



COVID-19 Vaccination Interest Among Georgia Educators

Two-thirds of Georgia educators who participated in a recent survey want to be vaccinated for the COVID-19 virus. Nearly 9,000 educators from across the state responded to the survey conducted by the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE). Their interest in receiving the vaccine varies by geography, age, virus risk level, position, and sex. If school districts offer vaccinations, most educators surveyed also report they would participate. Key findings include:

Virus Risk-Level

- Half of Black educators report being high risk for the virus, a greater portion than among Hispanic educators (40 percent) and White (30 percent) educators.

COVID-19 Positive

- Nearly 17 percent of all educators indicate they have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus or its antibodies.
- Educators under 54 are more likely to report a positive test than those 55 and over.

Vaccination Interest

- The majority of educators across the state's geographic regions want the vaccine though higher portions of those working in urban districts would like it than educators in other areas.
- Educators who are older or high risk for the virus have greater interest in getting vaccinated than younger teachers and those with lower risk.
- Educators serving in school-level leadership roles and central office roles are more likely to want the vaccine than classroom teachers and other educators.
- Male educators are also more likely than female educators to want the vaccine.

PAGE encourages state leaders to quickly provide vaccinations for educators who want them.

Methodology

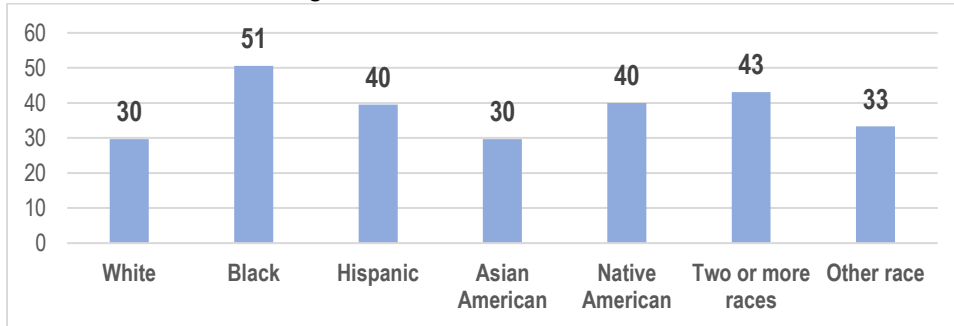
Nearly 9,000 educators participated in the PAGE vaccination online survey. The link to the survey was distributed by email to more than 68,000 PAGE members on Feb. 8.¹ Members received reminders by email and social media. The survey closed on Feb. 15.

¹ PAGE has approximately 95,000 members. The survey was distributed to the more than 68,000 who have supplied email addresses. It was also available to members via social media postings.

COVID-19 Risk Level

About one-third of respondents report being high risk for poor outcomes of the virus. Risk varies by race with Black educators reporting the highest levels of risk.

