

Letter to the Editor, *Los Angeles Times* re: “L.A. students must get COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available for them, Beutner says” (January 11, 2021):

Dear Editor,

The original headline of the story, “L.A. students must get COVID-19 vaccine to return to campus, Beutner says,” was misleading and, unfortunately, repeated on TV and radio before it was corrected. We fully anticipate having students back on campus before vaccines for children are available.

We are working to provide vaccines to all who work in schools and, when vaccines are approved for children, to extend that opportunity for our students to receive the same protection. There is no vaccine currently approved for children so the actual vaccination of students is likely a ways off.

Existing federal and state rules govern services to students with differences and disabilities and make sure no children go hungry while requiring adults to be tested for tuberculosis and students to be vaccinated for measles and mumps. This crisis is not the time to lessen standards which protect the health and safety of all in a school community – students, teachers, staff and their families.

Los Angeles Unified has repeatedly demonstrated the capability to provide a safety net to the community since this crisis began. Our schools have provided more than 95 million meals along with 18 million items of much-needed supplies to families in need. We’ve made sure all of the more than half-million students in our schools have computers and access to the internet to remain connected with their school community and continue learning online. We are operating the nation’s largest school-based COVID-19 testing and community engagement effort at school sites which are conveniently located in communities we serve spread across more than 700 square miles.

Our goal remains opening classrooms in schools as soon as possible in the safest way possible. That includes participating in a program to make sure all in the school community have access to a vaccine for COVID-19.

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