



The School District of Haverford Township

Maureen Reusche, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

February 3, 2021

RE: Advocacy for Vaccines for Schools Employees

Dear Senator Cappelletti:

Thank you for reaching out to school boards in an effort to inform the joint Senate Health and Human Services and Aging and Youth Committees of the public hearing regarding the "Implementation of the State Vaccine Plan." From a school district perspective, the superintendents of Delaware County schools would like to take this opportunity to advocate for the vaccines for district employees.

Access to the vaccine is critical for our schools and our community. Certainly, we do not begrudge those selected to receive the vaccination; however, we believe that people outside of public education are failing to witness the impact the lack of full-time school has on our children. Students' mental and emotional needs must be placed at the forefront of this critical step in securing safer learning environments. Although we can deliver "online" education, the absence of a full-time in-person model is truly taking its toll on our children and their families.

The Superintendents of Delaware County, along with the Chester County Health Department and Delaware County's COVID Task Force, developed a vaccination plan for our staff which was scheduled to begin on February 13, 2021. All plans were vetted through the school leaders, accounted for the details associated with such an enormous effort, and were submitted to the PA Department of Health.

The most critical element of this plan was the timing and number of vaccines. In order to begin on February 13, the County needed approximately 25,000-30,000 doses of vaccine by February 3. We have been advocating for the proper amount of vaccines so that we can begin to secure our schools. Unfortunately, we have not been allotted the necessary number of doses to begin our plan. School nurses and a handful of teachers have been vaccinated and that is due in large part to their own individual efforts; not a coordinated plan which prioritizes district staff. ***In fact, we were recently told by the local health department that we will not see vaccinations for our staff anytime soon.***

To say we are disappointed is an understatement. We know that the vaccine is not a cure for the virus, but it is another important tool in the fight against COVID-19. This mitigation effort, while voluntary for staff, is a game-changer when it comes to opening our schools to a greater degree for students.

We will continue to advocate for the supply to catch up with the demand. And, we need your help to bring a community voice to the current situation. We are asking you to



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please advocate for school personnel to be prioritized when it comes to getting vaccinated. By doing so, you will enable children greater access to their teachers, counselors, and other support services that are so vital to our communities.

We appreciate your continued efforts to limit the spread of COVID in our school community. Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

On behalf of the superintendents across Delaware County schools,

Dr. Anthony Barber
Superintendent
Springfield School District

Dr. Maureen Reusche
Superintendent
School District of Haverford Township