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August 30, 2022

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

RE: Vaccine Verification for Workers in Schools Public Health Order

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) and our more than 17,000 members, I write to express our appreciation for your staff's August 4th briefing with our ACSA members regarding COVID-19 updates for the 2022-2023 school year. As demonstrated throughout the pandemic, school leaders have adapted school policies and protocols to reflect the latest scientific research to ensure the health and safety of staff and students. During the call with Mr. Brooks Allen, Dr. Sohil Sud, and Dr. Chloe LaMarchand, our members shared the request for last year's [Vaccine Verification for Workers in Schools](#) Public Health Order (Public Health Order) to be rescinded. We believe the state order should be updated to reflect the current data and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

At the time of the August 11, 2021 Public Health Order release, vaccination against COVID-19 was cited as, "the most effective means of preventing infection with the COVID-19 virus, and subsequent transmission and outbreaks."ⁱ The rationale for the Public Health Order outlined that the purpose of diagnostic screening of unvaccinated workers was to minimize the risk of transmission while on K-12 school campuses since younger students were not yet eligible for vaccines.

However, at the present, these circumstances and the virus itself have changed. Children as young as six-months old now have the opportunity to be vaccinated and have added protection against severe COVID-19 symptoms. In addition, with the Omicron variant, CDC affirms, "Omicron spreads more easily than earlier variants, including the Delta variant. Anyone with Omicron infection, regardless of vaccination status or whether or not they have symptoms, can spread the virus to others"ⁱⁱ In fact CDC's August 11, 2022 school guidance no longer recommends routine screening testing in K-12 schools and instead recommends that testing focus on either "high-risk activities during high COVID-19 Community Level or in response to an outbreak." CDC's latest guidance also recommends that any screening program include both vaccinated and unvaccinated individualsⁱⁱⁱ

For these reasons, ACSA requests that the August 11, 2021 Public Health Order be rescinded since it now conflicts with the latest August 11, 2022 CDC guidance. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to working alongside the State collaboratively for the safety and health of our students and educators. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 916-970-7044 or skaminski@acsa.org.

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Sincerely,



Serette Kaminski
Legislative Advocate

CC: Ben Chida, Chief Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom
Brooks Allen, Executive Director, State Board of Education
Tomás J. Aragón, MD, DrPH, Director and State Public Health Officer, California
Department of Public Health
Dr. Sohil Sud, Lead, California Safe Schools for All Team
Dr. Chloe LaMarchand, Schools Lead, California Testing Task Force

ⁱ State Public Health Officer Order of August 11, 2021: “Vaccine Verification for Workers in Schools”
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Order-of-the-State-Public-Health-Officer-Vaccine-Verification-for-Workers-in-Schools.aspx>

ⁱⁱ Center for Disease Control and Prevention: “COVID-19 Variants” https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fvariants%2Fomicron-variant.html

ⁱⁱⁱ Center for Disease Control and Prevention: “Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning” Updated August 11, 2022:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-childcare-guidance.html>