



February 23, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

L.A. County Board of Supervisors
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Director
L.A. County Department of Public Health
5050 Commerce Drive
Baldwin Park, CA 91706

SUBJECT: Support for Safe and Immediate Return of all Youth Sports

Dear Governor Newsom, Supervisors, and Dr. Ferrer:

The City of Rancho Palos Verdes urges you to expedite the issuance of new guidance that will permit all youth sporting activities and competition to resume immediately, with proper safety protocols in place. The pandemic has had devastating impacts on our children's mental health, and resuming sporting activities may help alleviate anxiety and depression.

We appreciate L.A. County's revised *Reopening Protocol for Youth and Adult Sports* issued on February 16 and the state's guidance on *Outdoor and Indoor Youth and Recreational Adult Sports* effective February 26; however, it does not allow for competition among all sports. We recognize that risk of infection increases with additional people from outside a household, in relatively close proximity, with increased physical exertion, but stress the importance of physical exercise on mental health.

Students are under an immense amount of stress and pressure, compounded by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The City stands in alliance with members of the California State Assembly working to pass a bipartisan resolution as part of the Let Them Play CA effort to update the state's guidance to allow youth sports to resume. The co-authors of the resolution cite that more than 40 states have proven that it is possible to allow youth sporting activities to continue with limited COVID-19 transmission. The resolution also states that the ban on youth sports competition is

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creating an alarming negative mental health impact in the areas of suicidal ideation, anxiety, and depression.

Additionally, the resumption of broader recreational activities, including adult leagues and permitting broader openings of gyms, will assist in improving the physical and mental health of all of our community members (See World Health Organization's Physical Activity page at <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity>).

We understand the need for a cautious approach to issuing public health guidelines, but with proper safety protocols in place, it is possible to find a balance between preventing transmission and allowing our children to play sports again.

Thank you for your continued efforts to ensure the safety of all Californians and Angelenos. Allowing all youth sports to resume immediately, with proper safety protocols in place will support the well-being of children and their mental health as we move toward not just economic recovery, but recovery and care of the whole person.

Sincerely,



Eric Alegria

Mayor, City of Rancho Palos Verdes

cc: Ben Allen, Senator, 26th State Senate District
Al Muratsuchi, Assembly Member, 66th Assembly District
Rancho Palos Verdes City Council
Dr. Alex Cherniss, Superintendent, Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District