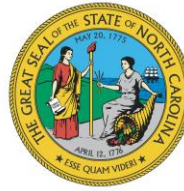




Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction



**NC DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

Dear Superintendents:

As you know, last week Governor Cooper and Secretary Cohen announced plans to begin moving the state to Group 3 for vaccinations, starting with anyone working in PreK – 12 schools or child care on February 24th, and moving to additional frontline essential workers on March 10th. While this is welcome news that supports educators in the transition to in-person instruction, it does come with challenges that we know are far beyond your control.

As shared in last Friday's webinar, vaccine supply unfortunately remains very limited. While staff in child care settings and PreK-12 schools will be eligible starting February 24th that **does not guarantee** they will get an appointment or get vaccinated between February 24th and March 10th because of very limited supply. Some vaccine providers may not be ready to open to frontline essential workers on these dates if they are still experiencing high demand for vaccines in Groups 1 and 2.

We recognize that differences in vaccine distribution from district-to-district present unique challenges for each of you, but we want to emphasize that everyone will have a spot to take their shot as supply continues to increase. We also heard during our call on Friday that the pace at which vaccinations can occur for Group 3 is an ongoing concern at a local level. The pace for vaccine distribution is dependent upon supply allocated to states. Allocations to states are made by the federal government, and while they are actively working to ramp up overall production of vaccine, supply remains constricted across the country.

We are committed to working collaboratively with you to vaccinate your staff and want to thank you for your continued partnership and your tireless efforts. We know this school year has presented challenges, and we are fortunate to have such incredible leaders at the local level who stand ready to give their time and talents.

In the coming weeks, your relationships across your district will be key to operationalizing vaccine distribution. We stand ready – as your partners – to do what it takes to get our education community vaccinated and are here to support you in the coming days and weeks as plans are put into motion.

To that end, **new [guidance on vaccine operations](#) is now available to help you support your school personnel to get vaccinated** by partnering with your local vaccine providers, getting the word out to staff, and building vaccine “champions” among your staff. If you have questions about the guidance, please send them to StrongSchoolsNC@dhhs.nc.gov for the fastest follow-up.

Thank you for your efforts to keep students, teachers, and school support staff safe. We could not do it without you.

Sincerely

Catherine Truitt
NC DPI Superintendent

Susan Gale Perry
NC DHHS Chief Deputy Secretary