

NEWS BRIEF

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Los Angeles Unified School District Mandates Vaccines for Students Ages 12 and Older

On Thursday, Sept. 9, 2021, the Los Angeles (LA) Unified School Board unanimously voted to require COVID-19 vaccination among students ages 12 and older by the end of the calendar year.

The requirement applies to all vaccine-eligible students attending in-person classes. Students with “qualified and approved exemptions” can opt out, although details of what that may look like are still uncertain.

Eligible students who do not get a COVID-19 vaccine would have the ability to attend classes online.

The LA school district is the second-largest in the country. It already mandates vaccination among its teachers and staff in addition to requiring face masks and regular COVID-19 testing.

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“Ultimately, we want our schools to stay open, and the best way to ensure that is to have as many people as possible who are in our schools vaccinated.”

- *Cecily Myart-Cruz, United Teachers Los Angeles union president*

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This latest vaccine push comes alongside similar mandates from the federal government, which

recently required vaccination among all its workers and contractors.

What’s Next?

Organizations are increasing their efforts to protect against the rapidly spreading coronavirus Delta variant as the country yearns to return to in-person life. The federal government and many private businesses are now mandating vaccines among employees to help contain the situation.

Legal experts generally agree that vaccine mandates are acceptable, partly because the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is fully approved by the Food and Drug Administration for people aged 16 and older.

However, that vaccine still only has emergency use authorization when applied to children between the ages of 12 to 15. That distinction muddies the waters for the LA school district. As such, it remains to be seen whether the LA school district will be able to meet its aggressive end-of-year deadline.

Stay tuned for updates on this developing story, as it may impact future vaccination trends across industries.

