

November 8, 2021

## Third in a Series: Don Juan's *Other* Reckless Daughter Breed's Reckless COVID Mixed Messaging Saga

by Patrick Monette-Shaw

COVID cases among San Francisco children are not as low as public officials in the City are actively trying to claim and want you to believe. The same City officials are simultaneously staying mum publicly about the increase of COVID cases among the elderly in San Francisco's skilled nursing facilities (SNF's).

Although San Francisco is now 19 months into our COVID-19 pandemic, we're still getting mixed messaging from Mayor London Breed — as well as from Governor Gavin Newsom — about the state of COVID in our City and State. Toss in mixed messaging spewing from San Francisco's Department of Public Health, and you arrive at a reckless COVID messaging saga.

No wonder San Franciscans don't trust COVID data emanating from City Hall.

### "Don Juan's *Other* Reckless Daughter" Articles

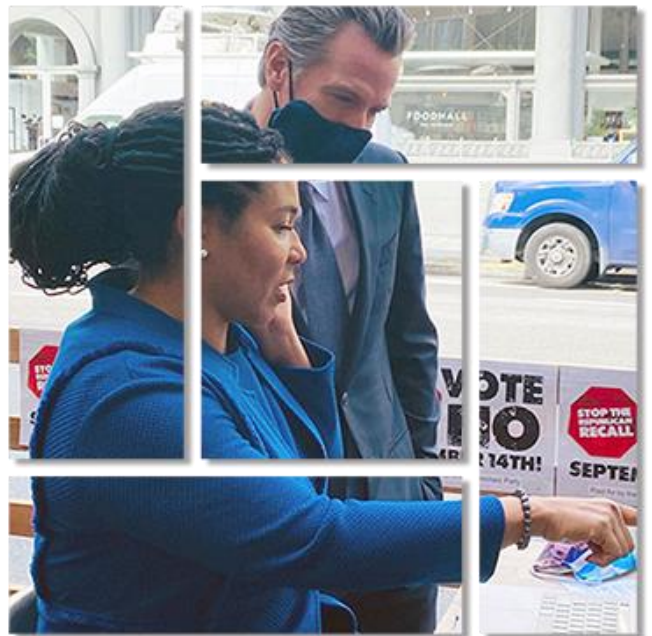
Breed — aided and abetted by Dr. Grant Colfax, San Francisco's Director of Public Health — failed miserably when it came to reporting COVID cases in San Francisco. Two vulnerable patient populations continue to be significantly impacted: The elderly in skilled nursing facilities, and children.

#### **COVID Case Data for Skilled Nursing Facilities**

In January 2021 I [published](#) the first in a series of *Don Juan's Other Reckless Daughter* articles regarding Breed's delay getting data about COVID cases in San Francisco's skilled nursing facilities (SNF's) posted on-line. Although San Francisco's Department of Public Health (SFDPH) had rolled out its *COVID Tracker* web site around March 21, 2020, it took until November 6 — fully eight months later — before SFDPH began publicly reporting only a limited amount of COVID case data in San Francisco's SNF's. Breed and SFDPH's eight-month delay was the very definition of *reckless*.

When Breed and SFDPH finally began reporting local SNF data on-line in November 2020 they chose to report data only about the number of COVID cases among *residents* of the 19 SNF's in the City. That was remarkable, because both the California Department of Public Health (CADPH) and the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) had been reporting the number of COVID cases for both SNF *staff* **and** residents since as early as May 2020. Why SFDPH hasn't bothered to publish and report data about COVID cases among San Francisco nursing facility *staff* now that we're in the 19 month of the pandemic is unknown and remains a local embarrassment. Since CADPH and CMS have been reporting COVID data among staff in San Francisco's SNF's all along, why hasn't SFDPH reported staff data, too?

My January 2021 article included a screen capture from SFDPH's *COVID Data Tracker* web site showing how many of the reported COVID cases in San Francisco had occurred in the City's 19 skilled nursing facilities through December 31, 2020 — shortly after the first COVID vaccine received emergency use authorization from the FDA on December 14, 2020. The vaccines were rolled out fairly rapidly in skilled nursing facilities across the U.S. as a mandated requirement.



**Mixed Messaging:** A photo showing the contrast between Mayor Breed and Governor Newsom was crystal clear, with Breed once again signaling "*Masks for Thee, Not for Me.*" Along came her unmasked outing to the Black Cat Club and her "*fun police*" run-in.

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**"Breed failed miserably when it came to reporting COVID cases in San Francisco. Two vulnerable patient populations continue to be significantly impacted: The elderly in skilled nursing facilities, and children."**

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Despite the fact that COVID vaccination of staff and residents in all of San Francisco's 19 SNF's was to have been completed before the week ending on Sunday, January 17, 2021 Table 1 illustrates that the 487 COVID cases among SNF residents as of December 31, 2020 jumped by another 229 resident cases to a total of 716 cases as of October 6, 2021. The 53 patient deaths in the 19 SNF's as of December 31 jumped by an additional 77 deaths to a total of 130 deaths of patients in San Francisco SNF's, despite SFDPH's plans to complete vaccinating all SNF patients and staff by mid-January 2021. It's thought that the increased COVID cases among SNF residents during 2021 occurred largely due to staff continuing to bring community-acquired COVID into the skilled nursing facilities.

