



SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

Agenda Item# 7.4

Meeting Date: December 17, 2020

Subject: Resolution No. 3178: Prioritization of Teachers and School Staff for COVID-19 Vaccine Access

- Information Item Only
- Approval on Consent Agenda
- Conference (for discussion only)
- Conference/First Reading (Action Anticipated: _____)
- Conference/Action
- Action
- Public Hearing

Division: Board Office

Recommendation: Approval of Board Resolution No. 3178: Prioritization of Teachers and School Staff for COVID-19 Vaccine Access

Background/Rationale: Sacramento City Unified School District schools have been closed since March 13th, 2020. School districts across the county have faced an unprecedented public health crisis and school districts, teachers and school staff across the country have stepped up and adapted to the significant challenges caused by school closures. We have shifting to new online distance learning formats and ways of delivering other supportive services, such as meals, school supplies, and essential health and well-being services, however we acknowledge that school disruptions have severely harmed K-12 student achievement and well-being, especially among our most vulnerable students, families and communities. Ensuring school staff receive priority vaccination will enable our district to safely reopen schools and get students back into the classroom as soon as possible.

Financial Considerations: None

LCAP Goal(s): Safe, Emotionally Healthy and Engaged Students; Family and Community Empowerment

Documents Attached:

1. Board Resolution No. 3178

Estimated Time of Presentation: 15 minutes
Submitted by: Board Member Murawski and Victoria Flores,
 Director Student Support & Health Services
Approved by: Jorge A. Aguilar, Superintendent

**SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

RESOLUTION NO. 3178

**“Resolution Urging Prioritization of Teachers and School Staff for
COVID-19 Vaccine Access”**

Resolution urging Governor Newsom and the California Department of Public Health to prioritize California public school educators for phase one COVID-19 vaccine access.

WHEREAS, as of Thursday, December 10, 2020, the California Department of Public Health has reported over 1.4 million confirmed COVID-19 cases in California, and a total of 20,463 deaths in the state; and

WHEREAS, in the early stages of the pandemic, local and state public health orders required the closure of public schools across the state to slow the spread of coronavirus in the community; and

WHEREAS, despite the unprecedented nature of the public health crisis, school districts, teachers and school staff across the state stepped up and adapted to the significant challenges caused by school closures by shifting towards new online distance learning formats and ways of delivering other supportive services, such as meals, school supplies, and essential health and well-being services; and

WHEREAS, even with innovative distance learning measures put in place, COVID-19 school disruptions have severely harmed K-12 student achievement and well-being, especially among students in low-income families, students of color, students learning English as a second language, students experiencing homelessness, students in the foster care system, students with disabilities and other vulnerable student groups; and

WHEREAS, public school enrollment has begun to decline across the state and country, with some families choosing to leave public school districts to enroll in schools that have managed to reopen schools with government authorization and safety protocols in place; and

WHEREAS, school closures have cut student learning time and limited the ability of teachers and school staff to provide their usual level of support, diminishing opportunities for students to develop their social and emotional skills, and increasing rates of anxiety, depression, obesity, and other serious health conditions among students; and

WHEREAS, these educational consequences from school closures are worse for the most vulnerable students, who were already facing stark achievement gaps prior to the COVID-19 crisis; and

WHEREAS, the disproportionate health and economic impacts of COVID-19 on Black, Latino, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Native American families, including higher rates of job loss and COVID-19 infections compounded by limited access to technology and reliable internet access, have only exacerbated the educational challenges vulnerable students have endured during this crisis; and

WHEREAS, the longer schools are closed, the higher is the risk of severe harm to vulnerable students, including persistent behavioral and academic challenges, grade repetition, and increases in school truancy, suspension, expulsion, and dropouts rate; and

WHEREAS, lower community rates of COVID-19 transmission, adequate testing, screening, sanitation, personal protective equipment, and public health protocols are all important to ensure educators and students can safely return to an in-person school setting; and

