



# **PUBLIC HEALTH: A REVIEW ON STAFF VACCINE MANDATES**

Chilliwack School District - Partners in Learning!



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# STAFF VACCINE MANDATES

MHO CONSULTATION OCTOBER 19, 2021



## CONSIDERATIONS

- Vaccines are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19
- The vaccines used in B.C. are highly effective against COVID-19, including among variants of concern
- Everyone eligible is strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated
- Staff in the education sector are strongly encouraged to get fully vaccinated to protect themselves, their families, and other staff and students within school settings in which they work



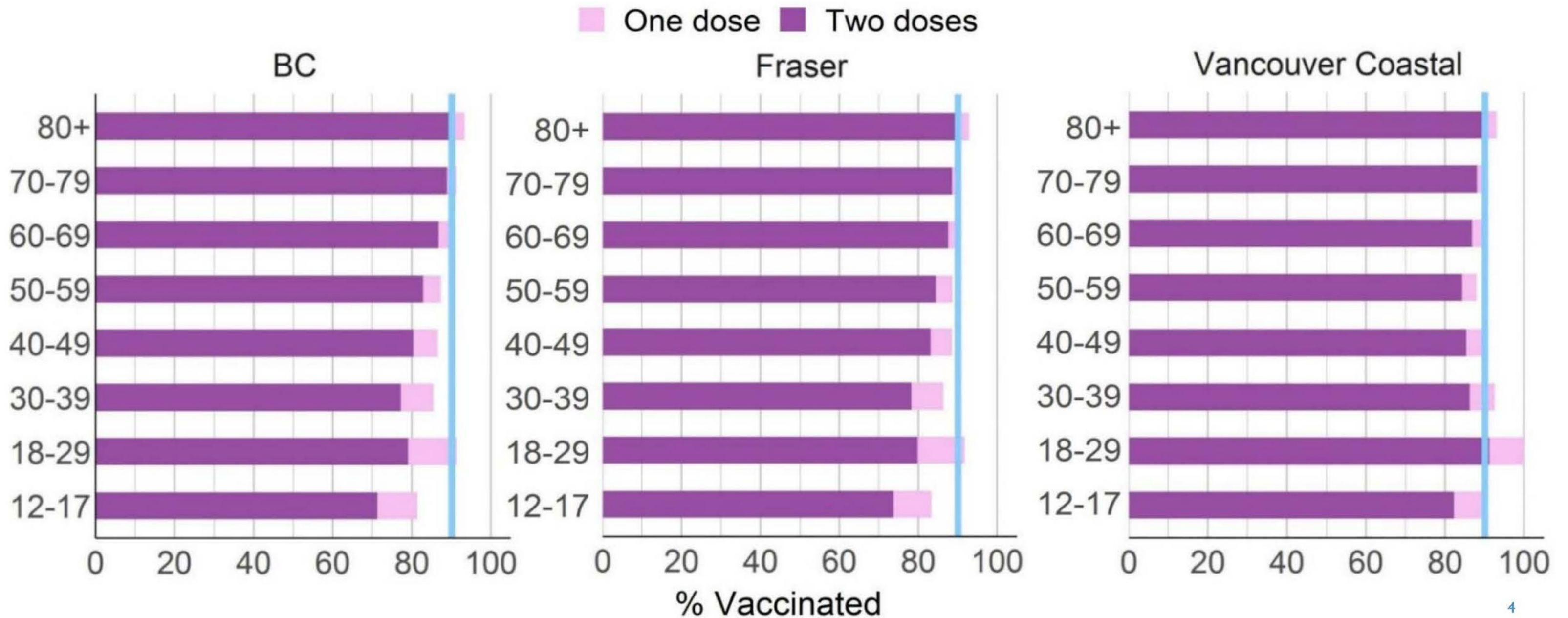
## CONSIDERATIONS

- People who are not vaccinated are at higher risk of getting and spreading COVID-19
- The value of mandating vaccination for staff may be limited where community vaccine coverage is already high, and schools are following COVID-19 safety plans
- While higher community vaccine coverage will result in lower risk in schools, schools may safely operate with lower than 100% vaccine coverage
- Vaccine mandates are currently being required in settings with high risk of transmission/severe outcomes – schools are low risk, and have low risk attendees





## VACCINE COVERAGE BY AGE GROUP, AS OF OCTOBER 5, 2021





## FRASER HEALTH CLUSTER ANALYSIS, SEP 7 – OCT 14, 2021

- 2009 school-associated cases of COVID-19 in Fraser Region schools
  - 210 cases were staff (10.5% of total school-associated cases)
  - Approximately 50% of staff cases were vaccinated, 50% unvaccinated
- 104 clusters were identified, 22 (21%) involved staff
  - Staff were the index cases in 12 of these clusters (11.5% of total clusters), and included both unvaccinated and vaccinated staff
- Key takeaway: students, rather than staff, are majority of cases and primarily drive in-school transmission



## PROS

- Potentially increase vaccine coverage within the school setting
- Fully vaccinated individuals are not required to isolate, allowing people to continue to work and ensuring continuity of services.
- Educators and school staff are role models





## CONS

- Efficacy in minimizing transmission may be limited particularly in areas with existing high vaccination coverage
- May potentially exacerbate inequities (lower vaccine coverage among low-income, lower education, racialized minorities, etc)
- May entrench those opposed to vaccine
- A mandate is one of the most intrusive/intensive interventions available. Other less restrictive measures may be possible





## PROCESS

- If you are going to implement a vaccine mandate, an incremental approach would be recommended (attestation, verification, decision)
- Public Health does not have the resources or the jurisdiction to implement and enforce a school staff vaccine mandate
- Public Health does not have the resources to stand up testing sites/rapid antigen testing in schools