# BOARD REVIEWING IMPLICATIONS OF VACCINE MANDATE

October 13, 2021

Kelowna, BC – Central Okanagan School Trustees were surprised that the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Government stated that Boards of Education could mandate COVID 19 vaccinations for their employees. All other mandates regarding COVID 19 have been introduced as a Provincial Health Order.

"We know that getting immunized against COVID-19 is the most important safety measure people can take to protect themselves and those around them," said Moyra Baxter, Chairperson for the Board of Education. "We also know that mandating vaccines for all staff carries many implications, so as a Board we must consider this important decision carefully and with a full knowledge of the potential consequences."

There is a provincial task force to support districts considering vaccine mandates for staff that includes the Ministry of Education, First Nations Education Steering Committee, the B.C. Public School Employers' Association, B.C. School Trustees Association, the BC School Superintendents Association, BC Principals and Vice-Principals Association, the BC Teachers' Federation, and CUPE.

Tomorrow (Oct. 14), all board chairs across the province will meet with the Ministry of Education to discuss implications and to hear more about the provincial direction and health advice. Concurrently, Superintendent of Schools/CEO Kevin Kaardal will compile a report to give the Board of Education a review of the potential impact of a vaccine mandate on staff in the Central Okanagan.

"Since we provide governance for our district, we have a duty of responsibility to consider the rights of everyone in our district when making impactful decisions," said Baxter. "Our superintendent will develop a report to give us a comprehensive understanding of the effect a potential vaccine mandate could have on our district."

"As a Board, we continue to prioritize the safety of all staff and students. As we discuss and consider this significant decision, we will notify our community each step of the way."

-30-

For comments, please contact:
Moyra Baxter, Chairperson of the Board of Education, 250-767-6153
Kevin Kaardal, Superintendent of Schools/CEO, 250-470-3256