

December 13, 2022

The Honorable Kathleen Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

We would like to express our concerns regarding your most recent statement about mandating the COVID-19 vaccine for children. Your statement, "Not at this time," is unsettling. Although the CDC recently made the recommendation to add the vaccine to the children's vaccination schedule, they continue to clearly state that the vaccine does not prevent infection.

Attached below is language taken directly from the CDC's website.

Vaccine Breakthrough Infections:

COVID-19 vaccines are effective at preventing severe disease, hospitalization, and death. However, since vaccines are not 100% effective at preventing infection, some people who are up to date with the recommended vaccines will still get COVID-19.

The addition of the COVID-19 vaccine to the vaccination schedule to attend school will cause many families to make difficult decisions about their children's education. It is understandable that people are hesitant about taking the vaccine, as well as giving it to their children. We request that the administration of the vaccine remains a choice so that these medical decisions may be discussed with their family physician. Our main focus is to keep children in the classroom. We feel that taking away an individual's choice will impact our mission to educate all children. Furthermore, the decrease in student enrollment would have a negative financial impact on districts due to the loss of state aid. This will be catastrophic to our schools and our communities. The East Islip School District is home to approximately 3400 students. Since our reopening in September 2022, data has shown that there is negligible spread of COVID-19 within school communities even after the removal of all restrictions. We implore you to allow for parental choice in the area of vaccinations and mask wearing in the true spirit of "our body, our choice".

East Islip School District
1 Craig B. Gariepy Avenue
Islip Terrace, NY 11752

Thank you for your consideration with this matter.

Respectfully,

John V. Dolan
Superintendent of Schools

Christopher Zachry

Christopher Zachry
Board President

Michael Dorgan

Michael Dorgan
Board Vice President

William Carpluk

William Carpluk
Board Trustee

Stephen Ruland

Stephen Ruland
Board Trustee

Timothy Sassone

Timothy Sassone
Board Trustee

c: Dr. Mary T Bassett, Commissioner, New York State Department of Health
Steve Bellone, Suffolk County Executive
Dr. Gregson H. Pigott, Commissioner, Suffolk County Department of Health Services
Dr. Rochelle Walensky, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Anthony S. Fauci, M.D., Director, NIAID Office of Communications and Government Relations
New York State Assemblyman Jarrett Gandolfo, Assembly District 7
New York State Assemblyman Philip Ramos, Assembly District 6
New York State Senator Alexis Weik, 3rd Senate District