

# Severe Reactions to COVID-19 Vaccine Close Schools in Michigan, Ohio and New York

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Schools in three states, Michigan, Ohio and New York were forced to close for a day last month after school staff could not work due to severe side effects from COVID-19 vaccinations.

Schools in Alma and Ithaca, Michigan were closed on Feb. 16, 2021 because the majority of the teachers had experienced side effects after they received the second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.<sup>1</sup> School superintendent Donalynn Ingersoll closed school in Alma in anticipation of the vaccine's severe side effects, saying:

*As 70 percent of our staff (across all employee groups) will be receiving their second dose over the weekend, this means there is potential for us to be unable to provide coverage for the number of staff who may not report for work on Monday.*<sup>2</sup>

Shepard schools in Michigan also closed its doors after a large number of the staff suffering from immediate negative reactions to the second dose of the Moderna mRNA-1273 vaccine called in sick.<sup>3</sup> Superintendent, Greg Miller, sent an e-mail

stating,

*Unfortunately we will need to call a snow day for tomorrow, Thursday, due to the district's staff experiencing ill symptoms from their second dose of the Covid vaccine. Their will be no on-line instruction.*<sup>4</sup>

In Ohio, schools in the Fairless district were forced to close school after many of the staff suffered negative reactions to the first round of the COVID-19 vaccination.<sup>5</sup> Maureen Ahmann, MD, medical director for Stark County Health Department said she was not concerned about the large number of people experiencing negative vaccine reactions said:

*As far as specifically the call-off numbers in Fairless, I haven't spoken to them, but I am not surprised if people are having some of the reactions like that to the vaccine. In fact, it's kind of good news because we know they are responding.*<sup>6</sup>

Ohio's Summit County Health Commissioner Donna Skoda stated:

*Feeling uncomfortable and having a headache is nowhere near what COVID can do to you and if you are fortunate enough in this vaccine shortage, to be able to have a vaccine offered to you, you should take it and put up with whatever side effects you have. ... As far as people using that as an excuse not to get the vaccine, that's their choice. No one is forcing anyone to get the vaccine. That's not happening so if their choice is they are not going to take it, that's their health, that's their choice, but we are going to give it to as many people as want it.*<sup>7</sup>

Staff members in the Sandy Creek district schools in New York suffered a similar fate when one-third of the school staff

reported feeling ill after receiving the 2<sup>nd</sup> shot of Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine causing the school to close for a day.<sup>8</sup> Superintendent, Kyle Faulkner explained:

*We are a small district, and we had so many folks down and out today that we didn't have enough people to staff the schools,''* Faulkner said. *"Some people get pretty sick with the second shot."*<sup>9</sup>

## **Severe Side effects From COVID-19 Vaccines Were Expected**

When the COVID19 vaccines were authorized for emergency use in December, the chief scientist for the U.S. government's Operation Warp Speed said that between one and 15 percent of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccine trial volunteers reported, "significantly noticeable side effects"<sup>10</sup>

*The New York Times* reported that COVID-19 vaccine recipients may feel bad enough that they have to take a day off of work after the second dose of the vaccine. Half of the people in the Pfizer study experienced fatigue and at least 25-33 percent or more experienced headaches, chills and muscle pain.<sup>11</sup>

According to the documents submitted by Pfizer and Moderna to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee, the vaccines caused wide spread side effects in the clinical trials. The second dose of the vaccine manufactured by Pfizer caused fatigue in 59.4 percent, headaches in 51.7 percent, muscle pain in 37.3 percent, joint pain in 21.9 percent, chills in 35.1 percent, and fever in 15.8 percent of volunteers. Moderna reported fatigue in 68.5 percent, headache in 63 percent, aches and pains in 59.6 percent, chills in 43.4 percent, and fever in 15.6 percent of vaccine trial

participants.<sup>[12](#)</sup>

While the vast majority of these extreme flu-like side effects appear to be transient only lasting a day or two, more severe adverse reactions to the COVID-19 vaccines have been reported since the mass vaccination campaign of this experimental vaccine began. According to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) as of Feb. 12, there had been 15,923 adverse events reported from the COVID-19 vaccines including 3,126 serious events, 6161 life-threatening, 21 ER visits, 1,869 hospital stays and 929 deaths.<sup>[13](#)</sup> It is important to note that a 2011 report by Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Inc. funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that less than one percent of all vaccine adverse events are reported to VAERS.<sup>[14](#)</sup>

Some doctors contend that experiencing side effects after the COVID-19 vaccines is an expected immune response. Kavita Patel, MD an *NBC News* medical contributor said:

*The second vaccine (dose)—think of it as having that hit to your immune system, and your immune system now recognizes the vaccine, so it does its job.” She admitted that after getting the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose she, “felt, for about 36 hours, like I had the flu.”<sup>[15](#)</sup>*

Bill Moss, MD, pediatrician and professor of infectious disease epidemiology at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health said:

*The immune system is seeing the vaccine for the first time with the first dose and is reacting to that, and the cells of the immune system are recruited to kind of recognize that spike protein (the part of the coronavirus that the vaccine affects). So when the body’s immune system sees (the vaccine) a second time, there are more cells and there’s a more*

*intense immune response, resulting in those side effects.*

Both the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines have been granted Emergency Use Authorization (EUA), but they have not been officially approved for licensure by the FDA.<sup>[16](#) [17](#)</sup>