



# **COVID-19 Student Vaccination Policy**

School Board Approved May 19, 2022  
Updated June 14, 2022

Dzilh-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community School is charged with ensuring the health and safety of all students within its schools and facilities. This includes delivering the highest-quality instruction in the safest environment possible.

This Policy is intended to safeguard the health of our students, employees, and their families—and the community at large—from infectious diseases, such as COVID-19. This Policy will comply with all applicable Navajo and federal laws, and is based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Indian Health Services, and the Navajo Nation Department of Health, as applicable.

COVID-19 is a material threat to the health and safety of all students, families, and staff, and is a further threat to providing safe in-person instruction. Federal agencies and officials recommend that all eligible persons, including children five (5) years of age and older, be fully vaccinated for COVID-19. When vaccines are made available for children under the age of five (5) years old, subject to any applicable federal or Navajo guidance, this Policy will extend to those students as well. Until that time, to mitigate potential spread of the virus, children under the age of five (5) years old shall be subject to restrictions set forth more fully below.

Dzilh-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community School has implemented multiple safety measures consistent with federal public health guidance. These include (but are not limited to) COVID-19 testing, masking and the use of other personal protective equipment, contact tracing, quarantines (as appropriate and permitted), as well as offering outdoor learning spaces, and improved ventilation.

Although safety measures are effective at mitigating the spread of COVID-19, having all eligible and non-exempt students fully vaccinated would provide the strongest protection to the health and safety of all students, families, and staff in the Dzilh-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community School while further protecting against the disruption to full-time, in-person instruction. The available COVID-19 vaccines have been shown to be safe and to be effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19 as well as the severity of COVID-19 for breakthrough cases, preventing nearly all COVID-19 related hospitalizations. Moreover, because new scientific data demonstrate waning immunity six months after the primary series of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines, and two months after the Johnson & Johnson Janssen vaccine, and because those with a booster vaccine have reduced risk for a breakthrough infection, ‘full vaccination’ includes administration of a booster vaccine if eligible according to the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and CDC.

**Therefore, non-exempt, unvaccinated students, as defined below, shall not be eligible for enrollment at Dziłth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community School for the 2022-2023 school year. Once enrolled, students must continue to receive booster vaccinations as they become eligible according to the FDA and CDC.**

A. MANDATORY VACCINATIONS

All Dziłth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community School students ages five (5) and over are required to be **fully vaccinated** against COVID-19 prior to student enrollment, unless otherwise exempted as described herein or the vaccine is unavailable.

1. A student is “fully vaccinated” for purposes of this Policy as of either two (2) weeks after their second dose in a two-dose series (e.g., Pfizer or Moderna if approved for children 5 years and older), or two (2) weeks after a single-dose vaccine (e.g., Johnson & Johnson if approved for children 5 years and older). However, if the student has received the doses as described above and is eligible for a booster dose as set forth by FDA and CDC guidance, the student is “fully vaccinated” **only after administration of their booster dose of the vaccine**. As of the date of adoption of this Policy, Children ages five (5) years and older are able to get an age-appropriate dose of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine.
2. A student is “unvaccinated” for purposes of this Policy if:
  - a. the requirement under this Policy to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 applies to the student and
  - b. the student is not fully vaccinated or has not provided a valid proof or record of vaccination as described below.
3. The Principal or designee shall determine and record the COVID-19 vaccination status of all students ages five (5) and over through the immunization records provided in advance of student enrollment. Such records and information shall be maintained securely and confidentially in accordance with all laws governing the privacy of student health information and other student records, consistent with other vaccination records.
4. After students are enrolled, they must continue to receive booster doses as they become eligible according to the FDA and CDC.
5. Dziłth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community School may provide a list of locations to assist students and parents in receiving the vaccine on their own. COVID-19 vaccinations are free of charge and may be obtained at an appropriate tribal health authority where available.
6. To enroll their student at Dziłth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community School, a parent or guardian will be required to provide either proof of vaccination through the student’s immunization records, or be granted an approved exception or accommodation as described below.
7. To the extent that the Navajo Nation Department of Health, the Navajo Nation President, or the Council enacts, decrees, or otherwise implements and enforces a Navajo Nation-wide order regarding student vaccinations for COVID-19, this Policy will continue to be effective to the extent it is consistent with such order.

