



June 3, 2020

The Honorable Tony Thurmond
Superintendent of Public Instruction
California Department of Education
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

Dear Superintendent Thurmond:

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a particularly significant impact on K-12 students across California. Since Governor Newsom's shelter in place order this past March, nearly every school district in the state has been forced to quickly transition to a distance learning model, requiring a modified learning process for students and new skill sets for teachers, administrators and parents/guardians to support their children in a home-based classroom.

As hospitals, doctors' offices and other healthcare providers prepared for a surge of COVID-19 patients, many physicians and health clinics cancelled regularly scheduled vaccinations and many parents/guardians chose not to schedule their child's scheduled vaccinations fearing exposure to the coronavirus. According to the California Department of Public Health, the number of children that had not been vaccinated for diseases such as chicken pox dropped more than 40%, compared to April of 2019. While we must be vigilant in our efforts to flatten the curve and reduce COVID-19 infections, efforts to address this current public health crisis should not cause another public health crisis because children are not being properly vaccinated against a range of preventable diseases.

Preparations and new health protocols for the Fall 2020 school semester are already underway. As part of these preparations, we must work collaboratively with county offices of education and school districts across the state to protect students from preventable disease. We must ensure that students are receiving all medically necessary vaccinations. For example, in the event that the Fall 2020 school year is delayed, requiring continued distance learning, what steps must we take to ensure that students continue to receive necessary vaccinations? What challenges must our schools overcome to receive vaccination records, especially if students are learning from home? What safeguards must we consider to ensure that we do not see a spike in other communicable diseases like Measles, Polio, Hepatitis B or chicken pox that can be prevented through vaccination?

California's leadership in reducing deaths and infections related to the coronavirus should not leave us vulnerable to other preventable diseases. Now is not the time to lose ground on our work to maximize vaccination rates and reduce the spread of other preventable communicable diseases.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you to serve California's students.

Sincerely,



MARC LEVINE, 10th District



BILL QUIRK, 20th District



BLANCA RUBIO, 48th District



ROB BONTA, 18th District



CHRISTINA GARCIA, 58th District



RICHARD PAN, 6th District