

# Largest U.S. teachers' union supports mandatory COVID vaccination

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(HealthDay)—Mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for teachers now has

the support of the United States' largest teachers' union.

"It is clear that the vaccination of those eligible is one of the most effective ways to keep schools safe," Becky Pringle, president of the National Education Association, said Thursday in a statement, *The New York Times* reported.

She suggested that teachers who are not vaccinated could undergo regular testing instead, and also said that local "employee input, including collective bargaining where applicable, is critical."

The union—which represents about 3 million members nationwide—said nearly 90% of its members report being fully vaccinated.

Randi Weingarten, the leader of the American Federation of Teachers, expressed her strongest support yet for vaccine mandates this week.

On Thursday, she told the *Times* that, "Things have changed with Delta raging, and with the proximity of the full approval of the vaccines. Because of those two facts, we are considering all alternatives, including looking at vaccine mandates."

Still, any decision to require teachers to get vaccinated is likely to be made at the local or state level, and teachers' unions have said that their local chapters should negotiate details, according to the *Times*.

Some states have already moved on mandates: Teachers and staff at public and [private schools](#) in California must show proof of vaccination or have weekly tests, and Hawaii requires all state and county workers, including public [school](#) teachers, to be vaccinated or be tested.

All city employees, including [public school teachers](#), in Denver must be

fully vaccinated by Sept. 30, the *Times* reported.

**More information:** Visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for more on [COVID vaccines](#).

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