



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on November 11, 2021

Scholarship Lottery and Cash: NY Launches COVID Vax Incentives for Kids

The Empire State is launching a new program specifically designed to incentivize children ages 5 to 11 to get vaccinated against COVID.

To promote a COVID shot among the newly eligible population, Governor Kathy Hochul announced Tuesday the "[Vaccinate. Educate. Graduate](#)" plan, which will allow any child in the 5 to 11 age group who gets at least one dose of the Pfizer jab by December 19 a chance to win a full ride to a State University of New York (SUNY) or City University of New York (CUNY) college or university.



Per the program:

Winners will receive funding for the full scholarship (including tuition, fees, room-and-board, and expenses) to a two-year or four-year New York State public college or university.

AP Images
Kathy Hochul

The 50 winners will be announced over the course of five weeks, starting on November 24 to December 22.

According to the official site, the vaccine Incentive program is "NOT A GUARANTEE OR ASSURANCE OF ADMISSION OR ENTRY into any college or university." Which means that besides getting at least one dose of the jab, students will have to "independently meet all requirements for admission and continued attendance at an institution, including but not limited to all academic performance requirements, degree program requirements, health requirements, and student conduct policies."

Also, a child will be required to achieve full vaccination in order to remain eligible to receive the prize.

[Announcing](#) the incentive, Governor Hochul promised to "creatively support and celebrate those [children aged 5-11] who get vaccinated" by providing them with a chance to participate in a "once-in-a-lifetime program."

The CUNY and SUNY Chancellors praised the efforts and called for the parents and guardians to get their young children vaccinated against COVID as soon as possible in order to "drive down the overall number of positive COVID cases and ensure all New Yorkers are protected."

Since the CDC announced last week that children 5 to 11 years old are eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccine, more than 350 New York school districts have already announced they plan to host vaccine events for that group, per the governor.



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As reported by [NBC New York](#), more than 4,500 New York City students ages 5 to 11 got jabbed on the first day of the citywide in-school drive program that started on Monday, bringing the total dosed in that age group to 24,000 since late last week. That amounts for about 3.6 percent of the city's estimated 660,000 newly eligible children.

New York public schools will be a major element of the vaccination push: In total, about 1,070 schools will host vaccine sites, and 24 new mobile vaccine sites will be stationed outside of schools to "help meet demand," per the outlet.

Just a day after the CDC recommended the Pfizer shots for young children, New York Mayor Bill de Blasio announced New York's public schools would immediately begin rolling them out. The neck-breaking speed of the rollout comes as no surprise for many observers since the Biden administration [has been preparing](#) for the nationwide distribution of the shots even before they were authorized for the emergency use by federal regulators.

At a November 3 [press conference](#), di Blasio said that each city school will have a designated day when the COVID vaccination will be provided "at the school building itself." And if the demand is steady, more in-school vaccine days will be considered by the city. The parents or guardians have an option to accompany their children or at least provide a verbal or over-the-phone consent. Every city worker or contractor would get four hours paid leave per child per shot, the mayor added.

In a [press conference](#) the following day, de Blasio said that children will also be eligible to receive a city-funded \$100 incentive offered to new vaccine recipients since mid-July. "Everyone can use a little more money around the holidays," the mayor said, adding, "but more importantly, we want our kids and families to be safe."

Maud Maron, an Independent candidate for the New York City Council, [criticized](#) the vaccination campaign for young children and called out the lies of the state and city officials. Noting that it "feels like groundhog day," Maron said, "Teens were promised a return to normalcy if they were vaccinated. That has not happened. Middle and high school kids are masked in class, limited in sports participation and cut off from normal school experiences like dances and plays." He added that those parents who believe that vaccinating their young children will return them "back to normal" "were not paying attention."

The push to vaccinate young children comes despite the fact that that population has proven to face extremely low risk from COVID. At the same time, tens of thousands of reports of serious adverse events and deaths following the inoculations paired with virtually [non-existent](#) safety data on experimental shots has led [numerous experts](#) to denounce the effort to vaccinate children.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration is [planning](#) to send a letter to U.S. elementary schools in the next week asking them to host vaccination clinics, while his Department of Education is urging schools to host town halls and webinars where parents can "learn about the benefits" of the shots.



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