

# COVID-19 News for Schools

WEEK OF MAY 17

Throughout May, Vaccinate West Michigan will bring you the latest in COVID-19 vaccine information, as well as stories, events and resources, all with the goal of providing you with timely, relevant information for your school districts, parents and students.

## Pfizer Vaccines Available for anyone 12 and Up

*"As more of our children become vaccinated, they can enjoy the sports they want to participate in, they can go to events, they can sing in choir, they can go to school without interruption. And those are the things that we are really hoping for."*

Kent County Health Department Medical Director Nirali Bora, in response to the Pfizer Vaccine announcement. [Read more from WOODTV.](#)

Several health departments, health systems and other clinics are ready to start vaccinating kids between the ages of 12 and 15.

- Vaccines are free for everyone.
- A parent or guardian must accompany minors.
- [Find available clinics](#) through your local health department, health system or pharmacy.

Visit the CDC's new webpage for parents that is [all about vaccinations for adolescents.](#)

## School COVID-19 Quarantine Update

Public Health Departments of Ottawa County, Muskegon County, Ionia County and Kent County have modified the state's COVID-19 quarantine guidelines for school districts. Under revised local Public Health Orders, students will only have to quarantine if there is a school outbreak or if the COVID-19 positive close contact is a household member. This does not apply to school employees who must still isolate or quarantine. With that said, it is strongly recommended that students limit contact with others outside of the classroom and household even if a school district permits the child to attend school during quarantine. Health departments will continue to monitor COVID-19 trends and respond as needed.

**Vaccinate West Michigan** is a collaborative of local health departments, health systems, pharmacies, colleges and universities, and more – who have partnered together with the common goal to meet the diverse needs of our communities and share COVID-19 vaccine facts, data and clinics. [Learn more.](#)



## Revised Mask Requirements!

[Per the CDC](#), fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance in most settings. Masks are still required in schools. Review the full [MDHHS gatherings and face mask order.](#)

## Good News For Fully Vaccinated

The CDC now states, if you are fully vaccinated, you can resume activities that you did before the pandemic. Learn more from the CDC about [what you can do](#) and [what activities are considered safe.](#)

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## Informative Reads

[Five big questions about vaccinating kids, answered](#)



## Student Stories Worth Sharing

[High school students Naomi and Esther Solis](#) share why they chose to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.



## Updated MDHHS Interim Guidance for Athletics

Based on the most current [CDC Guidance](#):

- **All individuals** can gather outdoors for purposes of organized sports without wearing face masks.
- **Fully vaccinated individuals** can gather indoors for the purposes of organized sports without wearing face masks.
- **Unvaccinated individuals** participating in outdoor organized contact sports without face masks do not need to test more frequently than weekly.

MDHHS recommends that individuals who are not fully vaccinated continue to wear face masks while participating in contact sports both outdoors and indoors. [Read more about the guidance from MDHHS.](#)

## Conversations and Events

*"It allows us to go back to school, back to sports and our regular activities."*

[Watch Dr. Haney Assaad](#) from North Ottawa Community Health system talk about the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine for students.

Join **Vaccinate West Michigan** for the Keeping Our Kids Safe series on Facebook, community conversations talking about what's new with COVID-19 and vaccines.

[May 21, 9 a.m.](#)

A Conversation with Students and Clinical Experts

[May 28, 9 a.m.](#)

A Conversation with Parents and Clinical Experts

[June 4, 9 a.m.](#)

A Conversation with School District Leaders and Clinical Experts

## Q&A:

**Q:** What if I already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated?

**A:** Yes. Even if you have already recovered from COVID-19, it is possible—although rare—that you could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 again. Learn more about [why getting vaccinated is a safer way to build protection](#) than getting infected.