Working to Get Kids Back to School, State Outlines Equity-Centered Plan to Accelerate Access to COVID Vaccines for Education Workers

State has dedicated a minimum of 10 percent of vaccine supply to K-12 school staff and child care workers, or an estimated 75,000 vaccines per week

Plan will build on county and local efforts to accelerate vaccine access for education workers, with a focus on communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic

SACRAMENTO – Following last week's announcement by Governor Gavin Newsom that, beginning March 1, at least 10 percent of vaccine supply would be dedicated to education workers – including teachers, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, child care workers and site-based administrators – the state outlined its plan to execute on the Governor's commitment.

"The education professionals who nurture and support our children deserve to be and have been prioritized for vaccines, and I am proud to accelerate those efforts in all 58 counties," said Governor Newsom. "Our top priority is getting students back in the classroom as safely and quickly as possible, and the expanded access to vaccines will build on the momentum and confidence that

we can do so with urgency."

Just over half of states currently authorize vaccines for education workers. California was among the first to do so, and vaccine prioritization has been a core component of the Safe Schools for All Plan since December. Counties have been authorized to vaccinate education workers based on supply since January and, at the state's encouragement, at least 35 counties are actively vaccinating education workers. Since the Governor's announced commitment, several counties have announced plans to expedite access starting March 1, including Los Angeles and Fresno counties.

County and local leadership, including from county offices of education, is foundational. The state plan serves to supplement, not supplant, those efforts. To ensure communities throughout the state are prioritizing education workers, the state will true up local efforts to the 10 percent minimum through dedicated access to Myturn.ca.gov – education workers will receive up to 75,000 single-use codes statewide to make an appointment to be vaccinated. The state is also prioritizing education workers for vaccination through dedicated mobile units and vaccine drives coordinated through the state-federal vaccination sites at California State University, Los Angeles and the Oakland-Alameda Coliseum. The Oakland and Los Angeles sites will conduct two dedicated vaccine drives per week for the next two weeks for education workers.

Vaccines will be directed to counties and school communities weighted by equity, including the proportion of students from low-income families, English learners and homeless youth. In turn, education workers will qualify for vaccine prioritization based on occupational health exposure – whether they are currently reporting or will imminently report in person.

For more information about safe returns to in-person instruction, please visit schools.covid19.ca.gov.

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