**“ Despite the fact that COVID vaccination of staff and residents in all of the 19 SNF's was to be completed before January 17, 2021 the 487 COVID cases among SNF residents as of December 31, 2020 jumped by another 229 resident cases to a total of 716 cases as of October 6, 2021. ”**

After Breed shut down visitors to San Francisco's SNF's on March 6, 2020 only a limited amount of visitation resumed around April 19, 2021, aggravated by an August 26, 2021 CADPH order that visitors must show proof of full vaccination or documentation of a recent negative SARS-CoV-2 test. Many of the 19 SNF's re-introduced visitation limited to one hour at a time with no more than two visitors, and restricted the number of visitors per day, mostly for staff convenience. So, it's clear the increased patient COVID infections throughout 2021 likely came from staff who had community-acquired COVID.

**“ It's clear the increased patient COVID infections throughout 2021 likely came from staff who had community-acquired COVID. ”**

**Table 1: COVID Cases and Deaths of Patients Only in San Francisco SNF's (Per SFDPH)**

As of Date	Total Resident COVID Cases	What % of All SF COVID Cases Were Among SNF Residents?	Total Resident COVID Deaths	What % of All SF COVID Deaths Were Among SNF Residents?
12/31/2020	487	1.9%	53	24.0%
10/6/2021	716	1.0%	130	20.0%
<b>Increase in 2021:</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>-0.9%</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>-4.0%</b>
<b>% Change Increase:</b>	<b>47.0%</b>		<b>145.3%</b>	

Source: San Francisco Department of Public Health, *COVID Data Tracker*, "COVID-19 in SNF's" web page. (<https://sf.gov/data/covid-19-skilled-nursing-facilities-snf>); 9/26/2021.

Although the vaccination of staff and residents in San Francisco SNF's was mandated in January, Table 1 shows there was a 47% change increase in COVID cases and a 145.3% change increase in patient deaths between January 1 and October 6, 2021.

**“ There was a 47% change increase in COVID cases and a 145.3% change increase in patient deaths between January 1 and October 6, 2021. ”**

Unfortunately, there's a huge disconnect between data posted on SFDPH's web pages, versus data posted on CMS' web site about COVID-19 cases in nursing homes nationwide. While DPH asserts in Table 1 that there was a total of 130 patient deaths in the 19 SNF's, Table 2 illustrates that CMS' web site is reporting 27 fewer deaths at just 103. It's unlikely that CMS was unaware there were an additional patient 27 deaths in San Francisco SNF's across the ten days between September 26 reported by CMS and October 6, 2021 reported by SFDPH.

**Table 2: COVID Cases and Deaths of Patients and Staff in San Francisco SNF's (Per CMS)**

Week Ending	COVID Infections			COVID-Related Deaths		
	Staff	Residents	Total	Staff	Residents	Total
12/27/2020	379	298	677	0	50	50
9/26/2021	643	624	1,267	0	103	103
<b>Increase Since 12/27:</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>% Change Increase:</b>	<b>69.7%</b>	<b>109.4%</b>	<b>87.1%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>106.0%</b>	

Source: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) (<https://data.cms.gov/covid-19/covid-19-nursing-home-data>); 9/26/2021.

In addition, although SFPDPH's *COVID Tracker* web site reported 716 total resident COVID cases across San Francisco SNF's as of October 6 shown in Table 1, as of September 26 CMS's web site reported just 624 patient cases shown in Table 2 — almost 100 fewer cases. Clearly, there are mixed messages between messaging from SFPDPH and messaging from CMS.

[**Note:** Ever since SFPDPH's *COVID Data Tracker* web site came on-line in 2020, its "COVID-19 in SNF's" web page has claimed there are 20 SNF's in the City. That's been a faulty claim all along; CMS and CADPH have consistently reported there were only 19 licensed SNF's in San Francisco (and now only 18). SFPDPH has been wrongly reporting on its "COVID in SNF's" web page that Kentfield Hospital on St. Mary's campus was the 20<sup>th</sup> SNF, padding DPH's data. The Kentfield Hospital at St. Mary's campus is a satellite hospital of Kentfield Hospital in Marin County, and opened as a long-term acute care hospital (LTACH) in 2015 or 2016 (after St. Mary's closed its SNF in 2015). That happened five years *before* COVID came along, so SFPDPH had to have known that Kentfield is not a licensed SNF, but is licensed as an LTACH. SFPDPH should never have included Kentfield on SFPDPH's "COVID-19 in SNF's" web page because CMS does not collect or include COVID cases in LTACH hospitals in CMS' "COVID in SNF's" data reporting. Another of the 20 SNF's (Sheffield Convalescent Hospital on Grove Street) closed and went out of business in mid-2021, so there's only 18 SNF's in San Francisco now, not 20. CMS has stopped reporting data from Sheffield Convalescent Hospital. It's not known why CMS stops reporting COVID cases and deaths in SNF's previously reported to CMS if a given SNF subsequently closes. After all, it's not as if cases and deaths previously reported to CMS had never occurred, or had never been reported to CMS. As of September 26, 2021 CMS' SNF data now reports 624 *fewer* facilities involving 32,072 *fewer* SNF beds nationwide than it had reported on December 27, 2020.]

