

January 3, 2022

Dear Governor Newsom,

In the midst of leading our State through a new surge of Covid-19, our School Board wants to bring to your attention some consternation and division that have been growing in our community, concerning the proposed Covid-19 vaccine mandate.

Fullerton School District has a long history of collaborative partnership among all stakeholders through honoring parent's right to choose what they feel is the best for their children's education and working cooperatively with our employees and their unions to implement the best options to prepare our students for their future. We believe that most problems are best solved at the local level by honoring the voices of all stakeholders and seeking understanding and cooperation from all parties. Hence, even for major decisions, we have had successful implementation by allowing local control of key executive decisions by listening to our community and employees and seeking their input. We will continue to keep our students safe from COVID-19.

During the past several weeks, the proposed COVID-19 vaccine mandate has caused unease and concerns among members of our community, board, parents, and staff. Some of our parents and other community members have expressed that the proposed Covid-19 vaccine mandate infringes on their personal choice and parental right to choose what is best for their children. Even some of the parents, who are vaccinated themselves, fear that the State is rushing into the mandate without knowing the long-term effects of the vaccine on children, since the vaccine only has emergency authorization for 5 to 11-year-olds and even for older children. It has only recently received authorization from the FDA. The possible long-term side effects are undoubtedly unknown, especially children who are in or yet to enter their formative years.

Even the parents who want the vaccine for their children, are concerned with the lack of time to assess the risks vs. rewards of the vaccine and make an informed decision about what is best for their child regarding COVID-19 vaccines. Faced with difficult choices and an unfriendly environment for their children, some staff and parents are considering leaving the State or pulling their children out of our education system and home-schooling, at a great cost to their family, our State and our schools.

As you move forward in leading us through yet another surge, I hope that some of the grassroots concerns I have brought to your attention may persuade you to consider the rights, choices, and beliefs of parents in our community before your next difficult decision.

Sincerely,



Robert Pletka,  
Superintendent of Fullerton School District