Percent of Educators at High Risk for COVID-19

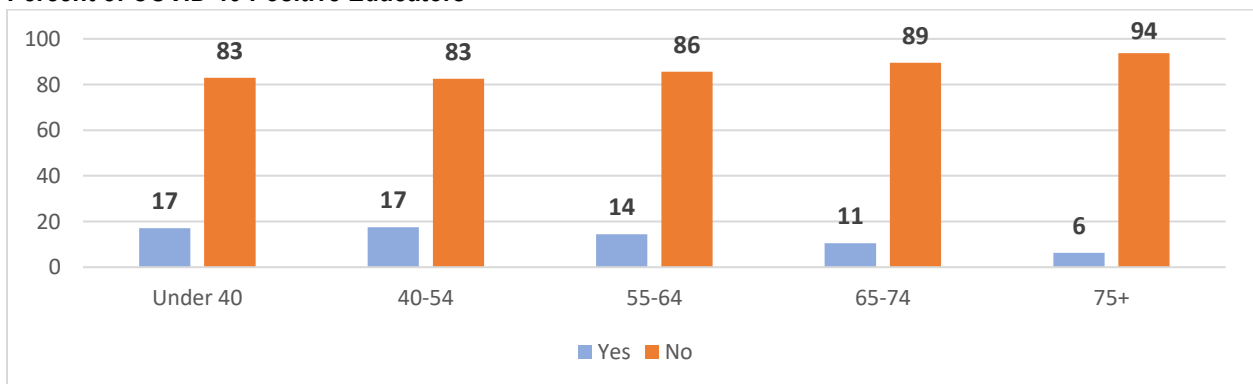


Risk level also varies by position. About 30 percent of classroom teachers, school-level leaders and central office staff report being high risk while approximately 40 percent of paraprofessionals and administrative support staff are high risk. Nurses, transportation staff/bus drivers indicate their risk level is higher, as well.

COVID-19 Positive

Nearly 17 percent of all educators say they have had a positive test for the COVID-19 virus or its antibodies. Educators age 54 and younger are slightly more likely to report a positive test than older educators.

Percent of COVID-19 Positive Educators

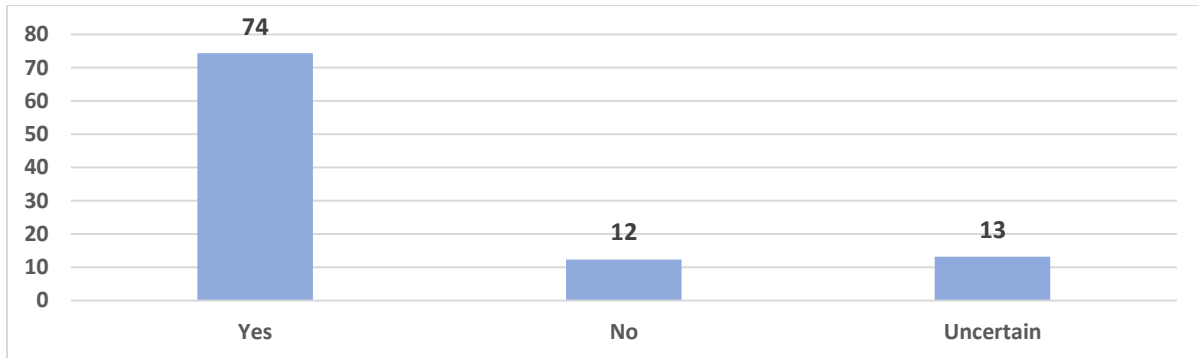


There is also a small variation among educators based on race. Black and Asian American educators are somewhat less likely to report a positive COVID-19 or antibody test than educators of other races.

Vaccination Interest

Nearly 66 percent of all survey respondents report they want to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. About 19 percent do not want the vaccine while approximately 16 percent say they are uncertain. Survey respondents who work in districts in the 10-county metropolitan Atlanta area are more likely to want a vaccine than those who work outside it.

Percent of Educators Who Want a Vaccine in Metro Atlanta Districts



Districts: Atlanta Public Schools, Buford City Schools, Clayton County, Cherokee County, Cobb County, Decatur City, DeKalb County, Douglas County, Fayette County, Fulton County, Gwinnett County, Henry County, Marietta City Schools, Rockdale County

This higher interest in the vaccine persists when districts across the 21 counties² identified by the Atlanta Regional Commission as the extended metropolitan Atlanta region are reviewed: 71 percent of educators in this larger area want the vaccine, about 15 percent do not, and nearly 14 percent are uncertain.

In metro Savannah, which is comprised of Bryan, Chatham, and Effingham Counties, 65 percent of educators want the vaccine, about 20 percent do not, and nearly 15 percent are uncertain. In the metro Augusta area, made up of Columbia and Richmond Counties, a similar portion of educators want the vaccine: about 65 want it, about 16 percent do not, and 19 percent are uncertain.

