

## **AUSD Leaders Issue Joint Statement of Support for New Vaccination Mandate for School Employees**

**August 11, 2021 -- Alameda, CA --** School leaders with the Alameda Unified School District have issued a joint statement expressing their strong support for Governor Newsom's announcement today of a statewide vaccine mandate for school employees.

The new [public health order](#), which the Governor announced at a press conference at Carl B. Munck Elementary School in Oakland, calls for all school employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19 or be tested weekly for infection. **The new order will go into effect August 12; districts have until October 15 to verify the vaccination status of their employees and set up testing protocols.** A press release about the Governor's announcement is available [here](#).

### **"Ready to Move Forward"**

At its public meeting on August 10, the AUSD Board of Education had already directed staff to create a plan to call for mandating vaccinations for employees. "Over the last week or so, it has become increasingly clear that school districts have the legal right to mandate vaccines among staff and that it is a best practice for operating schools safely," says Superintendent Pasquale Scuderi. "Our staff began discussing the logistics of such a mandate last week, and we are ready to move forward on this initiative."

Today's joint statement, which emphasizes the need for education, collaboration, and best public health practices is below. It was issued by:

- Board President Mia Bonta (on behalf of the Board of Education)
- Superintendent Pasquale Scuderi
- Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Tim Erwin
- Alameda Education Association Vice President Ron Johnson
- CSEA-27 President Cindy Zecher
- CSEA-860 President Jose Nunez

### **AUSD Joint Statement**

As AUSD leaders, we support and appreciate this leadership by Governor Newsom. Scientific evidence shows that vaccines work, they are safe, and they are the most effective strategy available to reducing the risks posed by COVID-19. As such, we believe this order - in combination with our other protective measures, such as masking, handwashing, and improved ventilation - will help us protect our students, our staff, our families, and the community at large as we open our schools this month.

We also know this new public health order will help us stabilize our work force during the pandemic, as vaccination status has a strong bearing on if and for how long employees need to

quarantine in the cases of exposure to a positive case. We strongly encourage our employees to get vaccinated and will provide weekly testing for those who do not.

As management and labor leaders, we are united in this effort and pledge to work together collaboratively to analyze the new order and determine how best to implement it. Our intention is to educate and support our employees as we comply with this new public health direction. We know employees and families will have questions about this order, and we promise to share more information as we receive more details.”

### **A Surge in Cases**

The Governor’s announcement comes at a time when the Delta variant is causing a surge in COVID-19 cases, including in Alameda County. According to public health data, unvaccinated people, in particular, are vulnerable to severe illness from the Delta variant. Currently COVID-19 vaccines are authorized for people ages 12 and up, but not authorized for children younger than that.

The order allows employees to provide proof of vaccination several ways, including by presenting the physical vaccination card, the digital vaccination card, or a healthcare provider’s verification. Information about the vaccine mandate will be sent to employees as AUSD receives more details and will be available on the district’s [COVID-19 Vaccination Information for Staff](#) web page.

“Reducing transmission of COVID-19 is key to our ability to open safe learning environments this fall and keep them open,” Superintendent Scuderi says. “We know that in-person instruction is vital to our students’ academic and emotional well-being. I am grateful to our management and labor leaders for their support of this new approach to employee vaccination and community safety.”