



970 Klamath Lane  
Yuba City, CA 95993  
Phone (530) 822-2900  
Fax (530) 671-3422

December 14, 2021

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

*Sent Via Electronic Mail*

Dear Governor Newsom,

I, Tom Reusser, as Sutter County Superintendent of Schools, as well as the Superintendents and of the school districts, charter schools and private schools listed below, 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 in our efforts to minimize 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 that 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. School boards and administrators have been 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 hope that it is the State's intention to create a supportive structure for public schools. Therefore, 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 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 regarding their children.
2. In addition, we request that the State identify the criteria that local counties must meet to safely end universal masking in classrooms.

3. Furthermore, local agencies must be able to exercise local control over the implementation of COVID-19 safety guidelines, including guidelines for masks, quarantines, and the establishment of normal classroom instruction to their local conditions.

In Sutter 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,

Tom Reusser, Sutter County Superintendent of Schools  
Dave Tarr, Superintendent/Principal, Pleasant Grove Joint Union School District  
Dr. Baljinder Dhillon, Superintendent/Principal, Nuestro Elementary School District  
Dr. Karen Villalobos, Superintendent/Principal, Twin Rivers Charter School  
Staci Kaelin, Superintendent/Principal, Brittan Elementary School District  
Doreen Osumi, Superintendent, Yuba City Unified School District  
Kerrie Corbridge, Superintendent/Principal, Browns Elementary School District  
Lisa Shelton, Superintendent/Principal, Franklin Elementary School District  
Dawn Carl, Superintendent/Principal, Winship-Robbins Elementary School District  
Tracey McPeters, Meridian Elementary School District  
Mat Gulbrandsen, Superintendent, Live Oak Unified School District  
Maggie Irby, Superintendent/Principal, Marcum-Illinois Union School District  
Neil Stinson, Superintendent/Principal, East Nicolaus Joint Union High School District  
Cynthia Rachel, Superintendent, South Sutter Charter School  
Susan Burky, Superintendent, St. Isidore Catholic School  
Bill Hannold, Superintendent/Elementary Principal, Faith Christian School

CC: Toni Atkins, Senate President Pro Tempore, California State Senate  
Nick Hardeman, Chief of Staff, California State Assembly  
Anthony Rendon, Speaker, California State Assembly  
Sutter County Board of Supervisors  
Dr. Sohil Sud, California Department of Public Health  
Dr. Luu, Public Health Officer, Sutter County