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From: Noel Hesser <NHesser@scd.org>

Cc: Penelope Ogden - St. Dominic <pogden@sdbenicia.org>; Katie Perata <kperata@scd.org>

Sent: Thu, Feb 24, 2022

Subject: Recent Events at St. Dominic

Hello [REDACTED],

I am Noel Hesser, Associate Superintendent and Regional Director for the Catholic School Department of the Diocese of Sacramento. I supervise 10 schools, St. Dominic among them.

I have recommended to Mrs. Ogden, based on your actions and communications this week, that she not invite your family back to St. Dominic School next year. Should she welcome you back, it will be the result of her compassion. However, I do feel that you owe her an apology, and more importantly, a commitment to greater support for her immense efforts in creating the exemplary community represented by St. Dominic.

Mrs. Ogden, in her role as a principal in the Diocese, is required to enforce a public health order issued by the Governor and the California Department of Public Health, and endorsed by the Bishop of Sacramento and the Superintendent of Sacramento Catholic Schools. She is exercising this requirement and does not have the authority to countermand it. When a parent blatantly chooses not to follow such an order, it is the role of the principal to enforce compliance. Parents do not set policy at the school, nor may they pick and choose which policies they will follow.

We understand that the wearing of masks is a contentious issue, and there are parents on both sides of this issue. However, we have a public health order in place that we must follow; this will only change when the order changes.

I have attached a section of the St. Dominic Handbook (pages 2-3) which details the expectation of parental support for the school. I believe your recent actions and communication violate several of these expectations.

Regarding your questions about a medical mask exemption, I will explain this process. The doctor who issues the exemption must provide his/her specific reasons for the exemption and dates when it should be in effect; he/she must also answer the questions provided. Should the doctor cite any HIPAA issues as an excuse for an incomplete explanation or questionnaire, HIPAA does not apply in this case as affirmed by our legal team. I say this so that you are not disappointed if we cannot accept the exemption because it is incomplete. Once you have a completed exemption letter and questionnaire, it need only be submitted to the school, and if complete, it will be accepted. Additionally, I will report the doctor's name to an authority who monitors these exemptions.

I am certainly willing to meet with you and Mrs. Ogden if you so choose, not to discuss the existing health order, but to determine your future at St. Dominic by establishing the partnership between family and school that is essential. Please let Mrs. Ogden know if this is something you would wish to do.

Sincerely,

Mr. Noel Laird Hesser
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