



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on June 12, 2021

N.H. School Branded Unvaccinated Students with Sharpie at the Prom

Unvaccinated students attending the Exeter, New Hampshire, high-school prom, were “marked” with a sharpie pen and then tracked throughout the evening, a New Hampshire parental rights advocate reported.

Ann Marie Banfield, education policy analyst and parental rights advocate, [reported](#) New Hampshire Rep. Melissa Litchfield [posted](#) to Facebook that some constituents informed her their unvaccinated students who attended the Exeter High School prom Monday night “had a number written on them in Sharpie” and were tracked throughout the evening.



Photo: MileA/iStock/Getty Images Plus

Litchfield said those parents were concerned that children were singled out for not being vaccinated. In the post, the lawmaker quotes outraged parents that reached out regarding the eyebrow-raising practice of “branding” unvaccinated prom attendees:

was pretty fired up today after learning that kids who weren't vaccinated had a number written on them in Sharpie at the EHS prom last night. If they were on the dance floor, they had to raise their hands after every three songs so their numbers could be recorded by other underclass students for contact tracing purposes....

They also left the list of student names (first and last) with the info on whether they were vaccinated or not on a table outside after the prom... This information should 1. Not have been shared, and 2. Should never be left where anyone can have access to it....

I find it absolutely unbelievable that it was allowed to treat the kids like prisoners in Nazi Germany. Marking them, thus singling them out, and then having to raise their hands is beyond tolerable. First, the school could be looking at lawsuits for violation of HIPPA rights. They have no business asking for a vaccine card.

In photos sent to Litchfield in response to her Facebook post, you can see the black Sharpie on the students' hands while posing for prom photos.

“You had to produce your papers, and if you didn't produce your papers, you were branded with a black Sharpie,” Litchfield said. “What does that mean to you? I'm just going to let that sit there.”

In an email to *NBC10 Boston*, the district [explained](#) that the labeling was the school's own contact tracing system, which allowed all students to attend prom whether vaccinated or not.

“Our student and parent feedback has been extremely positive regarding the prom experience. We are aware that some concerns have been expressed that students were singled out or had their privacy



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violated. We made every effort possible — while adhering to contact tracing guidelines — to ensure that this did not happen,” Principal Mike Monahan said in a statement. “We hope the community will understand that while no model is perfect, this model lets the students enjoy a close to normal and highly desired experience to cap off their senior year. That’s the memory we want to leave them with.”

This district also said that, when students registered for prom, they were made aware of the contact tracing system.

However, Litchfield said parents had no idea and were frustrated they couldn’t speak out beforehand.

“It is not right that kids are feeling pressured from peers, school and government to get vaccinated,” one parent posted. “Kids should not feel they need to get the vaccination, or they will potentially ‘miss out’ on events. It is a personal choice and should remain that.” The parent added that separation and culling out those that won’t follow along - is a scary, slippery slope.

Banfield, who broke the story, pointed to the school’s violation of its own district’s [principles](#) on “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.” Those principles proclaim, among other things:

- “Individuals of all backgrounds and experiences are welcome”;
- “A core value [is] respect and celebration of all human differences”;
- “We believe it is our moral responsibility to share with our students and families their power to pursue justice for all people, especially people from historically marginalized communities”; and
- “Part of our educational mission is to awaken our students’ awareness of their power and privilege so that they may view the world through a lens of equity and help eliminate unjust systems and practices.”

Sadly, the incident at the N.H. high school prom is not unique. Segregation of vaccinated and unvaccinated Americans is becoming a reality.

A New York stadium [plan](#) would separate sections for vaccinated and unvaccinated baseball fans. In [New York](#) and [Chicago](#) restaurants, unvaccinated patrons will have to be served in separate sections and seated farther from each other. A Houston hospital [suspended](#) more than 170 employees for refusing to take COVID-19 vaccines, which only got emergency use authorization. Unvaccinated NFL staff are to be [banned](#) from direct interactions with players. And the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) [says](#) unvaccinated workers can be excluded from the workplace.

We were taught that forcing certain categories of citizens into separate, lesser accommodations, barring them from public places, treating them like they are inferior, is completely immoral and wrong. Yet here we are. “Your papers, please!”



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