## B. EXCEPTIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS TO MANDATORY VACCINATIONS

1. This policy shall apply to all students, except where:
  - a. The student has received the final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine within the thirteen (13) days prior to enrollment.
  - b. The student received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine (for those two-dose vaccines) within the thirty (30) days prior to enrollment.
  - c. The student is under five (5) years of age.<sup>1</sup> Students who reach the age of five (5) during the school year must receive their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine thirty (30) days after their fifth birthday, and their second dose (if in a two-dose series) no later than three (3) weeks after their fifth birthday. Additional precautions taken by Dzilh-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community School for students under five (5) years of age are set forth in greater detail under Section C, below.
  - d. Students are unable to get vaccinated due to an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-covered disability or a Title VII-covered sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance.
    - i. To be eligible for an exemption due a qualifying medical condition, the parent or guardian must provide the School with a statement from a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or other licensed medical professional stating that the student qualifies for the exemption and indicating the probable duration of the student's inability to receive the vaccine;
    - ii. To be eligible for an exemption due to a disability, the parent or guardian must provide the School documentation from a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or other medical professional stating that the student has a disability that necessitates an accommodation and the probable duration of the need for the accommodation; or
    - iii. To be eligible for an exemption due to a sincerely held religious belief, the parent or guardian must provide the School with a statement regarding the manner in which the administration of a COVID-19 vaccine conflicts with the religious observance, practice, or belief of the student.
    - iv. These exempt students may be entitled to a reasonable accommodation that does not pose an undue hardship on Dzilh-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community School. School officials will consider accommodation requests on an individualized basis and may rely on recommendations from the CDC when deciding whether effective accommodations are available that would not pose an undue hardship on School operations. For example, the School may grant a reasonable accommodation by requiring an unvaccinated student to: (1) follow applicable CDC safety measures; (2) undergo regular COVID-19 testing; and (3) provide proof of negative COVID-19 status prior to reporting for in-person activities at the School or off-campus.
2. In designing a reasonable accommodation, the Dzilh-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community School will take into consideration the student vaccination prevalence, the amount of contact with others, and other applicable CDC or NNDOH guidance, as appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> Once vaccines are made available for children under the age of five (5) years old, this Policy will apply to enrollment for those students as well.

3. Students in need of an exemption from this policy due to a disability or medical reason, or because of a sincerely held religious belief consistent with Navajo and federal law, must submit a request for accommodation to the Principal to begin the interactive accommodation process prior to student enrollment for review and approval.

C. POLICY FOR STUDENTS UNDER THE AGE OF FIVE (5) YEARS OLD

1. The Dzilh-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community School provides preschool (FACE) and kindergarten services for the children ranging in the age from three (3) years old to those just under five (5) year old. For these students under the age of five,<sup>2</sup> who are not yet eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, the CDC advises making and ‘cohorting’. Cohorting is the practice of keeping students together in a small group and having each group stay together throughout the day, while minimizing contact with other cohorts. Pursuant to this guidance, Dzilh-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community School will enforce the following making and cohorting provisions to mitigate the spread of the virus:
  - a. Students are required to wear well-fitting face masks (unless medical or developmental conditions prohibit use) except when eating or drinking.<sup>3</sup>
  - b. Students will use separate entrances to their classrooms so as not to expose the rest of the student population;
  - c. Students will eat both breakfast and lunch in their own classrooms daily;
  - d. Recess for students will be scheduled at a different time than for the rest of the student population;
  - e. Students will be seated on their buses according to seating plans specifically designed to mitigate the spread of the virus;
  - f. Teachers will provide their own specials activities, including art, physical education, Navajo language and culture, and library for students;
  - g. To the extent possible during the school day and on Dzilh-Na-O-Dith-Hle Community School property, students under the age of five (5) years old will not be permitted to mingle with students from other grades; and
  - h. Students are required to receive the COVID-19 vaccination within thirty (30) days of turning five (5) years old.

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<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of Section C only, “Students” refers to those FACE or Kindergarten students who are under the age of five unless otherwise specified.

<sup>3</sup> If medical developmental conditions prevent a student’s ability to mask, the parent or guardian of the student must provide evidence of such to the school.