, Yuba Water Agency
Jennifer Vasquez, Director, Yuba County Health and Human Services Department