



ALBERTA
EDUCATION

*Office of the Minister
MLA, Red Deer-North*

November 17, 2021

Dear Colleagues:

We know that vaccines are a safe and effective means of protecting Albertans from COVID-19—and saving lives. That is why on October 5th, I signed a joint public letter with the Minister of Health strongly encouraging all school authorities to develop policies that require proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test for teachers, staff, and any adult who enters a school.

We also took steps to increase accessibility to COVID-19 vaccines by making them available in schools this fall for eligible students in Grades 7 to 12. The COVID-19 School Immunization Program, led by Alberta Health and AHS, ended in October and approximately 5,000 students and staff were vaccinated through this program.

I am aware that COVID-19 vaccines might soon be approved for children aged 5-11. While I have always strongly encouraged everyone who is eligible to receive their COVID-19 vaccine, I must reiterate that every child in Alberta is entitled to have access to an education program as per the Section 3(1) of the *Education Act*. (This provision also existed in Section 8 of the previous *School Act*.) To be clear, there is no legislation in Alberta that requires K-12 students to have specific vaccinations to attend in person schools, nor is Alberta Education considering mandating vaccines of any kind for students in the K-12 education system.

As Minister of Education, I take very seriously the responsibility of providing access to education for all students in our province. School authorities cannot deny their students access to education due to their immunization status.

Individual family choices need to be respected and students should not be stigmatized for their vaccination status. Once vaccinations for children aged 5-11 are available further information will be provided by Alberta Health as to how parents can access them, should they choose to do so.

Thank you to everyone for their continued efforts to keep students safe and learning throughout the pandemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Adriana LaGrange".

Adriana LaGrange
Minister of Education