



Governing Board of the William S. Hart Union High School District

March 2, 2022

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

Regarding: William S. Hart Union High School District request for local control to apply State of California guidelines and reminder of Resolution No. 21/22-19 sent on November 18, 2021

Dear Governor Newsom,

We appreciate your efforts that have helped reopen the schools in our district to traditional in-person instruction. These efforts have been significant in giving our children the opportunity to continue learning in the setting of an actual classroom, located in an actual school.

This letter has been sent for two reasons. The first is to follow-up on Resolution No. 21/22-19 that the William S. Hart Union High School District Governing Board sent to you on November 18, 2021.

That resolution asked you to rescind mandating the COVID-19 vaccination to public and private K through 12 students as a requirement for in-person instruction. We continue to urge you to rescind this mandate.

The second reason this letter has been sent is to ask you to allow local school districts to have the authority to follow guidelines from the State of California (i.e. California Department of Public Health) rather than the county in which it resides. We believe that local elected officials (i.e. elected school board members) are best suited to determine the needs of the students from the school district to which they were elected.

Our school district is located in Los Angeles County, yet we are isolated in the northern part of the county in the Santa Clarita Valley. The Santa Clarita Valley borders Ventura County and Kern County. COVID-19 rates for students, educational staff and the general population in our Valley are extremely low. These rates have been this way for a long time.

Los Angeles County is a very large and quite diverse county. It has many distinct and separate communities. The Santa Clarita Valley is one of those separate and distinct communities.

Accordingly, we believe that as elected school board members we are the leaders in the best position to apply guidelines from the State of California's Department of Public Health. We urge you to give us the flexibility, through having local control, so that we can best serve the students in our district.

Our students are in great need of outstanding services in many areas. Long overlooked during this pandemic has been the emotional, social and mental health of our students. For two years now, all we seem to hear about on a regular basis is information on the number of COVID-19 cases, the continual changes in quarantine rules and the policies/mandates for masking.

The detriment that this pandemic has caused to our students from an emotional, social and mental health standpoint is **enormous**. This is creating a **tremendous** burden that could take years to overcome.

When is the time to begin actively and fervently addressing this these enormous emotional, social and mental health needs? It is **now**.

Who is in the best position to assist our students in meeting their needs and overcoming this emotional, social and mental health burden? It is our local elected school boards, **not** the administration of a very large county.

We urge you to give us the flexibility and local control to **fully** serve the students in our separate and distinct community of the Santa Clarita Valley. We look forward to an opportunity to discuss the contents of this letter with you. Please let us know when we can speak with you.

Respectfully,

The Governing Board of the William S. Hart Union High School District

cc: Mike Kuhlman
Kathryn Barger
Tony Thurmond
Suzette Valladares
Scott Wilk
Henry Stern
Alec Padilla
Dianne Feinstein