

## Adams, Stevens, Sablan Lead Call for Educators to Receive COVID-19 Vaccine



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**WASHINGTON** – Today, **Congresswomen Alma S. Adams, Ph.D. (NC-12), Haley Stevens (MI-11), and Delegate Gregorio Kili Sablan (MP-At Large)** led a letter with 22 of their colleagues calling on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to make K-12 teachers and school personnel a priority group for receiving COVID-19 vaccinations.

[A copy of the letter is available here.](#)

“K-12 professionals and the schools they serve are cornerstones of communities across the country, and the pandemic has made that truth as clear as ever,” **said Congresswoman Adams.** “Prioritizing COVID-19 vaccinations for K-12 educators and school personnel recognizes the essential work of these individuals, enables a safer return to in-person instruction, and provides the means necessary for tens of millions of workers to support the economy. This reality must be reflected in our nation’s vaccine distribution strategy.”

Other signers of the letter include **Representatives Sanford D. Bishop, Jr., Bennie G. Thompson, Jahana Hayes, Henry C. “Hank” Johnson, Jr., André Carson, Susan Wild, Nydia M. Velázquez, Steve Cohen, Henry Cuellar, Andy Levin, Darren Soto, Sheila Jackson Lee, Mark Takano, Jesús G. “Chuy” García, Marcy Kaptur, Bonnie Watson Coleman, Juan Vargas, Barbara Lee, Frederica S. Wilson, Katherine Clark, Jan Schakowsky, and C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger.**

The full text of the letter is below:

*Robert R. Redfield, MD  
Director  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road  
Atlanta, GA 30333*

*Dear Director Redfield:*

*As the planning and implementation process for the nation's pandemic response progresses, we urge you to consider adding K-12 educators and school personnel to the list of critical groups of individuals and professionals prioritized for the COVID-19 vaccine. While the distribution of these vaccines is a state-controlled endeavor, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) plays an important role in informing the strategies employed to do so.*

*Every day, over 5 million teachers, administrators, and other school personnel work tirelessly to ensure students receive the educational experiences they deserve. These dedicated individuals and the schools they lead are cornerstones of communities across the country, and the pandemic has made that truth as clear as ever. When COVID-19 prompted abrupt shifts in instruction and school-based services, these professionals responded as they always do, by rising to the occasion, adapting, and delivering for children and families. However, no remote learning can replace what serves students best: engaging, in-person instruction. That reality is even more evident in communities that face long-standing inequities in access to the critical resources – educational or otherwise – needed to support student learning.*

*The difficulties associated with remote instruction have prompted many states and localities to try to reopen schools or implement hybrid models. These efforts have led teachers and other personnel to return to educating, caring for, and serving students and families in-person. However, schools reflect the complex communities in which they are situated and, right now, many communities are experiencing high coronavirus transmission rates. This means K-12 professionals inevitably put their lives at greater risk by showing up to support our students. Their essential service deserves to be recognized in our nation's vaccine distribution strategy. Additionally, with over 1.6 million children already infected by COVID-19,<sup>[1]</sup> it is important to note that prioritizing vaccinations for K-12 professionals not only protects adults, but makes schools safer places for students, too.*

*In addition to protecting the health of these essential workers, providing teachers with early access to the vaccine will also help to relaunch our economy. Over 70 percent of working parents with children under 14 lack access to a caregiver at home, representing roughly 23.5 million individuals and nearly 20 percent of the American workforce.<sup>[2]</sup> While necessary, pandemic-induced school closures have forced many parents to make painful choices between working to provide for their families and being physically present to care for them. The negative impact this struggle has had on the physical and mental wellbeing of families, especially our most vulnerable, is beyond measure. This situation is only compounded by the dire economic circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. While economic recovery will require multiple, concerted solutions, it will be crucial that we ensure working parents are able to safely remain in or re-enter the workforce. Providing K-12 personnel prioritized access to the COVID-19 vaccine, then, is not just a necessary step toward returning to safe classroom learning, but also toward enabling working parents to safely provide for their families and support the economy.*

*As has always been the case, the health and prosperity of our country depends, in large part, on the success of our nation's schools and those who selflessly serve in them. Prioritizing COVID-19 vaccinations for K-12 educators and school personnel recognizes the essential work of these professionals, enables a safer return to in-person instruction, and provides the means necessary for tens of millions of workers to breathe life into the American economy. As one of the principal decision-makers in our nation's pandemic response, we strongly encourage you to consider including these professionals in the first phases of the vaccine distribution.*

[1] <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/children-and-covid-19-state-level-data-report/>

[2] <https://www.brookings.edu/research/working-parents-are-key-to-covid-19-recovery/>

**Congresswoman Alma Adams** represents North Carolina's 12th Congressional District (Charlotte) and serves as Vice Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture. Additionally, she serves on the House Financial Services Committee and the House Education & Labor Committee, where she serves as Chair of the Workforce Protections Subcommittee. Before serving in Congress, she was a 40-year educator.

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