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(Sue Lempert is the former mayor of San Mateo)

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Why are we coddling those unvaccinated?

Those of us who are vaccinated have had enough of this coddling. The 30% of Americans who remain unvaccinated because of ignorance or belief in conspiracy theories are threatening all of us. Because of them, a stronger variant, delta, is growing stronger each day. Variants to the virus thrive and get stronger as long as there are a significant number of people unvaccinated. Who knows how long the vaccinated are protected from an even more deadly strain than delta (the good news is : that San Mateo has a 90% vaccination rate).

We can't mandate vaccination but we can mandate that the unvaccinated cannot fly or use public transit; cannot work in health care facilities; cannot work at schools or in any government agency; cannot attend restaurants, bars, sports events, concerts, movies.

Meanwhile, private employers need to mandate that all their employees be vaccinated. And we need to prosecute those who peddle false information about the virus.

On vacation, I was taking an early-morning walk on a Monterey County beach when I saw a couple approaching and the man's sweatshirt attracted my attention. It had something to do with Trump and I was curious. So I stopped and asked to look. The slogan was "don't blame me, I voted for Trump." The couple said they came from Modesto where it was over

100 degrees and we talked about the weather, how cool it was here. In fact, the sun never appeared except at sunset during our stay. We exchanged a few sentences and then I said was on the other side but it was good to talk to people who felt differently. The couple was overjoyed. All they had been getting were nasty looks at the sweatshirt. They agreed it was ~ important for people with different views to talk to each other and we went on and on in this vein for a while. The three of us were feeling really good about each other and that we were doing something important. Then I made the mistake after mentioning that my father was a staunch Republican and I had even voted for Republicans in the past (distant past) that I said my grandchildren were much more progressive than I was. The wife said that's probably because they have LGBT teachers. I felt sick and said I had to go.

An article from EdSource in a July issue of the DJ caught my attention. The headline: California students have unequal access to advanced math. That's probably : so. Students in many schools have not had access to calculus or teachers who know how to teach math. In fact, the drift now is to offer no advanced math in sixth grade for all students with the expectation that all students will do better. This kind of nonsense is only going to hasten flight from our public schools leaving the students behind at an even greater disadvantage.

Meanwhile a San Francisco teacher who is quitting after seven years writes in the San Francisco Chronicle "Our society has decided that public schools are the final frontier for social mobility. We don't address issues like staggering wealth and opportunity gaps, the higher costs of higher education or the devastating effect of centuries of racism and systemic oppressions. Many parents are saddled with student loan debts, high rent, stagnant wages and we expect those stresses will not enter the classroom with their children. ... There's an expectation that public schools, and public school teachers will be able to massage these barriers away through engaging lessons, relationship building and relentless positivity." She concludes they can't. She did her best. But she's leaving. Many great teachers do stay

but the challenges they face with today's students are overwhelming. They need our support.

Noelia Corzo of Foster City, who is just completing her first term as a member of the San Mateo-Foster City Elementary School District Board of Trustees, is seriously considering challenging Charles Stone, Belmont mayor, for Supervisor, District 2.

She is running because the board needs more diversity. According to Corzo, she can offer a unique perspective as a working class mom of color. The board needs to reflect that diversity, she said. Assemblymember Kevin Muilin and former state senator Jerry Hill endorsed Corzo when she ran for school board; it is unknown whether these endorsements will be forthcoming for her supervisor race against Stone. While Corzo may not be as well known as Stone, who is also chair of the SamTrans Board of Directors and on the Caltrain Board of Directors, she will most likely have the support of many progressives who support her stand on equity.

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