

Parent Advocacy Guide Student Vaccine Mandate

Created in consultation with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), Principal's Association of Christian Schools, and the Washington Federation of Independent Schools (WFIS) leadership

General Parent Advocacy Tips:

- When advocating for a position, **always start with a thank you.**
- Typically, legislators will not get back to you. However, if they do, it is **not** an invitation to continue the dialogue unless they ask a specific question.
- Keep all comments **focused on young children's vaccine mandates.** Do not add other issues to the conversation, or the message will become diluted. In this case, things like mask mandates or other ways the state has managed the pandemic would be very counter-productive.
- Keep the letter short: one-page max, half a page best. Short, to the point messaging is always best. People often read the first line of the paragraphs only.
- If a parent writing the letter has been vaccinated, that's worth putting into the letter.

Topics/language that is inflammatory and sound "party-line" – caution using these as often this closes dialog

- Government Overreach
- Personal Freedom or Liberty
- Religious Liberty
- My body, my choice
- Unconstitutional
- Discriminatory

Who To Send Letter:

1. Washington State Board of Health Board of Directors: The Board Member Email: wsboh@sbboh.wa.gov
2. Legislators: Find your legislator **here**. Put in the address of your home (parents) and find all three legislators—two representatives and one senator.
3. Governor Inslee's Contact Form: <https://www.governor.wa.gov/contact>

Sample Letter:

Dear Members of the State Board of Health, OR Representative xxxxx, OR Senator xxxx OR Governor Inslee:

I am the parent of (how many) children ages x and x. I am concerned that the state will mandate parents vaccinate their children to attend school, and I am writing to ask that you please not support a vaccination mandate.

Thank you.

(And then use one or two of the following as a guide for your letter)

1. I am concerned about the unknown, long-term effects of the COVID vaccines on small children. Scientists have not studied the vaccine long enough to ensure its safety for young people. While I am grateful there is a vaccine, I want the decision to give my young child this vaccine to be between my doctor and me.
2. The emergency nature of the pandemic should focus the government's vaccine mandates on the people for whom the virus is truly an emergency and are most impacted by the disease. Children are not affected by high death or hospitalization rates. The safety of the adult, non-vaccinated community should not rest on the backs of young children who risk unknown short-term and long-term effects from any medicine.
3. A successful rollout of the COVID vaccines for children is dependent on public confidence in the vaccine. Building confidence will take time. Rushing to mandate this drug at the potential expense of a child's health engenders fear and distrust. Therefore, we ask you to move this vaccine forward with caution and utilize the safety protocols established by the State Health Board for other vaccines. Do not rush to a student vaccine mandate for something that is not an emergency for young children.
4. There is currently a lack of transparency about the adverse effects of COVID vaccinations. The information shared at the local levels does not include the reality of the risks of the vaccine. Yet, in everybody's community, someone has had an adverse reaction or hospitalization directly associated with the vaccine. The lack of complete information about the vaccines, good and bad, breeds the feeling of conspiracy. Citizens need to be able to rely on the government to provide information to understand the risks. In addition, parents need transparency and complete information to feel secure about the vaccines.

End the letter with a nice salutation that conveys gratitude, honor, and respect.