



January 25, 2021

The Honorable Tom Wolf, Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Office of the Governor
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

The Honorable Acting Secretary Alison Beam
Pennsylvania Department of Health
625 Forster Street, 8th Floor West
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

RE: COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

Dear Governor Wolf and Acting Secretary Beam:

On behalf of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA), the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA), the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators, (PASA), the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials (PASBO), Pennsylvania Principals Association, Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Administrators (PACTA), and the Pennsylvania Association of Intermediate Units (PAIU) **we are writing to request that you consider providing our members with access to the COVID-19 vaccine as quickly as possible so that we can safely open all public schools for in-person instruction.**

Our eight associations collectively represent thousands of school leaders, teachers, and support staff across the Commonwealth, many of whom are eager to safely return to their brick-and-mortar school buildings and restart full-time, classroom instruction again. The significance of in-person education continues to be demonstrated daily to not only our educators working remotely, but also to our students and their parents/guardians. While our schools continue to perform incredibly well under the current circumstances, the difficulties of remote learning are of great concern to our members, Pennsylvania’s students, and their families. Issues ranging from technology disruptions, distractions in home environments, limited hands-on learning opportunities, truancy, and many other challenges make it ever more important to return to in person instruction.

There is no doubt that this pandemic has strained every facet of how we provide education. We know that face masks, social distancing mandates, comprehensive cleaning protocols, adequate ventilation, and other measures were all designed to temporarily manage our lives in the safest manner possible until vaccines were developed and made widely available. After nearly a year, we seem to be slowly entering the final phase of the pandemic with the announcement and distribution of vaccines. This has begun to offer promise that, at some point, our lives will have a sense of normalcy again. But, we understand that this process will likely take some time.

Please know that we support the state’s current plan to vaccinate healthcare personnel first in Phase 1A and have no intention of receiving the current limited supply of vaccines ahead of these heroic members of our society. We are asking that a specific plan be developed to distribute to those in educational settings that are in 1B. With early access to vaccines, our public schools will be given the ability to consider returning to school buildings and bringing our students back to more comprehensive, structured educational environments, as soon as safely possible.

We recognize that, as leaders of this state, you have been faced with making countless, difficult decisions throughout the entirety of this pandemic, including most recently, vaccine rollout plans. Your Administration has called on schools to be open for in-person instruction. To do that, we need your support and help to ensure that school staff members are vaccinated as quickly as possible.

Of course, we welcome any additional conversations you might wish to have, and we appreciate your thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,



Nathan Mains
Chief Executive Officer
Pennsylvania School Boards Association



Dr. John J. George
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Association of Intermediate
Units



Richard W. Askey
President
Pennsylvania State Education Association



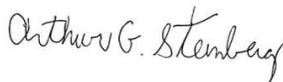
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