



October 22, 2021

Dear Parents and Families:

Below is an update on the COVID-19 case rate for Tehama County as well as information regarding some of the misinformation that continues to be shared within the community.

### **October 18 Protest/Walkout**

Last Monday was the school walkout in protest of the state mandates regarding COVID-19. There is misinformation regarding how this affects schools. Parents have been told to make sure that their child's absence was recorded as unexcused to ensure that the school does not receive funding for that day. **The fact is schools do not receive funding for any student that is absent regardless of whether it is excused or unexcused.** That rule changed many years ago.

Evergreen made the decision to excuse any absence related to the walk out for two reasons: to honor the students right to protest, and to protect students from possible truancy issues in the future. It has absolutely nothing to do with funding as we don't get funded either way.

Now there is pressure to continue the walk out every Monday. This is concerning, not from a funding perspective, but from an education perspective. During this pandemic, education has been anything but consistent and when we add in additional school closures due to power outages, storms, fires and a nationwide labor shortage, the result has real impacts on our students academically as well as socially and emotionally. Walk outs every Monday are not going to bankrupt schools; they will, however, create additional inconsistency and have a profound negative impact on our student's growth. I encourage those organizing these events to plan them outside of school hours and direct them at our state policy makers, allowing those that are committed to serving our students to attend while still being able to effectively support our students. Either way, we will remain open and committed to serving our students.

**Tiered Enforcement Plan:** [EUSD Student Expectations & Enforcement Plan.docx](#)

The COVID-19 case rate for Tehama County as of today is 44.2, which puts us in the Moderate tier for next week. Please refer to the link above for a list of the mitigation measures that will be in-place for next week.

## **Student Vaccine Mandate and Exemptions**

School districts in California have to comply with the mandate once it becomes effective. There is some misinformation out there that districts have the option whether or not to comply; this is false. What is true is that districts have the right to adopt the mandate earlier as we have seen in Los Angeles and the Bay Area. Evergreen has no plans to follow suit at this time and require the vaccination prior to CDPH requiring the vaccine; however, we will be completely compliant once the mandate takes effect.

## **Exemptions regarding the Student Vaccine**

At this time, the Governor has stated that personal belief exemptions and medical exemptions will be available. At this time, we are not collecting or accepting exemptions because the mandate is not in-place and the state has not determined how we are to collect/document those. Some have shared that if they get their exemption in now, they will be grandfathered in once the mandate becomes effective; again, this is not the case. Additionally, and as shared last week, the status of those exemptions could change in the future. If that happens, or if we hear that it may happen, we will communicate that information as soon as we have it.

Sincerely

Brad Mendenhall  
Superintendent  
Evergreen Union School District