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CONTACT:

Nancy Halley

WakeEd Partnership

nhalley@WakeEd.org

919-780-5208

WakeEd Partnership Urges Higher Priority for Teachers for COVID-19 Vaccination

RALEIGH, N.C. – As calls from state leaders increase and legislation advances in the NC General Assembly for public schools to quickly return to in-person classroom instruction, [WakeEd Partnership](#) (WakeEd), a business-backed nonprofit organization committed to supporting public schools in Wake County, [urged state and local leaders](#) to move educators up to a higher priority for COVID-19 vaccinations as quickly as possible to make in-person instruction safer for students, teachers and their families.

“Teachers are essential workers, so let’s vaccinate them like they are,” said WakeEd Partnership President Keith Poston. “We insist educators are essential workers, yet we prioritize other essential workers ahead of them.”

“Twenty-four states and the District of Columbia are allowing some or all of their educators to receive Covid-19 vaccines now – North Carolina should do the same,” Poston added.

The Wake County Public School System is the state’s largest school district with more than 10,000 teachers, about ten percent of the state’s total number.

“Yes, schools should be open because there is no replacement for high-quality, in-person instruction, despite a tremendous effort by teachers to keep learning going while students can’t be on campus,” Poston continued. “But insisting teachers can be in close quarters among students with minimal distancing is dangerous without vaccinating them.”

“If schools follow proper safety protocols, the risk of in-person learning can be minimized, but many schools simply lack the space, ventilation, staff and resources to do so,” Poston continued. “The best and safest path is vaccination.”

WakeEd Partnership [pointed to other states](#) that have prioritized teachers for vaccination and within subgroups. Teachers could be prioritized higher without significantly disrupting the overall vaccine rollout plan. For example, even if teachers remain in Group 3, they could be prioritized within that

group at the county level starting with teachers who are teaching in person now to get the process started.

About WakeEd Partnership

WakeEd Partnership is an independent, nonprofit organization composed of business and community leaders committed to improving public education. Since 1983, the Partnership has advocated for excellent educational opportunities for all students in the Wake County Public School System. For more information, please visit www.wakeed.org.

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