



MISSOURI STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

January 14, 2021

Dr. Randall Williams
Director
Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services
912 Wildwood
Jefferson City, MO 65102
info@health.mo.gov

Dear Director Williams,

The Missouri State Teachers Association advocates for and empowers public educators so they can teach. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Missouri educators have answered the call to service, from delivering education remotely, providing meals to students, to meeting students' needs in new and innovative ways.

Missouri educators employed as school nurses and those working with medically fragile students have recently been included in the Phase 1A category for vaccine distribution. As essential workers, all public education professionals should either be moved into the Phase 1A category or ensured that they will receive priority status in the administration of the Phase 1B vaccine distribution should they decide to get vaccinated.

Missouri schools have seen unprecedented disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Interacting with hundreds of students every day presents an unparalleled level of exposure for public educators. Providing these frontline professionals priority access to the vaccine would slow the spread of COVID-19 in our communities and allow for an expedited return to in-person learning across the state, in alignment with The Department of Health & Senior Services' guiding principles for education. Diligently working toward lowering the spread of COVID-19 in Missouri schools will benefit students by lowering the possibility of community spread of the virus and ensuring that school personnel are available to maximize learning.

Education professionals across Missouri have been recognized as heroes in their communities during this pandemic and this action by the state Department of Health & Senior Services would be an appropriate response to recognize the work school staff have put into ensuring student success.

Sincerely,

Bruce Moe
Executive Director

Cc: Governor Michael L. Parson
Dr. Margie Vandeven, Commissioner, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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