



Good afternoon Barry --

We wanted to follow-up on our recent meeting. Yesterday the CUSD Executive Cabinet explained that CUSD's position regarding medical exemptions for masks is, A) individuals can self-attest that they have a medical condition that prevents them from wearing masks and, B) Individuals can also self-attest that that same medical condition prevents them from wearing any other less-restrictive protective gear (such as a face shield and drape). We are concerned that the CUSD masking policy may contribute to avoidable outbreaks, thereby risking student and community health while also threatening to destabilize in-person instruction this year.

With the rise of the Delta variant, there is increasing evidence that vaccinated individuals can spread the virus and that more children are becoming sick with COVID-19. In his August 5, 2021 letter to the CUSD Board, Todd Suntrapak, President of Valley Children's Healthcare pointed out that "the Delta variant of COVID-19 is more easily transmitted and more virulent in its impact than earlier variants" and that our area currently has "higher than normal transmission rates." Additionally, our reading of the [CDPH guidelines](#) indicates that a professional opinion regarding mask exemptions is both necessary and prudent, given the risks associated with the rise of the Delta variant. It should be noted, in no other regulatory area (such as 504's or assessing a student for SPED services) is self-attestation considered sufficient.

Our primary concern as educators is to ensure the integrity of in-person instruction and keeping students and staff safe in classrooms with in-person instruction. This concern has been affirmed through hundreds of conversations and survey responses over the past week from Clovis educators and parents. In order to help our students to thrive this year, common sense policies and procedures are critical.

Therefore, we are calling on CUSD to follow the intent of Cal-OSHA, CDC, Fresno County and CDPH guidelines and require students and staff to provide a physician's note to be exempt from masking and/or less restrictive alternatives. Additionally, CUSD should make physical distancing a clear requirement for those with no masks. Such responsible leadership by CUSD will help us mitigate the impact of the Delta variant on our students and communities, while helping protect in-person instruction throughout the Fall.

Sincerely,

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