Also unfortunately, the mixed messaging doesn't stop there. While the CMS' September 26, 2021 dataset reported 68 cumulative COVID cases among Laguna Honda Hospital's patients, LHH's own [web page](#) reports only 63 cumulative COVID patient cases, five fewer than CMS reported. As well, CMS reported a total of 207 cumulative COVID cases among LHH's staff, but LHH's own web page reported 219 staff cases, 12 more staff cases than CMS reported.

In fact, of the 219 staff COVID cases LHH reports on its own web page, 49 of the staff cases — nearly a quarter, at 22.4% — occurred between March 17, 2021 and October 15, 2021, long after the staff were supposed to have been vaccinated.

Why doesn't the data posted on LHH's public-facing web site match data from CMS? Now 19 months into the pandemic, why haven't CMS, CADPH, SFPDPH, and LHH been able to report case data uniformly across all four web pages?

Neither Colfax, Breed, Newsom, San Francisco's Health Commission, or SFPDPH have commented on the surge in patient and staff COVID cases and deaths in SNF's in 2021 after the mandatory vaccines were administered in January 2021.

### **COVID Case Data Reporting for Children**

On March 17, 2021 I [published](#) my second article in the series, reporting on the first anniversary of Breed's recklessness during her first year of handling San Francisco's COVID pandemic. As I wrote, Breed's obsession in early 2021 about getting kids back into classrooms for in-person education was alarming, aided in part by then-City Attorney Dennis Herrera's February 3, 2021 lawsuit against the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) trying to force classrooms to reopen.

I reported that SFPDPH had reported a total of 2,678 COVID cases among children younger than age 18 in the ten-month period between March 2020 and December 31, 2020, 11.1% of the then-total 24,216 COVID cases in San Francisco in the first calendar year of the pandemic.

Some observers believed — and still do — that pushing schools to reopen when 11.1% of our local COVID cases were among school-age children was the very definition of *recklessness*.

After all, while research was then evolving — and still is — it was, and remains, entirely possible that even though children may not show symptoms from COVID as often as adults, or die from COVID like adults do, they can still spread the disease to others. Did Breed naïvely believe that kids bringing COVID home to their families and elderly grandparents — community spread from kids to their teachers, or spread from teachers to their students — wasn't reckless? Does she still believe the same nonsense?

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It took a long time before we received confirmation kids and adults share COVID exposure risks. On October 8, 2021 ABC Channel 7 in San Francisco reported that “*studies suggest children share the same [level of] risk of becoming infected with COVID as adults do.*” Presumably, that means kids and adults also share the same risk of spreading COVID to others and have shared that risk, all along. It was a point clearly lost on Ms. Breed and Mr. Herrera last February.

Now seven months after my March 2021 article, we have more data. Table 3 sheds additional light about COVID cases in San Francisco among kids younger than age 18 through the end of September 2021.

**Table 3: COVID-19 Cases by Age Range in San Francisco**

Age Range	December 31, 2020		September 30, 2021		Change Jan 2021 to Sep 2021	
	10-Month Period		19-Month Period		9-Month Period	
	3/5/2020 – 12/31/2020		3/5/2020 – 9/30/2021			
	# of COVID Cases	COVID Cases Subtotal	# of COVID Cases	COVID Cases Subtotal	Case Increase (Raw)	%Change Increase
Unknown	7	7	6	6	(1)	
0 – 4	651	2,678	1,486	5,875	835	128.3%
5 – 10	834		2,008		1,174	140.8%
11 – 13	492		1,037		545	110.8%
14 – 17	701		1,344		643	91.7%
18 – 20	885	5,732	1,653	12,824	768	86.8%
21 – 24	1,794		3,988		2,194	122.3%
25 – 29	3,053		7,183		4,130	135.3%
30 – 39	5,704	12,246	11,969	24,871	6,265	109.8%
40 – 49	3,753		7,311		3,558	94.8%
50 – 59	2,789		5,591		2,802	100.5%
60 – 69	1,744	3,553	3,612	7,074	1,868	107.1%
70 – 79	916		1,862		946	103.3%
80+	893		1,600		707	79.2%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>24,216</b>	<b>24,216</b>	<b>50,650</b>	<b>50,650</b>	<b>26,434</b>	<b>109.2%</b>

Source: San Francisco Department of Public Health, *COVID Data Tracker*, as of September 30, 2021.  
(<https://sf.gov/data/covid-19-population-characteristics#age>)

It’s clear from Table 3 that overall COVID cases reported by SFPDPH more than doubled in each age group, from a total of 24,216 cases in the initial ten-month period in 2020 to the cumulative 50,650 cases in the 19-month period between March 5, 2020 and September 30, 2021. That represents an increase of 26,434 cases during the first nine-month period of 2021 — with children younger than age 18 particularly hard hit.

As an aside, and as a point of reference coming from an AIDS widow, SFPDPH’s epidemiology surveillance branch recently reported that through August 31, 2021 there have been a total of 30,277 HIV Stage 3 Infection diagnoses (ostensibly full-blown AIDS diagnoses) across the 41 years since 1980. That compares to the 50,650 COVID diagnoses in San Francisco since COVID arrived in San Francisco 19 months ago in March 2020.

