



Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education
John A. Wilson Building | 1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 307 | Washington, DC 20004

August 26, 2022

Dear LEA Leaders:

As we start a new school year, I am grateful to each of you for your tireless work to ensure our students have a strong start. Like we did last year, we will continue to invest in supporting a safe reopening and student health and safety so that all children can remain in school, where they learn best. As we all know, this school year is especially important as we continue our shared work to recover and provide additional, targeted supports to our students with the greatest need.

One of the most important aspects of keeping students safe and healthy in school is through immunizations. With your help, the District has made a concerted and coordinated effort across our city to ensure families have access to vaccinations and know about our immunization enforcement policy, as required by District law, for all students in DC schools.

I am writing today with updated guidance regarding the enforcement timeline of the Immunization Attendance Policy for routine pediatric immunizations and the COVID-19 vaccine during the 2022-23 school year. To reduce the number of students who could be excluded from school at any one time, and to align schools and LEAs to one unified notification and exclusion timeline, we are implementing staggered enforcement based on grade band. Required immunizations include all routine pediatric immunizations for all students and, for all students 12 and older, the COVID-19 vaccine.

		Official Notice Sent to Non-Compliant Students	First Date of Exclusion of Non-Compliant Students
Routine Pediatric Immunization	Pre-K 3 through Grade 5	September 7, 2022	October 11, 2022
	Grades 6-12	October 3, 2022	November 4, 2022
COVID-19 Vaccination (For Students Age 12 and Older)		November 21, 2022	January 3, 2023

We have heard from many of you about the challenges of tracking enforcement for COVID-19 vaccinations, particularly given the layered 70-day implementation window since the vaccine for 12-15 year old youth was fully approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in July. We hope that the January 3, 2023 date for first exclusions of non-compliant students will give schools and LEAs additional time to prepare and for students to get their COVID-19 vaccinations. On January 3, 2023 eligible students must have received their primary COVID-19

vaccination series (e.g., two doses of the vaccines manufactured by Pfizer or Moderna or, certain eligible students aged 18 and over may elect to receive one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine) or be proceeding in accordance with their vaccine series, unless otherwise exempted. Booster doses are strongly recommended, but not required, for school attendance at this time.

If your school or LEA has already sent an official notification to non-compliant students, you should not begin exclusion until the dates indicated above. This will give your families more time to secure the missing vaccinations and will also align to a uniform exclusion timeline across all schools and LEAs in the District. Schools and LEAs should focus their efforts on students who are non-compliant at the time the official notice is sent. Students who become eligible for a vaccination after the official notice date (i.e., due to aging into a requirement following a birthday or further full FDA approval of the COVID-19 vaccination) will not be required to receive those vaccinations until the start of the following 2023-24 school year.

I urge you to continue working with your school health teams to reach out to your families who are missing vaccinations and connect them with resources to ensure their children fulfill this important requirement and submit the necessary immunization documentation to school. Throughout September and October, DC Health and our community-based partners will continue to offer expanded opportunities for families to access vaccinations. This includes offering thousands of vaccination-specific appointments at mobile immunization clinics at schools and community sites throughout the District. More information on these opportunities can be found on the [OSSE website](#) and at dchealth.dc.gov/immunizations.

The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) will host an informational session for **LEA leaders at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 30** to review this update and answer questions. A session invitation is forthcoming. OSSE will also share FAQs following the session.

If you have any questions regarding this policy, please submit them to dme@dc.gov. If you have any questions about attendance protocols and managing attendance data, please submit them to OSSE.HealthandSafety@dc.gov. Contact DC Health at doh.immunization@dc.gov for more information on pediatric immunization certification requirements, immunization data, pediatric immunization locations, and resources for accessing immunizations.

Thank you for all you are doing for our students and school communities.

Sincerely,



Paul Kihn
Deputy Mayor for Education