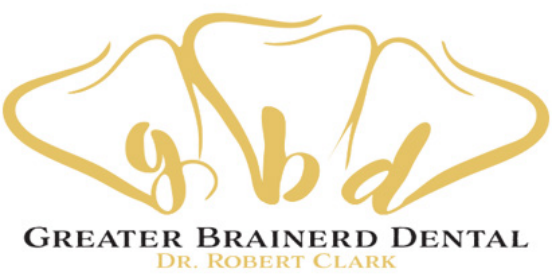


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CHATTANOOGA—A new agreement between the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and Cleveland State Community College offers an easier way for students to pursue a bachelor's degree.

The articulation agreement for the UTC Bachelor of Applied Science: Applied Leadership program allows Cleveland State students who receive an associate of applied science degree in advance business to seamlessly transfer those credits to the University.

From there, they can continue their

studies toward a bachelor of applied science leadership degree. Students can complete the online, accelerated program in 18 months once they meet admissions requirements for UTC.

"The partnerships, the focus on serving the community that we've had here, it has had a real impact. We appreciate the opportunity to provide options for students," said UTC Chancellor Steven R. Angle.

Having a four-year university close to Cleveland State gives students "the most economic and affordable way to

**FDA Authorizes Pfizer Booster Shot for Kids Ages 5 to 11**

A single dose of the Pfizer booster shot can be given to 5- to 11-year-olds, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced today.

The third shot can be given at least five months after healthy kids complete the two-dose vaccine series, the FDA said. Its action, which now goes to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for approval, dovetails with a rise in infections in many areas of the country.

"While it has largely been the case that COVID-19 tends to be less severe in children than adults, the Omicron wave has seen more kids getting sick with the disease and being hospitalized, and children may also experience longer-term effects, even following initially mild disease," said FDA commissioner Dr. Robert Califf. "The FDA is authorizing the use of a single booster dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for children 5 through 11 years of age to provide continued protection against COVID-19."

How safe is the vaccine?

Califf noted that vaccination is the most effective way to prevent COVID-19 and its consequences. And, he emphasized, it is safe.

The CDC must decide whether to formally recommend the booster for this age group. The CDC's scientific advisers are scheduled to meet on Thursday, according to the Associated

Press.

FDA officials based their decision on an analysis of data from a group of children in an ongoing trial that led to last fall's authorization of the Pfizer vaccine primary series in 5- to 11-year-olds.

Antibody responses were evaluated in 67 study participants who received a booster dose seven to nine months after completing the two-dose vaccine regimen. A month after the booster, their antibody levels were higher than before, according to the FDA.

The safety of a single Pfizer booster dose was assessed in about 400 children, aged 5 to 11, who received it five to nine months after the two-dose series.

The most commonly reported side effects were pain, redness and swelling at the injection site, as well as fatigue, headache, muscle or joint pain, and chills and fever.

Dr. Diego Hijano, an infectious disease specialist at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tenn., welcomed the FDA authorization.

"With an uptick in infections and the potential for a surge in the fall, a booster shot for children ages 5 to 11 is an important layer of protection," Hijano says. "Vaccines save lives. Parents of eligible children, five months out from their last COVID vaccine shot, should make appointments for their



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complete a bachelor's degree," said Cleveland State President Bill Seymour.

The articulation agreement is especially important to students who are

employed, Angle said.

"It is an affordable option which, in terms of time, they can take if they continue working," he said.



child's booster so they have full protection for the summer from severe illness and hospitalization."

Meanwhile, Califf urges parents whose eligible children have not yet been vaccinated to get the shots.

"Getting them vaccinated can help protect them from the potentially severe consequences that can occur, such as hospitalization and death," he said in an FDA news release.

The CDC notes that more than 350 kids between the ages of 5 and 11 have died as a result of COVID-19, according to AP.

Today's action follows the FDA's

authorization on Jan. 3 of a single booster dose of the Pfizer vaccine for 12- to 15-year-olds.

The FDA did not hold a meeting of its vaccine advisory committee before deciding on the Pfizer booster for 5- to 11-year-olds. It said there were no concerns that would benefit from additional discussion by committee members. Relevant documents about the decision are available on the FDA's website.

For more information on COVID-19 vaccines, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics. (Source: BlackDoctor.org by Jason Henderson)