



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:** Jenna Schwartz, Co-Founder, 310.994.9764 (c);

[PSTLAUSD@gmail.com](mailto:PSTLAUSD@gmail.com)

Nicolle Fefferman, Co-Founder, 323.376.6513 (c)

**Parents Supporting Teachers Reacts to Optional Masking in LAUSD**

Parents Supporting Teachers (Padres Apoyandes a los Maestros) aka PST, the largest parent led education advocacy group in Los Angeles with over 28,000 parents, teachers, staff and community members, supports LAUSD's recent announcement that masking will be optional, yet strongly recommended, for all students and staff no later than March 23, 2022. PST has stated from the beginning that we will support science and follow the recommendations of our public health officials. The CDC, State of CA, and County of LA have all stated that indoor masking at schools is optional, so we will continue to trust in their recommendations.

"After completing negotiations with labor partners, LAUSD students and staff will transition next week to masks being strongly recommended. While they will join the majority of school districts in the state and county with this change in protocol, we appreciate that LAUSD continues to go above and beyond in its COVID safety measures with weekly testing for all and baseline testing prior to a return from spring break." said parent leader and PST co-founder Nicolle Fefferman.

"For families choosing to not mask moving forward, please encourage your kids to wear a mask if you know you have an immunocompromised teacher or classmate." said PST co-founder and parent leader Jenna Schwartz. "While we support transitioning to optional masking, we need to be mindful that those still wearing a mask are doing so for a reason. We all need to just communicate with our kids, this will be a gradual shift."

"This issue has been an extremely emotional one and we have done our best to allow our members to have a free space to respectfully voice their opinions. Regardless of what families decide to do, we hope that people are considerate of everyone's own personal experiences, risk factors, and comfort levels with choosing to mask or not," said parent and moderator Rachel Wagner.

Should we see a rise in case levels, and LA County Public Health suggests a return to stricter safety measures, we are confident that the district will align with them immediately. The safety of students and staff should always be the first priority.

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Visit [www.parentssupportingteachers.org](http://www.parentssupportingteachers.org) or follow-on social media to learn more and support our shared vision for equitable and inclusive LAUSD schools.