Comparing the two reporting periods shown in Table 3 clearly illustrates:

- The increase of 3,197 COVID cases in kids younger than 18 represents an overall 119.4% change increase.
- COVID cases among children between the ages of zero and four experienced a 128.3% change increase.

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- COVID cases among children between the ages of five and ten had a whopping 140.8% change increase.
- There were a total of 1,486 COVID cases in kids aged zero to four across the combined 19-month period, plus 2,008 COVID cases in kids aged five to ten, for a total of 3,494 cases in children aged ten years old or younger, which represents fully 59.5% of the 5,875 cases of COVID in kids 17 years and younger.

That level of percent change increases across the two periods can't possibly be described as being "stable," yet that's how SFDPH chose to interpret the data in the second calendar year of our pandemic.

[Meeting minutes](#) show that for his part, San Francisco's Director of Public Health — Grant Colfax, MD — tried to snow San Francisco Health Commission members on September 21, 2021 by saying:

*"To date, our data demonstrate that cases among San Francisco residents under age 18 have remained low and stable throughout the pandemic and that schools are low-risk settings when the proper safety protocols are followed. ... The percentage of pediatric cases has been relatively consistent over time. Recent data shows that 11.5% of COVID-19 positive cases were among children under [age] 18."*

Colfax was using the "it's close enough for government work" by rounding downward when he said recent data shows 11.5% of COVID cases are among kids younger than 18. I don't mean to quibble about one-tenth of a percent, but the 5,875 cumulative COVID cases in kids younger than 18 between March 5, 2020 and September 30, 2021 is actually 11.6% of the 50,650 COVID cases in the 19-month period, not the 11.5% Colfax claimed.

It had been just 11.1% of all COVID cases during the first 10 months in 2020, but it increased by a half-percent increase (from 11.1% to 11.6%) among pediatric cases during the full 19-month period, which is somewhat statistically significant. Regardless, the 11.6% case mix for COVID cases among children younger than age 18 between March 2020 and the end of September 2021 is not "low," given it's in the double digits, and is not "stable," given the increase of an additional 3,197 COVID cases in kids 17 years old or younger between January 2021 and September 2021 to a total of 5,875 cases across our 19-month COVID pandemic.

As it is, Breed, Newsom, Colfax, the San Francisco Health Commission, SFDPH, and CADPH have said nothing about the fact that there are valid concerns about children developing COVID "long-haul" symptoms.

### Comparative COVID Cases in SNF's

Although Breed, Dr. Colfax, San Francisco's Department of Public Health, and the Health Commission have claimed all along that the City's responses to controlling the spread of COVID in the City has been a model for other jurisdictions nationwide to emulate, recent nursing home COVID data from CMS through September 26, 2021 paints a disturbing picture.

Table 4 shows that COVID cases in SNF's have increased significantly since December 27, 2020 after vaccines became available and were theoretically supposed to have been administered to all SNF residents and SNF staff nationwide in early January 2021.

Table 3 clearly illustrates:

- The increase of 3,197 COVID cases in kids younger than 18 represents an overall 119.4% change increase.
- Cases among children between the ages of zero and four experienced a 128.3% change increase.
- Cases among children between the ages of five and ten had a whopping 140.8% change increase."

The 11.6% case mix COVID cases among children younger than age 18 is not 'stable,' given the increase of an additional 3,197 COVID cases between January 2021 and September 2021 to a total of 5,875 cases."

**Table 4: COVID-19 in SNF's By Jurisdiction**

	Week Ending	COVID Infections			COVID-Related Deaths		
		Staff	Residents	Total	Staff	Residents	Total
Nationwide	12/27/2020	425,174	497,531	922,705	1,291	97,036	98,327
	9/26/2021	626,045	674,813	1,300,858	1,996	132,333	134,329
	Increase Since 12/27/20:	200,871	177,282	378,153	705	35,297	36,002
	% Change Since 12/27/20:	47.2%	35.6%	41.0%	54.6%	36.4%	36.6%
California	12/27/2020	34,235	39,554	73,789	118	5,633	5,751
	9/26/2021	54,119	61,384	115,503	215	9,281	9,496
	Increase Since 12/27/20:	19,884	21,830	41,714	97	3,648	3,745
	% Change Since 12/27/20:	58.1%	55.2%	56.5%	82.2%	64.8%	65.1%
San Francisco	12/27/2020	379	298	677	0	50	50
	9/26/2021	643	624	1,267	0	103	103
	Increase Since 12/27/20:	264	326	590	0	53	53
	% Change Since 12/27/20:	69.7%	109.4%	87.1%		106.0%	106.0%
LHH	12/27/2020	103	32	135	0	1	1
	9/26/2021	207	68	275	0	6	6
	Increase Since 12/27/20:	104	36	140	0	5	5
	% Change Since 12/27/20:	101.0%	112.5%	103.7%		500.0%	500.0%

Source: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) (<https://data.cms.gov/covid-19-nursing-home-data>); 9/26/21.

Comparing the raw number increases and percent change increases between December 27, 2020 and September 26, 2021 shows significant, disturbing COVID increases in SNF's nationwide, in California, and in San Francisco.

