

Dear _____ School Board, Administrators and Relevant Others,

This letter is directly and intentionally written to and for you. While there are many people being tried for various reasons during this time in our country, this letter in all capacities aims to land on your desk, and to flood your inbox with the utmost objective of addressing the safety, freedom and health of children who attend schools under your supervision and direction.

To begin, as a School Board member, you have been *granted the utter privilege* of taking care of thousands of young people whose families have entrusted you with the responsibility of caring for their children through holistic, inclusive, nurturing and empowering means of education, safety and community. I would hope that given such an opportunity to lead as an agent of example, you would be aware of the fundamental characteristics such as honesty, integrity, equitability and humility that are expected of you from myself and many of these families. While there is understanding regarding the limited capabilities of human beings to meet all needs at all times, you have an invitation here to represent these significant principles in the movement forward around how you respond to the upcoming vaccine mandates for public school teachers.

It is crucial that you recognize the honour granted to you through your position of leadership regarding the health of children and their families is not something you have earned through personal education or knowledge alone; it is a relationship that depends on connection between families and their local school board. You have been elected by the public community into your role and so have an ethical obligation to *include the voices of all those* unto whom you owe your position. On one hand there is empathy extended towards you as someone who is in a very tense and stressful situation between many disagreeing parties, however, on the other hand I hold the indisputable expectation that you offer equal assessment of these parties' positions with the nonpartisan disposition your role calls for.

Mandating vaccinations for public school teachers are in direct violation against commitments you have made to ensure the well-being of children in your school district's care. As COVID mortality rates are extraordinarily low among children aged 0-19, it is not only ignorant to mandate vaccines for teachers, but also entirely irrelevant. As children have a 0.0001% chance of *contracting* (NOT to be confused with dying. Mortality rates are even lower ranging from 0.00% to 0.03%), the risk of children suffering from COIVD ramifications is very, very low so far as to conclude that COVID rarely kills children, even compared with influenza, against which many children are already vaccinated.^[1]

The counter argument here is that unvaccinated teachers will spread COVID to children, who will then carry the virus home to vulnerable family members. This altercation is also misled as the BC population is currently at 73.8%^[2] fully vaccinated status, unto which we are to assume based on the ongoing, relentless rhetoric of ‘flattening the curve’ and ‘vaccine efficiency’ these vaccines indeed will protect the majority against major ramifications from SARS COVID-19. While I am not interested in spending time unpacking the definitions of vaccine efficacy or effectiveness (both of which I would assume as a responsible leader you have done due diligence in researching wisely), it is becoming ever clearer as time goes on that the vaccine is not going to serve the public as the ‘golden ticket’ unto which society may resume in normalcy. Henceforth, continuing to ‘tighten the noose’ on mandates, especially regarding professions crucial to the success of the economy, nurturing of adolescents and education of upcoming generations is nothing short of ignorance and control.

While these mandates pertain to teachers, be aware that I know, as do many others, that the next proposal will be regarding mandating children K-12 to have the COVID vaccines in order to continue attending school. While this letter will not address the pervasive sickness associated with such a misled, corrupt and tyrannical attempt at implementation, you would certainly be wise to expect much more than an informal complaint should such bigotry attempt be proposed.

In order to approach this division holistically, you must see a wider picture than the vaccine alone. Ramifications of firing teachers based on their constitutional right to choose medical procedures sets precedence for children to accept a narrative that rids people who do not fit the mold handed down (not co-created, discussed or managed with) by authorities in government, many of whom are entirely unqualified to be making medical judgements at all. This sets a scene where it is acceptable to break laws unto which every citizen is born with inherent rights to, trusts will provide safe passage throughout the building of a life and will aid in the movement through trial and struggle. By abiding to, let alone moving forward in such unlawful and destructive precedents, you are setting an example for my children that the systems unto which we live in can forcibly dispose of whomever they please without just ground. It is imperative, while carrying with sensitivity the immense fear many are feeling during this time, we hold fast to the wider picture and move forward in decision making with the assessment of long-term consequences of these mandates for the psycho-social-emotional-mental health of our children. It does not take an expert in any area of life to see the ways in which even mask mandates have severely impacted the social-relational components of primary age students and how isolation has impacted mental health on the secondary level in deeply concerning ways.

I am advising you as a parent and educated member of society to use your role in the School Board for the benefit of our children by denying these mandates in the school system. While the areas of rights for teachers themselves has hardly been touched in this letter, the reality is that by removing unvaccinated teachers from the school through coercive vaccinations, you are violating not only personal rights but are undermining your personal mandate to “put students first.” As a parent I know the devotion, adoration and commitment my children’s teachers have offered over and over again, both pre COVID and especially since March 2019. I have the utmost and deepest respect for these educators and the ways in which they have continued delivering education, care, support and attention to my children throughout a universally exhausting time. To punish them now based on their personal medical freedom is unacceptable, inappropriate and shameful.

While contrary to many opinions being fed across media and the news, human beings have always abided by the code of conduct regarding personal responsibility and consequence for actions. Calculated risk and critical thinking are two of the most important lessons taught in school, and in this case are of highest relevance. I support all teachers in their right to choose what is best for them, and for their right to be respected, safe and treated equally in the position of their profession. Lastly, by approving these mandates you are actively burdening a system that under my observance is already severely understaffed. If bringing further stress to school administration and staff, disrupting classroom environments with a rotating door of TOC’s and removing the already thin layer of supports such as EA’s and SEA’s from the classroom is an acceptable exchange to “protect” children from sniffles, then may that rest on your conscience furthermore.

A deeply concerned and distrusting, though hopeful parent,

[1] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7260492/>

[2] <https://covid19tracker.ca/provincevac.html?p=BC>