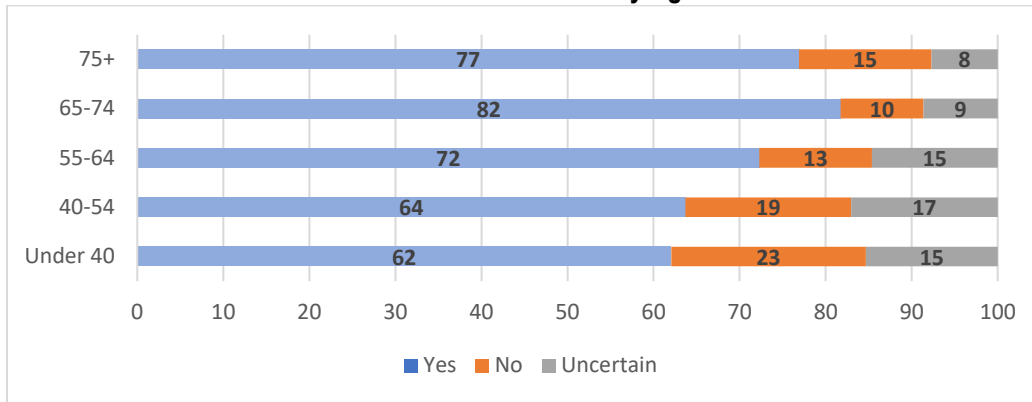
A smaller portion of educators in many rural areas say they want the vaccine: about 58 percent say they do, 24 percent do not, and 18 percent are uncertain.³

Older educators are more likely to indicate wanting the vaccine than are younger educators.

² The 21 counties are: Barrow, Bartow, Carroll, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Dawson, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Newton, Paulding, Rockdale, Spalding, Walton

³ Rural counties are the 120 counties identified as such by the Georgia Department of Community Health under the Rural Hospital Organization Assistance Act of 2017.

Percent of Educators Who Want a COVID-19 Vaccine by Age



Similarly educators who are at higher risk of poor outcomes from the virus are more likely to want the vaccine than are educators who identify as being at lower risk: 73 percent compared to 62 percent.

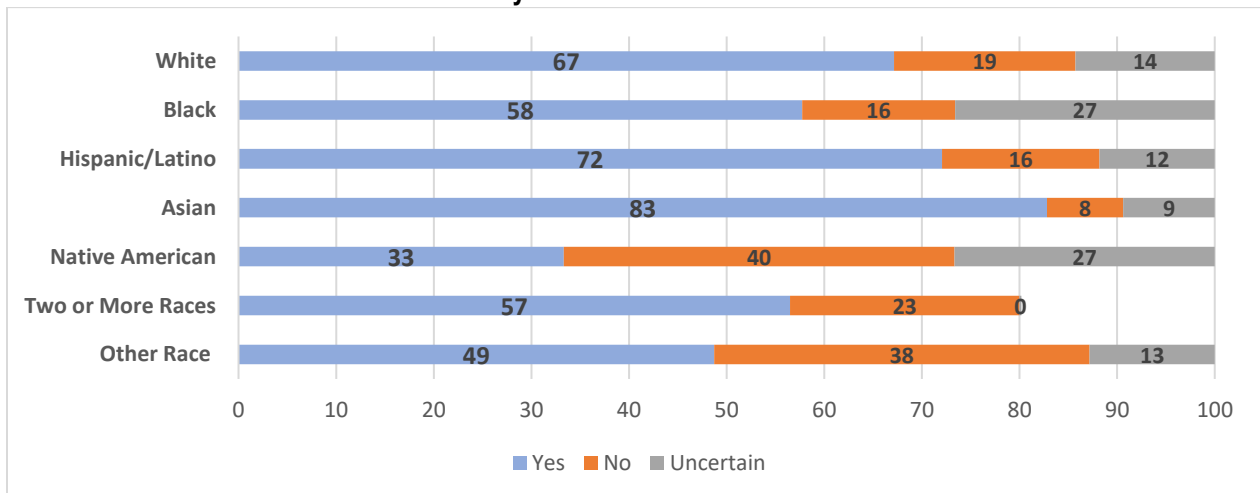
Desire for the vaccine also varies by educators' positions.

