



January 28, 2021

Governor Mike DeWine
Office of the Governor
77 S. High St., 30th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: Vaccine Consideration for Ohio's Early Childhood Workforce

Dear Governor DeWine:

Thank you for your leadership during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We know that you face challenging decisions daily in your efforts to keep Ohioans safe and, at the same time, support Ohio's economic recovery. With the rollout of the vaccination, we all feel a sense of optimism and hope for the future, but the limited supply of vaccine has presented you with a new set of challenging decisions in how to prioritize its distribution.

We are reaching out to you to urge you to prioritize the early childhood workforce to receive the vaccine as soon as possible. Like the educators in the K-12 system, early childhood educators provide a vital function for Ohio's children and families. As a workforce, they have stepped up to provide the essential childcare services Ohio's working families need in order to continue their employment. At the same time, they are providing children with those social and developmental experiences essential to ensure they enter school ready to learn and succeed.

We hear directly from the programs we support and the families they serve, that it is crucial to have the staff of early childhood programs vaccinated in order to allow programs to stay open; to resume operations with the pre-pandemic number of children in each class; for families to stay employed; and for children to have the opportunity to play, learn and develop in the most beneficial way possible.

As Governor, your strong commitment to children has been evident in the policies and programs you have put into place, and we applaud all that you have done and continue to do in that regard. We now ask you to extend that commitment to supporting early care and education programs by prioritizing the vaccination of their staff. The impact will be immediate and visible across the state of Ohio and will diminish the deleterious effect that the pandemic is having on Ohio's youngest children and their families.

We thank you for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy R. Kaplan".

Amy R. Kaplan
Vice President, External Affairs

CC: LeeAnne Cornyn, Director, Governor's Office of Children's Initiatives
Kara Bertke-Wente, Assistant Director, ODJFS

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