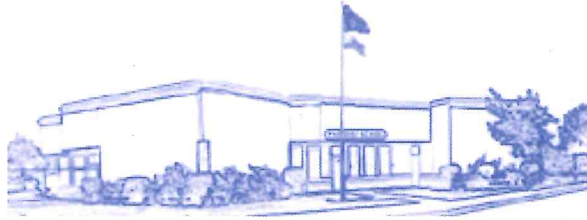


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E. Heath Thomason

PARADISE SCHOOL DISTRICT Est. 1868

3361 California Ave., Modesto, CA 95358 · (209) 524-0184 · Fax (209) 524-0363

October 14, 2021

Dear Paradise Families:

October 1, 2021, Governor Newsom made an announcement that the State of California would be requiring students and staff in private and public schools to be vaccinated. The details were a bit fuzzy and we wanted to get some clarifying information out to you after researching a bit more. We know that this is a very controversial topic and there are varying feelings about the vaccination for COVID-19. Please remember that your school district did not put this into place; we are only reporting to you what the state has told us so far.

The announcement on October 1 was just an announcement; it did not enact any policy, mandate, or law. After the vaccine is approved by the FDA for students in grades 7–12, there will be a rule-making process and this will all go through our state legislature. They will be looking at Health and Safety Code 120335, which references the current ten required vaccines for students who attend schools. The Department of Public Health can add a vaccine to the list and the legislature can approve an addition. Currently, there is a provision in that code that when a new vaccine is introduced, there can be personal belief/religious exemptions or health exemptions. This may or may not change when it goes through the state legislature process.

We have been told that if a student has an exemption, they will be able to participate in in-person learning. The other option for students without an exemption, who are not vaccinated, is independent study. We will continue asking questions and seeking clarification on these issues over the next few weeks.

The other question we have received is when this would take effect. It is believed by the leaders in Sacramento that the earliest that this would go into effect for 7th–12th grade students is July 1, 2022 for the next school year. K–6th grade students would be in the second phase, of which a date is too early to determine at this time. There is a lot that will need to happen over the next few months before it will be a mandate for the students in our schools.

If you would like to voice your concerns about the vaccine mandate, please reach out to your elected representatives who will be debating in Sacramento:

Assemblyman Heath Flora

578 N. Wilma Ave., Suite B

Ripon, CA 95366

(209) 599-2112

Senator Andreas Borgeas

102 Grove Ave., Suite B

Oakdale, CA 95361

(209) 848-8001

Governor Gavin Newsom

1303 10th St., Suite 1173

Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 445-2841

The school district found out about this announcement at the same time as everyone else did. While many suspected that it may happen eventually, there was some shock in the timing and phases that were initially stated by the Governor. As always, we will continue to seek answers and clarification and keep you informed on any updates that may happen.

As we work together to navigate this, please remember that we are not the rule makers on this and we will do our best to give you accurate information and support each family and their personal decision. We have been through a lot together and through all of this, we know that all of us want what is best for our students and will continue to work together through the process.

Sincerely,



Heath Thomason

Superintendent/Principal