Table 4 based on CMS data on cases and deaths in SNF's illustrates that after vaccines became available in January 2021:

- There has been a 41% change increase in COVID *cases* in SNF's nationwide, compared to a 56.5% change increase in California, an 87.1% change increase in COVID cases in San Francisco, and a 103.7% change increase at Laguna Honda Hospital.
- There has been a 36.6% change increase in COVID -related *deaths* in SNF's nationwide, compared to a 65.1% change increase in deaths in California, and a 106% change increase in SNF deaths in San Francisco.
- The 134,329 cumulative deaths of residents and staff in SNF's nationwide since the start of the COVID pandemic represents a minimum of 17.5 percent of the [reported](#) 768,516 COVID -related deaths as of November 2, 2021. It's not known if those 134,329 deaths reported by CMS still includes massive under-reporting of COVID deaths in SNF's across the country, and whether the 17.5% is probably far, far higher.

So much for Breed's and Colfax's claims that San Francisco has been a model for the rest of the nation to have emulated, since the data for San Francisco is significantly higher for both cases and deaths than in other jurisdictions.

Indeed, SFDPH released a [press release](#) on November 1, 2021 urging seniors to get COVID vaccine booster shots because it's been a year since vaccines were first rolled out and prioritized for the elderly.

The press release noted: "*Since the beginning of the pandemic, in sum through September 30 there have been 16 deaths of fully vaccinated people that are due to complications from COVID-19.*"

SFDPH may have been referring to "*breakthrough*" cases that caused the 16 deaths of people who were fully vaccinated. It's not known why DPH set the goalpost as "*since the beginning of the pandemic*" rather than when vaccines became widely available in January 2021. And SFDPH didn't provide the age ranges of the 16 people who died, so we have no idea of whether those 16 deaths were among the additional 53 patient deaths in San Francisco SNF's shown in Table 2.

### **Breed's Blatant Hypocrisy: "Masking Rules for Thee, Not For Me"**

On September 15, 2021 Mayor Breed was filmed on videotape not wearing a mask indoors by a *San Francisco Chronicle* reporter inside the Black Cat nightclub in the Tenderloin. It set off a firestorm in the City and in national news outlets, since her own health orders for the City still require that even fully-vaccinated customers wear face masks indoors in restaurants and bars.

Surely Breed must know as an elected City official she has a greater responsibility to model the very behaviors necessary to control the COVID pandemic, or any other pandemic affecting public health.

Breed brazenly claimed that she and her friends she was with at the club were *actively* eating and drinking. That was complete nonsense, and a probable outright lie, as [photos](#) now still posted online show that the cocktail table she and her friends were sitting at only held drinks — not food — on their tables. Did Breed seriously expect observers to believe she was actively *eating* the drink in front of her? How do you *chew* a cocktail? Did she mean she was *chewing* the lemon or lime garnish hanging from the rim of one of the cocktail glasses?

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**“ Comparing the raw number increases and percent change increases between December 27, 2020 and September 26, 2021 shows significant, disturbing COVID increases in SNF's nationwide, in California, and in San Francisco. ”**

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**“ Table 4 clearly illustrates:**

- **There has been a 41% change increase in COVID cases in SNF's nationwide vs. an 87.1% change increase in San Francisco.**
- **There has been a 36.6% change increase in COVID-related deaths in SNF's nationwide vs. a 106% change increase in San Francisco.**

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The backlash was fast and furious. The *San Francisco Examiner* [reported](#) one club owner said: “‘If she didn’t wear the mask, then nobody has to wear a mask. Actually, I’m going to take mine off right now,’ said Santo Esposito, owner of il Cilentano restaurant.” Other San Franciscans quickly echoed Esposito.

Two days later, still on a hunt to spin an excuse, Breed told ABC Channel 7 News “*To be clear, I did everything I thought that was appropriate.*” Ironically, that was the very crux of the problem: Lots and lots of people in San Francisco have rejected various COVID mandates precisely because they thought it was entirely *appropriate* for *them* to violate social distancing, face masks, and other mandates believing *they* knew better than the very health orders Breed had issued — and it was appropriate for them to do anything they thought applied to them, as if *appropriate* is fungible.

Breed continued blabbing to the *Examiner* “*The fact that this is even a story is sad. ... This is now a distraction.*” The story was sad, and even sadder because she didn’t grasp the significance of what she had recklessly done (in her own words: “*I wasn’t thinking*”).

Does Breed not know that hypocrisy always comes at a cost — notably, the cost to her own credibility?

### ***Breed’s Skirmish With the “Fun Police”***

Doubling down, Breed tried to justify her recklessness by alleging the “*fun police*” were hell bent on ruining her night out at the Black Cat nightclub. The *Examiner* [reported](#) on September 20 that Breed had told national media outlets, including Fox News, “*We don’t need the fun police to come in and micromanage and tell us what we should or shouldn’t be doing.*”

Breed sounded eerily like Tucker Carlson wailing on Fox News against Anthony Fauci micromanaging what people should, or shouldn’t, do.

While Breed didn’t want the *fun police* to micromanage her own behavior, her administration has been more than willing to micromanage COVID compliance elsewhere in the City. Previously, Breed had already “*deputized*” San Francisco restaurant and bar owners to act as the *proof-of-vaccination police* (a variant of the *fun police*), requiring them to check their customers’ vaccine passports prior to entry, much like Texas had enacted legislation turning over enforcement of its ban on abortions to deputized vigilantes and bounty hunters with promises of \$10,000 rewards by reporting abortion ban violators.

