

State Senator Josh Becker Calls for Vaccinating Teachers Now Against COVID-19 in Peninsula Counties

As students continue working through distance learning, vaccinating teachers creates pathway for classroom support

MENLO PARK, Calif. – With Governor Newsom recently announcing the expansion of the vaccine eligibility to include teachers and emergency services, food and agriculture workers, State Senator Josh Becker has called for the immediate vaccination of teachers.

“As we cross the year threshold in this pandemic, we are losing a generation of students to distance learning because there is nothing that can replicate the classroom experience,” said Senator Becker, D-Menlo Park. “By allowing teachers to receive COVID vaccinations now, we are creating a pathway that will make it easier for our students to return to the classroom.”

With San Mateo County averaging 9,000 doses per week, and the overall number of teachers in the county being at 5,000, Senator Becker feels that the overall number of teachers allows for a countywide vaccination effort that can be managed in an efficient manner.

Santa Clara County has about 13,000 teachers and is averaging around 45,000 (first and second) doses a week.

“This is doable,” said Senator Becker. “Vaccinating teachers and beginning to safely reopen schools will be the most meaningful move yet to return to normalcy for everyone.”

Becker said he is urging both counties to elevate teachers to an immediate priority and to vaccinate as many teachers and school district employees who have direct contact with children. “Let’s pick a week in the next several weeks to be ‘Teacher Vaccination Week’ – if we do that we still have the chance to save spring classes.”

For perspective, in [Alameda County](#), teachers became eligible for COVID vaccinations this week. [Riverside County](#) and the city of [Long Beach](#) have

already begun vaccinating their teachers. Sacramento, San Diego and Orange counties say they plan to make the vaccine available to teachers this month.

Already, Senator Becker has mobilized his community and developed a coalition that stands with him in support of immediate teacher vaccination, as many see getting students back into classrooms as a top priority.

“As a school board member and a mother, I understand how important it is for students and their mental health to return to the school,” said **Ligia Andrade Zuniga**, a San Mateo Union High School District trustee. “It is imperative that our teachers know that they are returning to COVID-safe environments. I encourage policymakers to prioritize vaccinating our teachers so our kids can get back to the classroom.”

Palo Alto Unified School District Trustee **Jennifer DiBrienza** said on behalf of the board, “We are happy with the protocols and outcomes in our elementary schools. As we move to open our middle and high schools, the added protection that vaccines offer will ease the risk and fear of our staff and families. We are eager for them to be vaccinated as we are preparing for more students and staff to return to campus soon.”

“Providing our teachers with immediate access to vaccinations is the right thing to do for a profession that has always put our children first,” said San Mateo County Board of Supervisor President **David Canepa**. “In a region known for innovation, I am confident that our county and the state can make teacher vaccinations a reality. In doing so, we will take a major step towards bringing our families a level of normalcy without risking the health and safety of our teachers.”

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Further Resources

The number of public school teachers in San Mateo County as represented by Senator Becker and Supervisor Canepa, and in the school districts in Santa Clara County communities represented by Senator Becker:

San Mateo – Public School Teachers
<https://www.ed-data.org/county/San-Mateo>
(2018-2019 numbers rounded to full FTE)

Total Public School Teachers in San Mateo County – 5,123 FTE

High Schools:

- [Jefferson Union High School District](#) – 233

- [San Mateo Union High School District](#) - 534
- [Sequoia Union High School District](#) - 580

Unified School Districts:

- [Cabrillo Unified School District](#) – 147
- [La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District](#) – 27
- [South San Francisco Unified School District](#) - 431

Elementary Schools:

- [Bayshore Elementary School District](#) - 24
- [Belmont-Redwood Shores School District](#) - 208
- [Brisbane School District](#) - 33
- [Burlingame School District](#) - 180
- [Hillsborough City School District](#) - 100
- [Jefferson Elementary School District](#) - 509
- [Las Lomas Elementary School District](#) - 87
- [Menlo Park City School District](#) - 188
- [Millbrae School District](#) - 105
- [Pacifica School District](#) - 148
- [Portola Valley School District](#) - 47
- [Ravenswood City School District](#) - 162
- [Redwood City School District](#) - 418
- [San Bruno Park School District](#) - 105
- [San Carlos School District](#) - 186
- [San Mateo-Foster City School District](#) - 567

- [Woodside Elementary School District](#) - 41

Santa Clara – Public School Teachers
<https://www.ed-data.org/county/Santa-Clara>
(2018-2019 numbers rounded to full FTE)

**Total Public School Teachers in Santa Clara County Public School
Teachers: 13,048
In the 13th Senate District: 3,300**

High Schools:

- [Fremont Union High](#) - 509
- [Mountain View-Los Altos Union High](#) – 255

Unified School Districts:

- [Palo Alto Unified](#) - 876

Elementary Schools (K-8th):

- [Cupertino Union](#) - 790
- [Mountain View Whisman](#) - 287
- [Sunnyvale](#) - 333
- [Los Altos Elementary](#) - 250

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