



January 10, 2022

Governor Gavin Newsom  
1021 O Street, Suite 9000  
Sacramento, CA 95814

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**Executive Director**

Joe Boyd

Dear Governor Newsom:

Three weeks ago, we joined with you and education organizations across the state in sharing our expressed desire and commitment to in-person learning and keeping California's schools open. That commitment has not changed.

Educators have worked throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to provide instruction and social and emotional support to students and families. They have been working under extraordinary circumstances, followed health guidelines and safety standards to return to classrooms even as the Omicron variant surges. Simply put, educators continue to want what they have wanted throughout the pandemic — safe school sites where in-person learning can occur. Just as it is impacting communities across the state and country, the Omicron variant is creating new challenges for students, educators and schools.

We know that you have heard from our team in Sacramento; and, on Saturday your Administration announced your intention to propose \$2.7 billion to expand statewide COVID testing and vaccinations as well as additional PPE and supplemental paid sick leave. We cannot underscore enough how crucial these resources are to ensuring that California's students, educators and school employees have the tools we need to be safe in classrooms and campuses.

In this first week following the winter holiday, we have seen increasing and alarming numbers of students, educators and school employees with COVID infections. These infections have resulted in greater staffing shortages and are stressing the education system to new levels, which could trigger temporary school closures after we've all worked so hard for schools to reopen.

From the outset of the pandemic, CTA has prioritized safety. Our members welcomed vaccines, continue to be vaccinated at high rates, and have embraced the importance of masking and frequent testing.

However, even with proper precautions and safety measures, thousands of students and educators tested positive during the first week of the new year.

To blunt the impact of the virus and this variant to students, educators and school employees and guard against temporary closures, we recommend the following immediate actions:

1. Prioritize for distribution to school districts and LEAs, N95 and/or KN95 masks for all educators and school employees; provide supplemental masks for students.
2. Build upon the COVID-19 test supply delivered to districts for students and provide at-home and school- site testing for educators and school employees.
3. Restore COVID-19 Supplemental Paid Sick Leave for all workers in California.
4. Work with CTA and other education stakeholders to develop proactive solutions to staffing shortages.

Together, we can ensure the safety of students, employees and all Californians swiftly and with minimal disruption.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Toby Boyd". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large initial "E" and "T" and a final flourish.

E. Toby Boyd  
President, CTA