After Breed’s 3–1–1 Call Center received multiple complaints that the In-N-Out Burger restaurant at Fisherman’s Wharf wasn’t performing vaccine verifications before admitting customers, Breed dispatched her own fun police — the San Francisco Department of Public Health — to investigate, which resulted in the In-N-Out Burger restaurant being shut down for indoor dining on October 14. Sadly, Breed sent another mixed message: “*The Fun Police Are for Thee, Not for Me.*”

Breed’s comical overreaction to the “*fun police*” scandal of her own making is ripe for a “This Week in COVID History” comedy segment on the *Jimmy Kimmel Live* show on late night TV.

Which reminds me, shouldn’t Breed have received a fine from the real police — or from the Department of Public Health — for violating the City’s health orders about not being maskless inside the Black Cat nightclub while she was **not** actively eating or drinking?

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## More “Messaging” Disconnects

But wait — there’s more!

In addition to the increases in COVID cases among children and in skilled nursing facilities, Breed, SFDPH, and the Health Commission have been strangely quiet recently about the increased number of overall COVID-related deaths in the City.

At the time I published my second article in this *Reckless Daughter* series in March 2021, there were a total of 194 COVID-related deaths through December 31, 2020 during the first 10 months of the pandemic. Fast forward and the cumulative total number of COVID-related deaths in San Francisco jumped by another 456 in the nine-month period in 2021 to a total 650 deaths over the full 19-month period between March 2020 and September 30, 2021 — a whopping 235% change increase in COVID-related deaths.

[**Update:** There were an additional 17 COVID-related deaths during October 2021, bringing the cumulative deaths to date to 667. So, in the first 10 months of the COVID pandemic (March 5 to December 31, 2020) there were 194 reported COVID-related deaths in San Francisco, and in the second 10 months (January 1 to October 31, 2021) there were an additional 473 deaths, which represents a 243.8% increase during the second 10-month period in 2021.]

Dr. Colfax, Breed, and the Health Commission haven’t offered condolences in months, and months, and months to the now 667 families who have lost their loved ones to premature deaths from COVID. Maybe trying to fend off the *fun police* kept Breed from uttering new condolences, *distracted* as she became by the *fun police*.

Worse, Breed appears to be yet again fudging the City’s COVID response achievements. At about the same time as Breed’s *l’Affaire Black Cat* misadventure in mid-September, San Francisco’s DPH’s *COVID Tracker* web site was [reporting](#) that 73% of San Franciscans were fully vaccinated (presumably receiving their second vaccine dose).

That didn’t stop Breed from claiming multiple times during the past month that 83% of San Franciscans are fully vaccinated — an artful 10% increase, or lie, depending on your point of view. As of October 22, 2021 DPH’s web site was reporting that 75% of the City’s residents were fully vaccinated, still eight percentage points lower than the 83% Breed wants you to believe. Why do Breed and SFDPH persist in spreading mixed messages, a.k.a. misinformation?

## Newsom’s Delayed New Vaccine Mandates

Leading up to his September 14 recall election, Newsom had been loathe to introduce any new COVID-related mandates, perhaps afraid any additional mandates might influence his chances of escaping being recalled as governor.

But just two weeks after surviving being recalled, Newsom unleashed his bold new mandate about kids and vaccinations.

On October 5, 2021, CalMatters [published](#) an article by Dan Walters titled “*Newsom’s erratic vaccination orders*” that reported on Governor Newsom’s declaration on October 1 that when anti-COVID vaccines become available for children, they must be immunized against COVID before attending public school, just

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**“ In the first 10 months of the COVID pandemic there were 194 reported COVID-related deaths in San Francisco. In the second 10 months there were an additional 473 deaths to a total of 667, which represents a 243.8% increase.**

**Breed hasn’t offered any condolences in months. Maybe trying to fend off the *fun police* kept her from uttering any new condolences, *distracted* as she became by the *fun police*. ”**

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**“ Breed appears to be yet again fudging the City’s COVID response achievements. At about the same time as her *l’Affaire Black Cat* misadventure in September, San Francisco’s DPH was reporting 73% of San Franciscans were fully vaccinated.**

**That didn’t stop Breed from claiming multiple times during the past month that 83% of San Franciscans are fully vaccinated — an artful 10% increase, or lie, depending on your point of view. ”**

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**“ After surviving recall, Newsom declared on October 1 that when anti-COVID vaccines become available for children, they must be immunized against COVID before attending public school, just as state law requires children to be vaccinated for other deadly diseases.**

**Unfortunately, San Francisco’s Unified School District (SFUSD ) is holding out against vaccine mandates. ”**

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as state law requires children to be vaccinated for other deadly diseases like measles, mumps, rubella, polio, chicken pox, hepatitis, whooping cough, diphtheria, and tetanus.

Unfortunately, on September 10 — four days before Newsom survived his recall election and about two weeks before Newsom’s October 1 announcement mandating vaccinations would be eventually be required in California schools — the *San Francisco Examiner* [reported](#) that the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) is holding out against vaccine mandates. Little did anyone know that the SFUSD would undercut Newsom even before he made his announcement.