Percent of Educators Who Want a COVID-19 Vaccine by Position

School-level leader	74	Transportation/bus driver	73
Classroom teacher	66	School nutrition	51
Paraprofessional	56	Administrative support	65
Central office staff	74	School nurse	68
School counselor/social worker/psychologist	72	Other	67

Educators' interest in being vaccinated also differs by race.

Percent of Educators Who Want a Vaccine by Race



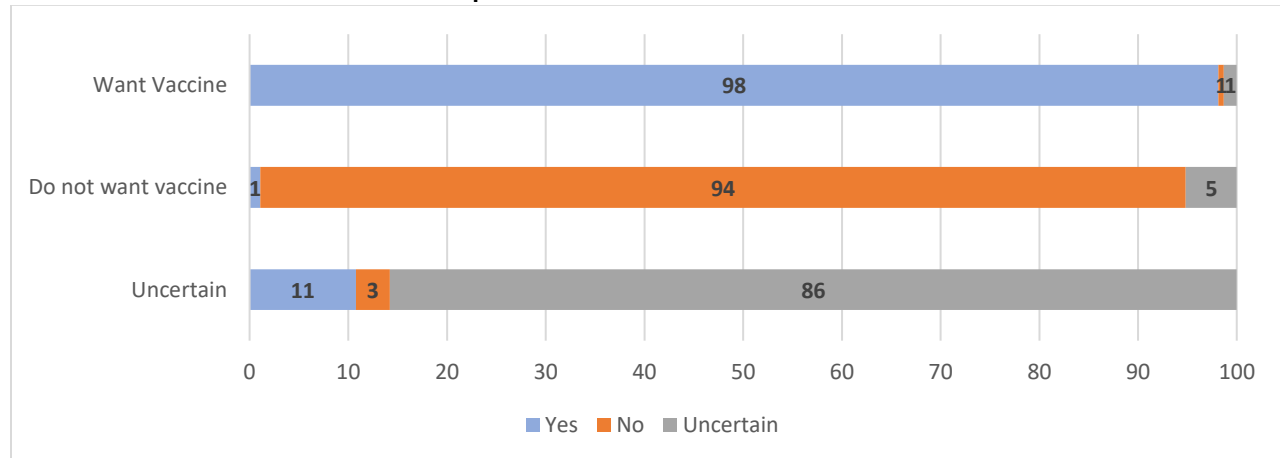
Male educators are more likely than female educators to report that they want the vaccine.

- Yes: male-74 percent, female-65 percent
- No: male-16 percent, female 19 percent
- Uncertain: male-11 percent, female 17 percent

This difference may be connected to the location of the districts in which educators work. Preliminary analysis suggests that male respondents are more likely to work in metro Atlanta districts than female respondents. Men are also more likely serve as school leaders, a group in which a higher portion of respondents want the vaccine.

Most educators would participate in a district-sponsored vaccination initiative, though their willingness to do so is tied to their interest in getting the vaccine.

Percent of Educators Who Would Participate in District Vaccination



Looking Ahead

Educators across Georgia have demonstrated creativity, perseverance, and deep commitment to students since the virus emerged a year ago. Providing COVID-19 vaccinations for educators who want them is a critical step to move beyond the upheaval in public schools caused by the pandemic. It should be implemented with great speed with many educators working in the majority of Georgia's schools which have been open since fall. It is not the only step: The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html) states that schools can open for in-person instruction when mitigation strategies are used consistently.⁴ Connecting to students and engaging them in meaningful learning experiences are educators' passions. State leaders can help them do so by providing the resources and tools that each educator needs, including the COVID-19 vaccine for those who want it.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control. (2012, February 12). Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools Through Phased Mitigation. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html>