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All,

Earlier today, the MCCS board of trustees voted to rescind the student vaccination protocol. This action shifts the colleges from requiring that students have the COVID-19 vaccine to strongly encouraging them to get COVID-19 vaccines and boosters. At the same time, we at the colleges are committing to more deeply engaging in wellness education efforts.

Through the last three years, we have prioritized the health and safety of our communities and today's action continues in that vein.

Vaccines and boosters were once the best, most logical, line of defense in keeping our community safe. Today, better access to and range of preventative and treatment options for COVID-19, strong vaccination rates in Maine, and improved outcomes for pandemic victims, make this a timely, solid, decision.

However, it's important that we deliver on our pledge to strengthen and expand wellness education programs aimed at mitigating the spread of respiratory and other illnesses, including COVID-19, influenza, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV.)

Each college will do this in its own way to best reach members of the campus community, and college presidents will use their prerogative to implement masking protocols and other safety measures based on local conditions, keeping our colleges as safe as possible.

As a result of the vote, HR will remove the vaccine requirement from our job postings.

One exception to the student vaccine protocol worth noting is that students in some programs may still need the vaccine due to the vaccination requirements at third-party locations, such as student placement sites.

I do want to take this opportunity to acknowledge how challenging the last three years of COVID-19 have been and thank you for the tremendous dedication and effort all of you put into your jobs on a daily basis. It isn't easy, and I appreciate the good job you do.

As we move forward, know that we will keep working to keep our communities healthy and safe, and we will continue monitoring the latest healthcare guidance.

Be well,

David 