The *Examiner* article reported that “About 90% of youths ages 12 to 17 are fully vaccinated as of September 10, according to The City’s COVID-19 data dashboard.” However, checking SFPDPH’s *COVID Data Tracker* dashboard on October 23 shows that the 90% vaccination rate for children between 12 and 17 hasn’t budged since September 10, and that the 90% statistic is for children who have received “at least one dose” of the vaccine, not that they are fully vaccinated with a second dose. After all, the J&J one-shot vaccine has not been approved yet for children younger than age 18.

Putting aside for a moment whether these kids have received both doses or just one dose, it seems that only the Pfizer vaccine has received emergency use authorization for children between 12 and 17 as of October 23, 2021, so it seems amazing that the 90% vaccination rate among that age range would have all received the two-dose Pfizer vaccine.

The *Examiner* article quoted Dr. Naveena Bobba, one of the Deputy Directors of Health at SFPDPH, as saying “I’m not so sure a [vaccine] mandate would make a difference to get to that last 10 percent.” Does Dr. Bobba not know that vaccine requirements against measles, mumps, or rubella are **not** cut off at the 90% vaccination level?

While I’m admittedly and certainly not a medical clinician, it seems to me as a layperson that the 10% of children who may not have received even a first dose of the vaccine would still be able to transmit COVID to adults, their teachers, or to other children. Shouldn’t Bobba and SFPDPH actively be working toward obtaining 100% compliance?

While Dr. Bobba was quibbling about advocating to get the remaining 10% of children between 12 and 17 vaccinated, she admittedly could not have known that a little over a month after the September 10 *Examiner* article, the American Academy of Pediatrics would issue a recommendation near the end of October advising that even children who are fully vaccinated should still wear face masks when they attend public schools.

Newsom is obviously right that requiring COVID vaccines should be no different than requiring vaccinations against other contagious diseases as a condition of being allowed the privilege to attend public schools. Isn’t 100% compliance what Newsom is working towards with his statewide mandate to require COVID vaccinations to the list of all other required vaccinations children must obtain to attend school?

CalMatters is an award-winning, nonpartisan, nonprofit journalism venture committed to explaining how California’s state Capitol works and why it matters.

Walters’ article noted Newsom’s vaccination mandate “has a somewhat smarmy tinge,” and may have been more of a political stunt than a real accomplishment. Walters noted Newsom is known for his years-long obsession boasting about being the first politician (or state) to do something.

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**“ On September 10, 2021, a *San Francisco Examiner* article quoted Dr. Naveena Bobba, a Deputy Director of Health at SFPDPH, saying ‘I’m not so sure a [vaccine] mandate would make a difference to get to that last 10 percent.’**

**It seems to me as a layperson that the 10% of children who may not have received even a first dose of the vaccine would still be able to transmit COVID to adults, their teachers, or other children.**

**Does Dr. Bobba not know vaccine requirements for measles, mumps or rubella to attend school are not cut off at the 90% vaccination level? What’s up with that?”**

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**“ The American Academy of Pediatrics issued a recommendation near the end of October advising that even children who are fully vaccinated should still wear face masks when they attend public schools.”**

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**“ The CalMatters article noted Newsom’s new vaccine mandate ‘has a somewhat smarmy tinge’; it may have been more of a political stunt than a real accomplishment.”**

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CalMatters reported Newsom's claim doesn't necessarily mean that California will be the first state to require school kids get immunized. It only means California is the first state in the nation to *announce* future COVID-19 vaccine requirements for school kids.

Indeed, Newsom's October 1 [press release](#) announcing his plans to add the COVID-19 vaccine to the list of vaccinations required to attend school in-person is contingent on two milestones that must happen beforehand. First, the requirement will go into effect only *after* the vaccines for children receive full approval — not just emergency use authorization — from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). And second, the requirement won't take effect until the start of the term *following* full FDA approval, with the school term being defined as January 1 or July 1, 2022, whichever comes first.

Newsom's press release noted that based on current information, the vaccine requirement is expected to apply to grades 7 to 12 (for students between the ages of 12 and 17) starting on July 1, 2022. The press release didn't mention when vaccinations will be required for students in grades K–6 (for students between the ages of 5 and 11) will be begin.

Although only the Pfizer COVID vaccine for kids between the ages of 5 and 11 became available under emergency use authorization in the first week of November, we have no idea of how much longer it may take before the Moderna or J&J vaccines for children aged 5 to 11 will become available, nor do we know when anti-COVID emergency use authorization vaccines for kids between the ages of zero and 4 will become available. That portends that the 3,494 San Francisco kids aged 10 and below infected with COVID between March 5, 2020 and October 6, 2021 will continue to climb.

As it is, recent news media articles indicate two million kids have already been infected with COVID nationwide to date, including 8,300 hospitalizations of children.

We also have no idea of how long it will take before the emergency use authorizations for kids aged 5 to 11 and zero to 4 will receive full-use, not emergency use, authorization.

In both cases, after the FDA grants full approval of the vaccines for children under the age of 18, it appears the California Legislature and the California Department of Public Health must first consider the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Academy of Family Physicians prior to implementing the COVID vaccine requirement in California schools.

