

Public Comments for School Board Meetings

#294

I would like to provide: *	Written Public Comments
Select the meeting date:* *	August 19, 2021
My public comments are related to: *	COVID-19
Topic *	Mandatory Vaccinations
Full Name *	Sean M McNally
What is your relationship to ACPS? *	Parent/Guardian of an ACPS Student

Enter your comments here OR upload below:

Members of the Alexandria City School Board,
With the start of school less than a week away, it is disappointing that you are just now meeting to decide whether to require the District staff entrusted with the health and safety of our children, and by extension our community, to be vaccinated against covid-19. This decision should have been made months ago, once vaccines became widely available, the Board should have immediately made vaccination a requirement of employment.

Prior to the pandemic, we required our students attending school to be vaccinated against a myriad of infectious diseases – and as a result, our students and teachers do not spread those diseases widely. We have ample evidence that the vaccines developed to protect us from covid are doing just that. They are remarkably effective at preventing infection and spread of the disease and it is unconscionably selfish and irresponsible for public employees to refuse to do all they can to protect the health and safety of the community they are charged with serving.

Whatever holdouts the school has will likely say their choices don't impact the students and parents of this District that we are free to wear masks and get the jab but that plainly isn't true. Responsible behavior doesn't start with me and end with you – we are all in this together and protecting our community from covid means that those who are able (meaning every person over the age of 12 at the moment) should be vaccinated.

With just shy of 70% of Alexandrians over the age of 12 already vaccinated, it is past time to stop catering to the minority of residents who are too short sighted or too selfish to care about their friends and neighbors. When incentives to get vaccinated stop working, even in the face of rising numbers, it is time to put away the carrots and take out the sticks.

The Board should immediately require all staff to be vaccinated as a condition of employment, and then begin the work to require all eligible students to be vaccinated as a requirement of attendance. Anything less is putting our community further risk to appease a shrinking minority.

Sean McNally, father of a rising ninth grader
