

# ATTACHMENT

For Item

#11

Tuesday,  
October 11, 2022

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CLERK OF THE BOARD

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**From:** [Jennifer Rodriguez](#)  
**To:** [FGG, Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** [External] Letter of support for item on Oct. 11 County Board of Supervisor's agenda  
**Date:** Monday, October 10, 2022 4:35:23 PM  
**Attachments:** [Letter of Support - SDCOE - Enhancing fentanyl education-signed.pdf](#)

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Dear County Board of Supervisors:

Attached please find a letter of support sent on behalf of County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Paul Gothold for agenda item 11 on the Oct. 11 meeting:

## 11. ENHANCING FENTANYL EDUCATION AND STRENGTHENING HARM REDUCTION EFFORTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Please let me know if you need additional information or have any questions.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Rodriguez  
Communications Strategist  
San Diego County Office of Education  
6401 Linda Vista Road, Room 507, San Diego, CA 92111  
[jennifer.rodriguez@sdcoe.net](mailto:jennifer.rodriguez@sdcoe.net) | Ph: 858-295-6633  
[www.sdcoe.net](http://www.sdcoe.net)

Oct. 7, 2022

San Diego County Board of Supervisors  
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 310 (Third Floor)  
San Diego, CA 92101.

**RE: Enhancing Fentanyl Education and Strengthening Harm Reduction Efforts for Young People— Support**

Dear San Diego County Board of Supervisors:

On behalf of the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE), I write to express our support for the agenda item coming before you to enhance fentanyl education and strengthen harm reduction efforts for young people across all districts in San Diego County.

The threat that substance misuse poses to our young people is unprecedented. No longer can they “experiment” with substances without potentially devastating consequences. Pills containing fentanyl, and vaping products that contain as high as 90% THC, are having a lasting impact on mental and physical health.

In San Diego, there were more than 1,100 overdose deaths in 2021, compared to 976 in 2020. In 2021, 22 young people under the age of 21, and 12 teens under the age of 18 died from overdose.

The need to educate young people and their families on the current drug threat has never been greater. Currently, there is no requirement for schools to provide substance abuse prevention education. Several districts across the county are providing exceptional prevention and intervention services to students but additional funding and resources are needed to support districts in these efforts.

Although there is no required curriculum around substance abuse prevention, the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) has been focused on comprehensive substance abuse prevention education for decades because we believe it’s in the best interest of young people to be informed and have the tools they need to make smart choices impacting their own wellness.

SDCOE currently provides assemblies and classroom presentations to schools across San Diego County around the dangers of fentanyl and other drugs, and encourages schools to continue the conversation by providing additional information and lesson plans from local and federal sources.

Through these presentations, we have reached thousands of young people, but we know that there are thousands more that must hear this message. Requiring drug prevention education will help inform more students and families.

SDCOE was also one of the first county offices of education in the state to recognize the impending danger of opioid use among young people, creating resources to assist schools in obtaining free

naloxone for their campuses and offering training on how to administer the drug. There is more work to be done here and we fully support the County's proposal to increase distributions and trainings to parents and students across the county.

SDCOE believes in the success and social mobility of each and every child. In order to accomplish this goal, a comprehensive, community-based approach to mental and physical health must be taken. Legislation and policy are necessary to require K-12 curriculum to improve the mental and physical well-being of all students.

San Diego County must work with the state to prioritize educating our young people about the dangers of fentanyl and other drugs and focus on harm reduction strategies that benefit young people and the entire San Diego community. We support this agenda item and ask that you vote yes on the recommendations before you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "P. Gothold", written in a cursive style.

Dr. Paul Gothold  
San Diego County Superintendent of Schools