Not to be outdone, the [San Jose] *Mercury News* published an [editorial](#) on October 13 titled "*Newsom must stop COVID-19 mixed messages.*" The editorial noted that although waiting to require vaccinations of children under age 18 until the vaccines obtain full FDA approval rather than just emergency use authorization may be understandable, vaccines for adult teachers have already received full FDA approval. Newsom should require teachers to obtain vaccinations *now* rather than waiting until the fall of 2022.

After all, San Francisco already requires all healthcare clinicians to be fully vaccinated to protect vulnerable patients. And all City employees are required to be fully vaccinated as a condition of continued employment. Why shouldn't teachers be required to get fully vaccinated *now* to protect vulnerable children? Why should teachers get preferential exemptions?

Given where we are at the end of October 2021, we'll have to wait to see if California actually becomes the first state to require school kids get immunized. Newsom may be being, once again, overly optimistic.

The mixed messaging about COVID coming from Breed and Newsom sounds like they're trapped in amateur hour and are unfortunately continuing to erode public confidence in COVID information coming from the government, suggesting neither of them should be trusted as reliable messengers of COVID information.

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**Newsom's plan to add the COVID-19 vaccine to the list of vaccinations required to attend school in-person is contingent on two milestones: First, the requirement will go into effect only after the vaccines for children receive full FDA approval, and second, the requirement won't take effect until the start of the term following full FDA approval, with the school term being defined as January 1 or July 1, 2022, whichever comes first.**

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**The [San Jose] Mercury News published an editorial on October 13, 2021 titled 'Newsom must stop COVID-19 mixed messages,' saying Newsom should require teachers obtain vaccinations now rather than waiting until the fall of 2022.**

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**San Francisco already requires all healthcare clinicians be fully vaccinated to protect vulnerable patients. Why shouldn't teachers be required to get fully vaccinated now to protect vulnerable children?**

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How much longer will Breed's and Newsom's *reckless* COVID mixed messaging saga go on?

*Monette-Shaw is a columnist for San Francisco's Westside Observer newspaper, and a member of the California First Amendment Coalition (FAC) and the ACLU. He operates [stopLHHdownsize.com](http://stopLHHdownsize.com). Contact him at [monette-shaw@westsideobserver.com](mailto:monette-shaw@westsideobserver.com).*

### Postscript

On Wednesday, November 3, 2021 major media outlets began reporting that beginning anti-COVID vaccination of 5- to 11-year-olds will reduce COVID transmission *across all age groups* by up to 8%, preventing an additional 600,000 COVID cases nationwide (on top of the 47.3 *million* COVID cases across the U.S since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020 though November 2021).

This essentially confirms that a significant percentage of the 47.3 million COVID cases in the U.S. to date *may have* involved children-to-adult or children-to-teacher (or adults-to-children) community-acquired transmission across those age groups.

This goes a long way toward illustrating just how *reckless* Breed has been all along about her efforts to force schools to prematurely re-open to get kids back in school (as a form of day care so their parents can go back to work).

It also illustrates just how dangerous — not to mention *reckless* — it had been for former-City Attorney Dennis Herrera's February 2021 lawsuit to try to force San Francisco's school district to prematurely re-open San Francisco's public schools in his efforts to appease Breed's endless rants about getting kids back into schools.

And it suggests that SFPDPH should not only redouble its efforts to get the remaining 10% of children aged 12 to 17 fully vaccinated rapidly, SFPDPH should also strongly advocate that kids 5 to 11 get vaccinated under emergency use authorization *now* as a condition of attending public school like other childhood vaccine requirements, rather than waiting for full FDA authorization for the two age ranges of children at some point in 2022.

Finally, the *San Francisco Chronicle* also [reported](#) on November 3 that kids “*ages 5 to 11 will be required to show proof of vaccination to enter certain public spaces in San Francisco*” — including (but not limited to) restaurants, gyms, movie theaters, and large events like Warriors games — now that emergency use authorization kid-size vaccines have become available. That will probably happen eight weeks or so from now, probably in January 2022.

The *Chronicle* additionally noted “*San Francisco has required everyone 12 and older to confirm they are vaccinated since August if they want to go inside many public places.*” The Pfizer vaccine for children aged 12 to 17 is currently still under the FDA's emergency use authorization.

It makes absolutely no sense for Newsom to have wait until the FDA grants full-use authorization before requiring COVID vaccination of school-age children as a condition to attend public schools. If all kids will be required to obtain an emergency-use-authorization COVID vaccines by January 2022 in order to attend two-hour or longer Warrior games or indoor movies, why does Newsom or Breed have to wait until July or September 2022 to mandate children obtain full-authorization COVID vaccinations in order to attend public schools?

After all, COVID cases in San Francisco more than doubled — by 26,434 cases to a total of 50,650 cases — in the first 10 months in 2021 (through the end of September) over the number of cases in the first ten-month period in 2020. [An additional 2,130 cases have occurred between October 1 and November 4, 2021, to a now total of 52,780 cases.] Will they double again in the third ten-month period between October 2021 through the end of July 2022?

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**This goes a long way toward illustrating just how reckless Breed has been about her efforts to force schools to re-open to get kids back in school prematurely.**

**It also illustrates just how dangerous — not to mention *reckless* — it had been for former-City Attorney Dennis Herrera's February 2021 lawsuit to try to force San Francisco's school district to re-open San Francisco's public schools. ”**

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