

# Board Resolution on CDPH Guidance for K-12 Schools / Let Them Breathe

**WHEREAS**, the California Department of Public Health (“CDPH”) announced that as of June 15, 2021, masks would be required for all individuals in indoor K-12 school settings, pending updated guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”)<sup>1</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the CDC released its “Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools” (“CDC Guidance”) on July 9, 2021, recommending that: 1) vaccinated students and adults do not need to wear masks indoors; 2) prevention strategies such as masking and social distancing be removed one at a time “based on local conditions;” and 3) schools “determine the prevention strategies needed in their area by monitoring levels of community transmission (i.e., low, moderate, substantial or high) and local vaccine coverage, and use of screening testing to detect cases in K-12 schools;”<sup>2</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, immediately following the release of the CDC Guidance, the California Department of Public Health (“CDPH”) decided NOT to follow the CDC Guidance and instead implement restrictions regardless of local conditions or vaccination coverage, including requiring masks for all students and adults in K-12 settings regardless of vaccination status;<sup>3</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, the CDPH further stated it was “not recommending physical distancing due to the obstacles it would present to California schools’ full reopening,”<sup>3</sup> despite evidence that thousands of schools fully re-opened last March when the CDPH revised its guidance to only recommend 3 feet of spacing;<sup>4</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, the CDPH announced that it would be mandating masks not for scientific reasons, rather because “students should be able to walk into school without worrying about whether they will feel different or singled out for being vaccinated or unvaccinated;”<sup>3</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, numerous studies and the CDC confirm that children are at an incredibly low risk of severe disease,<sup>5 6 7</sup> long-term side effects<sup>8 9 10</sup> and death from COVID-19,<sup>11 12 13</sup> with a mortality risk substantially less than from influenza<sup>14</sup> or common activities such as riding in a car or swimming;<sup>15</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, numerous studies found low case rates in countries where schools did not require masks,<sup>16 17</sup> and studies published by the CDC<sup>18</sup> and the COVID-19 School Response Dashboard<sup>19</sup> found no difference in case rates between schools with and without student mask mandates; and

**WHEREAS**, schools do not require masks, quarantines, testing, vaccination or any other significant prevention measures during flu season, despite studies showing influenza is more severe<sup>20 21</sup> and more deadly than COVID-19, with the CDC estimating that approximately 600

children died from influenza during the 2017-2018 season, despite wide distribution of an influenza vaccine;<sup>14</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, numerous epidemiologists, pediatricians and health care professionals have publicly advocated for the removal of mask requirements for children,<sup>22 23 24</sup> and over 40 states have eliminated the mask requirement in schools for the upcoming school year;<sup>25</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, the World Health Organization (“WHO”) states that children under 5 years old should not be required to wear masks, and requiring masks for children ages 6-11 should be made based on several factors, including the impact of wearing a mask on a child’s psychosocial development;<sup>26 27</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, the WHO also recommends against children wearing masks during exercise or play, as masks compromise a child’s ability to breathe;<sup>28</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, recent studies have shown that mask wearing can impact a child’s language development,<sup>29</sup> emotional development,<sup>30</sup> interpersonal communication,<sup>31</sup> and overall physiological and psychological health;<sup>32 33</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, a substantial majority of the population of California – particularly those at high-risk of severe COVID-19 – have been vaccinated or naturally infected, with CDPH reporting that approximately 85.9% of Californians have antibodies,<sup>34</sup> a number which will continue to increase; and

**WHEREAS**, adult vaccination and natural immunity are effective at driving down the number of new cases in a community;<sup>35</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, the CDPH wholly ignores the benefits of both adult vaccination and natural immunity from COVID-19 in reducing outbreaks and transmission;<sup>36 37</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, the CDPH continues to mandate restrictions including masks, quarantines, asymptomatic testing, temperature screenings, plexiglass barriers and cleaning procedures even if a community reports no cases, hospitalizations or deaths from COVID-19, and despite clear evidence that these restrictions are ineffective,<sup>38</sup> unnecessary<sup>39</sup> and harmful to the health and education of a child;<sup>40</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, as many as 50-90% of RT-PCR tests may inaccurately identify a subject as positive for COVID-19 when the subject is not infectious,<sup>41 42 43</sup> resulting in unnecessary multi-week quarantines and the exclusion of millions of students from in-person education; and

**WHEREAS**, quarantining students for days or weeks due to close contact with an infected patient denies students their constitutional right to an education and has not been shown to reduce the spread of COVID-19;<sup>44</sup> and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that this Board establishes the following goals:

- Advocate in writing to the CDPH to remove mandatory requirements for preventative measures such as masks, quarantines and asymptomatic testing.
- Allow school districts to consult with city and county health departments to determine the need for safety protocols based on local conditions.
- Advocate for parental choice for masking and vaccinating their children.
- Ensure that mask requirements will NOT be used as punishment to coerce children to get vaccinated.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this Board commits to acting at all times in the best interests of students, including educating students and families on the overwhelming benefits of in-person education, the low risk of COVID-19 to children, the evidence that students are at less risk of infection from COVID-19 in school than out of school, and the evidence that in-person education does not contribute to the spread of COVID-19; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this Board is committed to assisting schools in returning to normalcy in the classroom, including the removal of any and all prevention strategies which are not based in science, have harms that outweigh the benefits, or which impede in any way a student's ability to fully participate in classroom instruction; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this Board will seek out the assistance of any and all local public health agencies for decisions regarding safety protocols in schools, specifically requesting assistance to understand how local conditions should inform the implementation and discontinuation of safety protocols such as masks, quarantines and testing; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this Board will transmit official copies of this resolution to the following: Superintendents for all school districts within the county, the County Department of Public Health, the County Department of Education, California Congressmembers, the California Governor, the California Department of Public Health, and any other entities the Board deems appropriate for this resolution.

Adopted this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in 2021.

Motion made by:

Second made by:

Members voting "aye":

Members voting "no":

Members abstaining:

Members not present:

## CITATIONS

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