

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents and Heads of Independent Schools
FROM: Daniel M. French, Ed.D., Secretary of Education 
Mark A. Levine, M.D., Commissioner of Health 
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Prevention Recommendations for End of the School Year
DATE: May 28, 2021

Background

It is likely the state of emergency will end prior to the end of the 2020-2021 school year. When the state of emergency ends, much of the COVID-19 guidance for schools promulgated by the Agency of Education and by the Health Department will no longer be in force since its underlying authority is derived from the Governor's Emergency Order 01-20. This includes our [A Strong and Healthy Year](#) guidance.

COVID-19 Prevention Strategies in Schools

The Health Department recommends, however, that schools continue to follow current prevention strategies outlined in the [A Strong and Healthy Year](#) guidance for the remainder of the school year because students will not be fully vaccinated. Youth under the age of 12 are not yet eligible for vaccination. Youth between the ages of 12 and 15 became eligible for vaccination on May 12, 2021. Because people are not fully vaccinated until 2 weeks after their second dose of the Pfizer vaccine, students in this age group will not be fully vaccinated before the end of the school year.

We strongly recommend schools follow Vermont's [A Strong and Healthy Year](#) guidance for the remainder of the school year. We think Vermont's guidance has proven to be very effective in ensuring the safety our students, and it would be difficult for schools to successfully adopt new operational routines so late in the school year.

Contact Tracing

Contact tracing for schools will continue despite a change in the state of emergency. Schools should continue to work with the Health Department's contact tracing and outbreak prevention and response teams to respond to positive cases in schools.