

Statement From Iea President Kathi Griffin On Deadline Extension Of Governor's Executive Order On Vaccination Or Weekly Testing

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SPRINGFIELD – The following statement is attributable to Illinois Education Association (IEA) President Kathi Griffin:

“Today’s announcement of the two-week deadline extension on the governor’s Executive Order on vaccines is welcome news. We have said all along that the best place for students to be is in the classroom, as long as it’s safe. We believe the governor’s executive order – which encourages all education employees from preschool through college to be vaccinated and if they can’t, or won’t, then to be tested weekly – will help keep schools open and all those who work and learn inside them safe.

“Ultimately, keeping everyone safe and healthy while they are working and learning is the main goal. Extending the deadline will give school districts and higher education institutions more time to bargain the details and the impact of the order with employees, an important step that must take place to ensure that our members’ concerns are addressed. It will also give school leaders time to develop plans, secure testing, and even offer vaccination clinics.

“We support public health strategies that work. Vaccines are the most effective way to ensure safety. And, vaccines combined with other known effective mitigation strategies, such as wearing masks, washing hands, keeping socially distanced, appropriate building ventilation, and a vibrant testing program for students and staff will help all of us meet the goal of keeping doors open and everyone safe and healthy.”

About the IEA

At 135,000 members strong, the Illinois Education Association (IEA-NEA) is the largest union in Illinois. The IEA represents PreK-12 teachers outside the city of Chicago and education support staff, higher education faculty and support staff, retired education employees, and students preparing to become teachers, statewide.