

Together We Learn



## Central Okanagan Public Schools

Board of Education

October 22, 2021

Via email: [Premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Premier@gov.bc.ca), [EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca), [HLTH.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:HLTH.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

The Honourable John Horgan, MLA,  
Premier of British Columbia  
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt.  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

The Honourable Jennifer Whiteside, MLA,  
Minister of Education  
PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt.  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

The Honourable Adrian Dix, MLA,  
Minister of Health  
PO Box 9050, Stn Prov Govt.  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dr. Bonnie Henry  
Provincial Health Officer  
PO Box 9648, Stn Prov Govt.  
1515 Blanshard St.  
Victoria, BC V8W 9P4

Dear Premier, Minister Whiteside, Minister Dix and Dr. Henry:

At the October 13, 2021 Public Board Meeting, the Central Okanagan Board of Education passed the following Motion:

*THAT: The Board write a letter to Premier Horgan, the Minister of Education, the Minister of Health, and the Provincial Health Officer regarding our expectation that any mandate for staff vaccines would have been a provincial decision in a provincial health order and that they would cover any costs.*

On behalf of the Central Okanagan Board of Education, I am writing to explain the Board's discussions around the issue of mandatory vaccinations for K-12 staff.

First of all, for the past 20 months our Board has been following all Provincial Health Orders regarding COVID 19. The Board was consistently told that we should not deviate from the Provincial Orders especially by implementing protocols which went beyond the orders. That is why we expected any vaccine mandates would come from the PHO, and not be left up to individual Boards of Education.

Since the Province's announcement regarding mandatory vaccines in the K – 12 sector, we have learned just how complicated this issue is, and understand that it is more than a health and safety issue and has now moved to a labour relations issue.

Considering all the issues before Boards of Education, we would respectfully state that if the Province was contemplating publically declaring that vaccine mandates are a Board decision, then the guidelines and

frameworks that are now beginning to come to Boards should have been ready for distribution and discussion before the public announcement.

As our Board discusses all the implications of moving forward, we are concerned that there may be costs involved. We believe that the Provincial Government should cover any extra costs incurred by Boards.

The past 20 months have been trying for everyone. We appreciate the work undertaken at the Provincial level, especially in the Ministries of Health and Education, and by the Provincial and local health authorities.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Moyra Baxter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Moyra Baxter, Chairperson  
Board of Education

pc: Central Okanagan Board of Education Trustees  
Kevin Kaardal, Superintendent of Schools/CEO  
Dr. Sue Pollock, Interim Chief Medical Health Officer – Interior Health Authority  
BCSTA for distribution to all Boards of Education

**Board of Education – Trustees**

Moyra Baxter  
Norah Bowman

Wayne Broughton  
Chantelle Desrosiers  
Julia Fraser

Amy Geistlinger  
Lee-Ann Tiede