

Biden brushes off the GOP threats to sue over vaccine mandates

September 10, 2021



President Biden tours Brookland Middle School in Washington, D.C., on Friday. Biden has encouraged school districts to promote vaccines to protect students as they return to school amid a coronavirus resurgence. (Manuel Balce Ceneta/AP)

President Biden said he was “disappointed” by Republican governors who are opposing his call for widespread vaccinations of teachers and school staff members. To those

who wish to sue the federal government over mandates, he said, "Have at it."

Speaking at Brookland Middle School in Washington, D.C., Biden said he was saddened that some GOP governors "have been so cavalier with the health of these kids, so cavalier with the health of their communities.

"We're playing for real here," Biden said. "This isn't a game."

RELATED: [Anchorage mayor says he won't require COVID-19 vaccines, pushing back against Biden mandate](#)

A number of Republican officials accused Biden of overreach Thursday when he announced his proposals, which included forthcoming rules for private companies with more than 100 employees to implement required vaccinations or weekly testing for their staff.

"Once again, President Biden has missed the mark. His outrageous, overreaching mandates will no doubt be challenged in the courts," said Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey, who [herself has expressed frustration with unvaccinated people](#) as her state has faced a surge in cases from the delta variant. "Placing more burdens on both employers and employees during a pandemic with the rising inflation rates and lingering labor shortages is totally unacceptable," she added.

The Republican National Committee threatened to sue the administration over the rules for private business.

Biden laid out a strategy to move out of the pandemic

As part of a [series of steps to combat](#) the surging pandemic, Biden on Thursday [called on states to mandate that teachers and staff](#) be vaccinated. He [also urged parents of adolescents ages 12](#) and up to ensure their kids are vaccinated and said he was supporting the Food and Drug Administration's efforts to evaluate the vaccine effects for children under 12.

[In an interview on NPR's Morning Edition](#), Dr. Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health, said depending on the data, vaccine approval for [12 and under kids](#) could come within "a couple of three or four weeks." Collins added, "You want to be sure this is done right. Kids are not miniature adults, and we want to be sure that everything that's put forward is going to be safe and effective."

[\[Sign up for Alaska Public Media's daily newsletter to get our top stories delivered to your inbox.\]](#)

The Los Angeles Unified School District — the second largest in the U.S. — on Thursday approved a measure mandating vaccines for all students 12 and older.

Biden also said he will order that all federal teachers employed by the Defense Department, Head Start and Early Head Start programs, and teachers and staff at Bureau of Indian Education-operated schools get vaccinated.

In calling [out his critics](#) at the school on Friday, Biden said the series of measures were “hard but necessary” to beat the pandemic. [Recent polling shows](#) that the share of adults saying they won’t get vaccinated has dropped amid the latest surge in cases due to the delta variant.

Copyright 2021 NPR. To see more, visit <https://www.npr.org>.