

Toppenish School District No. 202

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August 18, 2021

Subject: COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement for K–12 Employees

Dear Toppenish School District Employees,

I am writing to share important information about vaccination requirements for the upcoming school year.

On August 18, 2021, Governor Jay Inslee announced a new directive legally requiring all K–12 school district employees to get a COVID-19 vaccination or a medical or religious exemption by October 18, 2021.

The Governor's directive means that all Toppenish School District employees, including contractors, will be required to be fully vaccinated by October 18, 2021 (you must be at least 14 days past the last dose of the applicable COVID-19 vaccine regimen by the date listed in the chart included in this message).

There are options for employees to request a medical or religious exemption. We expect to receive more information on allowable exemptions in the coming days, and will share that information with you as soon as possible.

Some of the key elements of the proclamation are outlined below:

- Toppenish School District and our Board of Directors do not have local control over this matter. We are legally required to follow the Governor's directive.
- Employees may request an exemption if they cannot meet the requirement due to a medical or religious reason. A religious exemption will not require medical consultation or proof of an organized religious affiliation. It will be an attestation and signature from the employee related to a religious belief, practice, or observance. We will provide more information about this process as soon as we have it.
- There is not an option to undergo regular testing for COVID-19 instead of receiving a vaccination or exemption.
- Employees who are vaccinated will need to provide proof of vaccination. Attestation is not an allowable substitute for vaccination. A copy of your vaccination card must be emailed to Noemi Verduzco at nverduzco@toppenish.wednet.edu.
- The information you provide regarding vaccination will be a confidential record.

" We do what's best for kids."

"Hacemos lo que es mejor para los niños."

WE ARE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

- Vaccination is a condition of employment in the proclamation. If you do not provide proof of full vaccination or obtain a medical or religious exemption by October 18, 2021, you will be separated from employment via non-disciplinary dismissal due to no longer meeting the qualifications of your position.
- This proclamation does not include vaccine requirements for students. It also does not replace the current requirement for all students, staff, and visitors to wear face coverings in schools and on school buses.

Vaccination is the most effective tool we have in combatting COVID-19. The currently approved COVID-19 vaccines are free, safe, and continuing to undergo the most intense safety monitoring in U.S. history. Millions of Americans have been vaccinated against COVID-19.

Our collective goal of safely providing in-person education to students remains the same. This announcement will not delay our return to school buildings this fall, and unvaccinated employees should continue to come to work while in the process of becoming fully vaccinated.

We understand this is challenging news for some. Please know that our leadership team is committed to doing what we can to support you as you get vaccinated or request a medical or religious exemption.

You may see a [frequently asked questions document](#) on the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) website for more information.

We will share information about next steps and required verification processes as soon as we have more information, likely in the coming days. In the meantime, questions may be directed to Shawn Myers, Assistant Superintendent.

Sincerely,



John M. Cerna, Superintendent

Vaccine	Series Dose Requirement	First Dose no Later Than	Second Dose	Completed Series	Fully Vaccinated
Pfizer	2 doses, 21 days apart	09/13/21	10/04/21	10/04/21	10/18/21
Moderna	2 doses, 28 days apart	09/06/21	10/04/21	10/04/21	10/18/21
Johnson & Johnson	Single dose	10/04/21	N/A	10/04/21	10/18/21