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PERSONAL HEALTH DIVISION

For Immediate Release

July 15, 2021

Students vaccinated by Aug. 3 will return to school fully vaccinated this fall

Parents checking off their to-do list as their child returns to school – buying new pencils and a backpack, shopping for a new back-to-school outfit and checking on the class schedule – should add getting their child vaccinated against COVID-19.

Children aged 12 and older who get their first dose by August 3 can be fully vaccinated before school starts after Labor Day. Those who receive both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have the most protection against the virus and fully vaccinated students can return to school safer this fall, say officials with the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department.

Superintendents across the health department's two-county jurisdiction are encouraging their students to get vaccinated so they can fully enjoy in-person learning and special activities as they return to school this fall. The shot gives students not only protection from the virus but also saves them the inconvenience of having to quarantine should they be exposed to a COVID-19 case.

"As we navigated the complexities of operating a school district during the 2020-2021 school year, we repeatedly asked our students, staff, and families what we could do to support them. The number one answer, by a landslide margin, was to "keep schools open", said Suttons Bay Public Schools Superintendent Casey Petz. "We know the vast majority of our students need to be in school everyday and we have done all we can to make in-person instruction a reasonable and safe option for families, even in a Pandemic. Thankfully, we have a really useful tool available to us to continue making that possible for the 2021-2022 school year - safe and effective vaccines. We respect the personal choices of all our staff and students to choose what is best for their unique situation, but we also know that our high percentage of vaccinated students, staff, families, and community members in Leelanau County (currently the highest percentage of vaccinated people age 12 and up in the State) will be one way that we can keep our doors open safely all year, limit quarantines due to close contact, and reduce the rate of transmission for at-risk individuals and/or unvaccinated populations," he added.

Students are welcome at all of the health department clinics and have the option of scheduling an appointment ahead of time or simply walking in. Parent consent is required. Public health nurses are on site at these events and able to answer any questions that residents may have regarding the vaccines. All clinics are open to walk-ins or people can register by clicking on the clinic link below:

- **Tuesday, July 20th**
 - Suttons Bay Middle School Gymnasium, 310 S. Elm Street, Suttons Bay, MI 49682
 - Time: 10:00-12:00pm
 - Vaccine: Moderna, Janssen, and Pfizer (open to 12 or older, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
 - To schedule an appointment: [Click Here](#)
- **Wednesday, July 21st**
 - Crystal Cafe, 1681 Benzie Hwy, Benzonia, MI 49616
 - Time: 4:00- 6:00pm
 - Vaccine: Moderna, Janssen, and Pfizer (open to 12 or older, parent/guardian must accompany minor)
 - To schedule an appointment: [Click Here](#)

As of 4:00 p.m. today, the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department is reporting:

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 1,261, Leelanau– 1,264
- Active COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 4, Leelanau– 4
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Benzie– 1,223, Leelanau– 1,244
- Confirmed COVID-19 deaths in the following counties: Benzie – 34, Leelanau– 16
- Hospitalized: 161 total; 1 currently

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