



WAUKESHA COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Wednesday, February 24, 2021

Interim Secretary Karen Timberlake
Wisconsin Department of Health Services
1 W. Wilson Street, Room 650
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Interim Secretary Timberlake:

Thank you for your department's recent email to Waukesha County's Public Health Division regarding vaccination of newly eligible populations on March 1, 2021, particularly K-12 educators. I appreciate you taking the time to review our concerns.

Recently, DHS announced its establishment of a separate allocation process and dedicated vaccine supply for K-12 educators in public and private schools beginning March 15, 2021. While we welcome the potential of receiving more vaccine, we are concerned that the hard-working teachers in Waukesha County, the majority of whom have been teaching in-person since the start of the school year, may not receive vaccine until after teachers who have worked remotely for the entire school year.

Although our teachers know firsthand that transmission of COVID-19 between students and teachers in the classroom is minimal, they also know that teachers working in-person are at higher risk of contracting the virus than their counterparts working in districts operating in a virtual environment. You can imagine how frustrating it must be for a teacher who has been working in the classroom since late August to learn that a virtual educator working from home or in an online environment could receive protection from the virus first. I am requesting that vaccine distribution, and vaccination priority, be given to in-person educators and staff, not to school districts with limited or no student access to classrooms.

We all know the state's vaccination plans have changed course many times in the past few months, and we are asking you to do that again by prioritizing teachers and districts that are already educating students in-person.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Farrow". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

PAUL FARROW
Waukesha County Executive