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Eileen M. Donoghue
City Manager

Kara Keefe Mullin
Assistant City Manager

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Leahy and Members of the City Council

FROM: Eileen Donoghue, City Manager

DATE: February 23, 2021

SUBJECT: Motion Response – HR Audit Update

EMD

C. Elliott/C. Leahy – 2/9/21 - Req. City Council Vote To Support Letter To Governor And Provide School Committee Vote To Move Teachers Up In The Vaccination Process Following Vaccinations Of Front Line Providers And Senior Citizens.

The attached letter regarding the vaccination of educators and school staff has been transmitted to Governor Baker. The letter expresses the City Council's support for the prioritization of this group in the vaccine distribution process and requests that the administration develop a dedicated process to vaccinate educators to ensure that it can be accomplished in a timely manner.

I will keep the Council apprised of any pertinent developments related to this issue that I am made aware of.



Eileen M. Donoghue
City Manager

Kara Keefe Mullin
Assistant City Manager

February 18, 2021

Governor Charles Baker
Massachusetts State House
24 Beacon Street Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Baker,

I write to you on behalf of the Lowell City Council regarding the vaccination of public education staff in the Commonwealth. As local elected officials, we understand firsthand the significance of getting our children back in school. The effects of this year on student's education and mental health cannot be understated. Conversely, it is clear that our students will not reap the benefits of in-person learning unless teachers feel they can return to work safely and productively amidst the pandemic.

Teachers, administrators, and support staff will need to be vaccinated in order to be at their most effective. Currently, they are in line for COVID-19 vaccinations after individuals 65 years and older. The City of Lowell greatly appreciates the urgency you have ascribed to this issue.

While the prioritized eligibility of school staff is an important step, we also request that the administration consider developing a specific process by which educators can receive the vaccine when they become eligible. Given the demonstrated demand for vaccine appointments and the constraints on supply, it is likely that the vaccination of educators would take weeks, if not months, further jeopardizing the safe return to classrooms. We urge that the administration consider providing communities with a dedicated supply of vaccines for school staff, similar to the process that was effectively employed to vaccinate first responders earlier this year. This would be particularly valuable in expediting the resumption of in-person learning in the twenty communities, including Lowell, that the administration recently designated as being hardest hit by the pandemic, where COVID-19 has been disproportionately disruptive to primary and secondary learning.

Again, we appreciate the effort your administration has invested in combatting the COVID-19 pandemic. The next step in this fight is a quick and effective vaccination program for public education staff in order to get our students back in school. Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Eileen Donoghue
City Manager