

November 22, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

As Vice President of the Natomas Unified School District Board of Trustees, I am proud to represent one of the most diverse districts in the nation, and one that strives to ensure students graduate as college and career ready, productive, responsible, and engaged global citizens.

Natomas Unified School District (NUSD) is among the state's leaders in providing an educational environment that facilitates success for students, achieving a graduation rate of 96 percent, compared to the state average of 84 percent. Black NUSD students graduate at a rate of 93 percent, compared to the state average of 77 percent, and Hispanic NUSD students graduate at a rate of 96 percent, compared to the state average of 82 percent. A primary reason for this success is our teachers' focus on serving the needs of their students, administrators serving the needs of faculty, and the Board of Trustees serving the needs of parents and the community.

Your October 1, 2021 press release states that you are directing the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to require all K-12 students be vaccinated against COVID-19 once available vaccines receive full approval from the Food and Drug Administration.

While I share your desire to protect the safety and promote the well-being of all Californians, the nature of state mandates such as the statewide mask mandate and the prospective K-12 vaccine mandate places the burden of communication, implementation, and enforcement squarely on the shoulders of principals, teachers, staff, administrators, and school boards. These burdens erode the ability of NUSD to focus on serving students, and diminish our ability to foster excellent educational outcomes.

With that in mind, I respectfully request your help in supporting our students and community by:

- Issuing another press release in which you make clear that the state is the controlling authority for mandates such as the ones described above, and providing a forum in which concerned parents and community members can provide feedback and obtain meaningful contact with decision-makers regarding their concerns;
- Ensuring County Public Health Directors have the authority to adjust CDPH guidelines to suit local conditions;
- Ensuring the availability of medical, religious, and personal belief exemptions with regard to any prospective COVID-19 vaccine requirement; and
- Clearly delineating what benchmarks must be met to end universal masking in classrooms.

The Natomas Unified School District wants to provide safe, high-quality, in-person education to our students, transparency and access to parents and the community, and an environment in which teachers can focus on the needs of their students. I am asking for your support so we can continue to help students achieve academic success and fully realize their potential.

Respectfully,



Micah Grant, Vice President
Board of Trustees
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