

State Kicks Off 'Vax to School' Student Vaccination Campaign

Campaign begins 5 weeks out from the school year — the length of time to go from first dose to fully vaccinated; Only one-third of Minnesotans 12-15-years-old and less than half of Minnesotans 16-17-year-old are fully vaccinated against COVID-19

Today, Governor Tim Walz announced Minnesota's 'Vax to School' campaign encouraging students and families to get fully vaccinated by the beginning of the school year. Minnesotans 12 years of age and older are authorized to receive the two-dose Pfizer vaccine, which takes five weeks to go from first dose to fully vaccinated.

To kick off the campaign, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) [released a video](#) of educators from across Minnesota calling on students and families to get vaccinated to ensure a safe and worry-free school year.

"Our kids deserve to be kids again" said Governor Walz. "In-person learning is critical to a child's well-being and academic success. Getting vaccinated is the best way to keep our students healthy, keep our educators and families safe, and prevent the virus from spreading in our communities."

"Our students deserve a worry-free and fun year back in the classroom, and we are doing everything we can to make that a reality," said Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. "We know our kids do best when they're in the classroom learning from their teachers, playing with their friends, and engaging in sports and activities — and getting them vaccinated is the best way to keep them safe while they do so."

Over the next month, the campaign will highlight voices from educators, pediatricians, and parents on the safety, efficacy, and critical need to get students 12 years of age and older vaccinated against this deadly virus.

Currently only one-third of Minnesotans 12-15-years-old and less than half of Minnesotans 16-17-years-old are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Unvaccinated kids remain vulnerable to life-threatening symptoms and long-term health consequences from virus exposure.

"COVID-19 has taken so much from us over the past year and a half, but we have the power to help our children and our schools get back in the classroom with vaccination," said MDH Commissioner Jan Malcolm. "The COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective for those 12 and older. We know this disease can be severe even in younger people. Even if it is mild, we don't want to see our kids miss any more school or social activities due to a disease that can be prevented."

"Throughout the pandemic, we have prioritized safe in-person learning because we know that's what our students need," said Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner Dr. Heather Mueller. "Vaccines continue to be a critical part of our strategy to ensure our

students have the kind of school year they deserve, while keeping everyone in our school communities healthy and safe.”

Every Minnesotan 12 years of age and older is eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccine. All available COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective — in Minnesota 99.9 percent of people who have been fully vaccinated have not gotten COVID-19.

Minnesotans 12 and older can get vaccinated wherever the Pfizer vaccine is being administered. Minnesotans can visit [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to filter by vaccine type and find a provider offering the Pfizer vaccine in their area, call their pediatrician to make an appointment, walk into a local pharmacy, or visit the Community Vaccination Program site at the Mall of America.

Now is also the perfect time to ensure children are caught up on other recommended vaccinations they need to stay healthy. Adolescents can get all the shots they need on the same day, including the COVID-19 vaccine. Minnesota parents should talk to their health care provider about what vaccinations their children need.

“These vaccines work — we’re preventing severe illness and reducing the spread of the virus with every vaccine we administer,” continued Governor Walz. **“Our students, educators, and school staff deserve this level of protection as they head back to the classroom this fall.”**