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February 8, 2022

Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: Follow-up on Newhall School District Resolution #21/22-11

Dear Governor Newsom,

Thank you for your response to our email in November of 2020, regarding re-opening our schools for in-person instruction. The State's support was instrumental in allowing our children to resume learning in the much-needed traditional classroom setting.

This letter serves as a follow-up to Resolution #21/22-11 that we, the Newhall School District (NSD) Governing Board sent you on November 17, 2021 that asks you to rescind or reconsider mandating the COVID-19 vaccination to children 12 and under, and to ask you to allow local school districts full authority on determining their mask-wearing policy.

As a legal agency of the state, school districts derive their power from the state constitution, laws, and judicial decisions. Consequently, the state is considered the final authority on how school districts are run.

Citizen oversight of the state public education school system happens through the local election of school board trustees. School board trustees are entrusted to and responsible for setting direction and creating policies that reflect the values, beliefs and priorities of their communities.

We, on the Newhall School District Governing Board want you to understand that the resolution regarding reconsidering the COVID-19 vaccine mandate is not merely a symbolic gesture representing a portion of our constituents. It is a document that reflects the belief of the NSD community, based on science at this time, that parents be given the choice to decide whether or not their children receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

Science tells us that the vaccine slows the spread and reduces the risk of death and serious illness due to COVID-19 for the vaccinated individual no matter the variant, but does not prevent it.

Science also tells us that there is no longitudinal data that addresses the long-term effects of the COVID-19 vaccine on the chemistry of developing minds and bodies of children who are connecting to their biological genetics from birth through prepubescence, through adolescence to early adulthood. Parents, including COVID-19 vaccinated and pro-vaccination parents, have shared they are uncomfortable subjecting their children to a vaccination for which there is no longitudinal data.

The lack of longitudinal data leaves many parents feeling sufficiently uninformed to truly give informed consent. Therefore, based on the lack of long-term studies and research resulting in the lack of longitudinal data supporting mandated use of the COVID-19 vaccine for children, we the members of the Newhall School Board, ask you to not mandate the COVID-19 vaccine to children 12 and under.

As part of the County of Los Angeles, our school district operates under the strictest health mandates in California. Our (NSD) case rates for students and staff are extremely low. The number of students who have tested positive have been extremely low throughout the pandemic. That being said, if school districts across the state continue operating and maintaining high standards of COVID-19 health protocols and procedures that ensures health safety at schools where children spend the majority of their waking hours, and families continue to partner with maintaining those protocols and practices, then the vaccine mandate is not necessary.

We, on the Newhall School Board also ask that you fully authorize local school districts to determine mask wearing policies based on their local health statistics and the California Department of Public Health guidelines. As a local agency of the state, school districts are in the prime position to decide what best practices need to be mandated and/or recommended to promote the safest physical and social emotional health learning environments for students and staff.

Our children have carried the burden for far too long. It is our opinion that both a vaccine and mask mandate that is not based on any long term, peer reviewed research will decimate the California Public School System. We are asking for your support to return normalcy to our schools. Our students, educators and families need your support.

Rather than taking an incremental approach we call upon all public officials, elected and unelected, to apply the lessons learned nationally and internationally in nearly two years and remove the mandatory restrictions in place due to COVID-19. The deleterious impact on the social and emotional well-being of students far exceeds any benefit of mandatory mask wearing.

To continue to be an active part of this statewide discussion, we would like to schedule a meeting with you either in Sacramento, or in Southern California when you visit Los Angeles County. We certainly would host a meeting with you and your staff in our school district.

We look forward to your response!

Respectfully,
The NSD Governing Board

cc: Jeff Pelzel, Superintendent
Suzette Valladares, California Assembly Member, 38th District
Tony Thurmond, California Superintendent of Public Instruction
Kathryn Barger, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, 5th District
Scott Wilk, Senator, District 21
Henry Stern, Senator, District 27
Alex Padilla, United States Senator, California, 25th Congressional District
Dianne Feinstein, United States Senator, California, 25th Congressional District

Enclosures:
Copy of Newhall School District Resolution #21/22-11