



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor



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DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

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Colt Gill

Director of the Oregon Department of Education

August 30, 2021

Dear Early Intervention-Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) Contractor Partners,

Effective October 18, 2021 K-12 teachers, school staff and volunteers are required to be vaccinated or submit documentation of a religious or medical exception in order to teach, work, learn, study assist, observe or volunteer in a school setting. The rule applies to schools and school-based programs, but does not apply to our programs that serve children birth to five in home settings or in buildings that are not located on K-12 school campuses. Our Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) programs have many different models and staff assignment structures for service delivery. As a result, the vaccination rule by definition applies to some of the program models and assignment structures and not to others.

I am writing to request that you hold your organizations and your EI/ECSE staff to the vaccination requirements in [OAR 333-019-1030](#) regardless of current assignments. I recommend vaccination for this group of employees for a number of reasons, including:

- The population that the EI/ECSE programs serve include some of the most medically vulnerable/fragile children in this age group and require the highest level of health caution. Children receiving EI/ECSE services are also not required to wear face coverings, unlike K-12 students.
- Many EI/ECSE staff are assigned to serve new children and families throughout the school year. Some of these children are placed in preschool/prekindergarten and childcare settings that are physically located in K-12 school settings where the vaccination requirement is in place. Staff may unexpectedly be assigned to this physical location and we do not want a delay in services due to vaccination status.
- Some EI/ECSE staff are itinerant and work across early learning and K-12 settings.
- Some EI/ECSE staff perform home visits and vaccination will protect your staff and prevent staff quarantines that could disrupt services to children and families.
- Some EI/ECSE staff interact with many other staff in early learning, K-12, ESD, and university settings and vaccination will protect your staff and prevent staff quarantines that could disrupt services to children and families.
- EI/ECSE service providers must remain flexible and may need to reassign staff based on the service needs of children and families. Universal vaccination will create more flexibility in staff assignments.

Please consider the Department's strong recommendation to include your EI/ECSE staff in the statewide educator vaccination requirement. Feel free to reach out to [Tenneal Wetherell](#) or me if you have any questions regarding this recommendation. If you have questions regarding the [OAR](#) or [FAQs](#), please write to ODECOVID19@ode.state.or.us.

Sincerely,



Colt Gill
Director of the Oregon Department of Education and
Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction

CC:

Lindsey Capps, Governor Brown's Senior Education Policy Advisor
Alyssa Chatterjee, Oregon's Early Learning Systems Director, ELD
Tenneal Wetherell, Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Enhancing Student Opportunities, ODE
Kara Williams, Director of Inclusive Services in the Office of Enhancing Student Opportunities, ODE
Kati Moseley, RSSL Student and School Resiliency Leader, Office of the Director, ODE