

Ms. Lucia Baez-Geller, School Board Member

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SUBJECT: INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYEES ON PANDEMIC-RELATED VACCINATIONS AND WORK OPTIONS

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY

LINK TO STRATEGIC

BLUEPRINT: SAFE, HEALTHY AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a lot of worry and fear among our Instructional and Non-Instructional staff. Many suffer from pre-existing medical conditions, live with a loved one who does, or takes care of a loved one who does. Additionally, many of our Miami-Dade County Public School (M-DCPS) employees are seeking ways to receive vaccines for themselves and their loved ones but are unable to and find the process extremely difficult.

Many of these employees are currently working remotely using a virtual platform since March of 2020. Over the last several months, many of these employees have been informed by their superiors that they must return to the physical classroom, but these employees remain concerned about their health and safety. In many cases, those employees who have expressed their concerns to their superiors have been provided an opportunity to continue working remotely, however, many have been directed to return. They have been told that the only way to continue working remotely is that they must obtain an Americans with Disability (ADA) designation from their doctor.

The concern is that many of our employees fall into a category of high-risk, however, they do not qualify for ADA protections. And many of the high-risk employees are not currently able to obtain the vaccine.

This has resulted in an extreme fear of returning to work for many of our MDCPS employees. Questions that must be answered include: Which employees must return to work and when? If they are told they must return, what are the employees' options if they are at high risk and cannot obtain the vaccine?

M-DCPS must do all it can possibly do to respect our current employees' decisions with sensitivity and compassion around what is best for their health while working with them to provide guidance and recommendations.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the School Board Attorney for legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS. LUCIA BAEZ-GELLER:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to:

1. explore, with the Human Resources department, methods for the distribution of clear rules for returning to work;
2. work with health care representatives to provide information on how, where, and when to get vaccinated;
3. explore an option for those employees who are considered high-risk, however, are not eligible for ADA protections, to maintain their employment until they are able to receive the vaccine;
4. provide guidance that respects and recognizes employees' options of returning to work and providing them with their best options; and
5. provide a response no later than the School Board meeting of March 2021.