WHEREAS, protecting educators and school staff through vaccination provides an important layer of protection that will assist schools in reopening safely; and

WHEREAS, safe and highly effective vaccines protecting against the COVID-19 virus are expected to become available to priority populations this month following authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration; and

WHEREAS, because initial vaccine supply will be limited, California state health officials are developing a phased distribution plan that will establish the priority populations for vaccination; and

WHEREAS, many European countries have prioritized keeping schools open citing their commitments to minimize the academic harm of school closures, while our state and nation have prioritized reopening other sectors as schools have remained closed; and

WHEREAS, the state's prioritization scheme is likely to prioritize health care workers and other high-risk groups in the first phase of vaccine recipients, termed Phase 1A, and these workers are being divided into subgroups in case of a shortage in the first rounds; and

WHEREAS, after Phase 1A, "essential workers" are proposed to be prioritized directly afterwards in Phase 1B;

WHEREAS, while educators and school staff are generally considered essential workers, it is still unclear where they will fall within the state's priority ranking, which will be decided in the coming weeks; and

WHEREAS, the criteria being used by the state Vaccine Community Advisory Committee for prioritization among essential workers include: 1) Societal impact of job, 2) Equity, 3) Impact on economy, and 4) Occupational exposures; and

WHEREAS, there are few employees with greater **societal impact** than educators and school staff, as they not only provide an education, but also serve to protect children from hunger and other social ills, give children purpose, set them up for success as citizens, and inspire them to succeed in life; and

WHEREAS, the short-term and long-term **equity** implications of school closures on the economic well-being, health, life expectancy, academic achievement and overall life outcomes of vulnerable children are staggering and these harms can be mitigated by reopening schools, and

WHEREAS, the **economic impact** of school closures is significant, as the continued closure of schools has forced many parents and caregivers to make an impossible choice between leaving their jobs and foregoing their family's income; and

WHEREAS, research shows child care needs related to school closures are forcing women out of the workforce at rates much higher than that of men, leading experts to project significant wage losses for affected women that not only result in immediate financial instability but will likely constrain their future prospects and earnings, as well as exacerbate the gender wage gap; and

WHEREAS, closures are expected to reduce schooling and lead to future losses in earnings for current students, with one recent working paper estimating the present-value loss in expected lifetime earnings to current students *for only the four-month period 2019-20 COVID-19 school closures at \$21,158 per individual student* in high-income countries; which equates to over \$800 million dollars in projected lost earnings among current SCUSD students just due to the four-month 2019-20 school closures; and

WHEREAS, despite implementation of numerous mitigation strategies, in-person schooling inherently includes risk factors for potential **occupational exposure** for educators and school staff that cannot be mitigated, including a long time duration interacting with a large numbers of students as well as most interaction occurring indoors; and

WHEREAS, it is an ethical imperative to weigh the special moral status of children and our obligations to them in decision-making about vaccine prioritization; and

WHEREAS, education is the cornerstone of democracy, and at a time when democratic institutions are under attack, there is a moral obligation to protect the integrity of educational institutions by ensuring that they are well-resourced and equipped to overcome the current and future challenges presented by the COVID-19 health crisis; now, therefore, be it,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sacramento City Unified School District Board of Education urges Governor Newsom, the California Department of Public Health, the state Vaccine Community Advisory Committee, the state Drafting Guidelines Workgroup and all other state and local health officials to prioritize the recovery of our public education system by making vaccines available to teachers and school staff immediately within Phase 1B so we can safely reopen schools and get students back into the classroom as soon as possible; and be it,

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Sacramento City Unified School District Board of Education hereby directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit copies to the Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom and to the California Department of Public Health with a request to take all actions necessary to achieve the objectives of this Resolution.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Sacramento City Unified School District Board of Education on this ____ day of _____ 2020, by the following vote:

AYES: _____
NOES: _____
ABSTAIN: _____
ABSENT: _____

President of the Board of Education

ATTESTED TO:

Jorge A. Aguilar
Secretary of the Board of Education