

Public Comments made at the July 16, 2020 Regular Board Meeting

Attention board members as a student about to attend high school i would like to be able to go to classes in person, this is about to be my first year of high school and i was very excited to experience my freshman year and make so many more memories but if we have online classes i don't think that would be possible because we wouldn't be around people as much and i wouldn't want this year being different especially since it's the first year of highschool for me.

Maylin Anguiano

Hello School Board members and Superintendent Tom Prichard,

I have reviewed the proposed plan for reopening and I am concerned about the plan for elementary schools going 5 days full time.

How are schools going to accommodate 30+ students in classrooms while following 6 feet apart? How can the school board commit to parents that their children will receive a regular full day/ week of school with all the CDC and state guidelines? How will masks be enforced when students refuse to wear them or try to make excuses that they can't? Nowhere in the virtual board meeting was there discussion on how this would work in the classroom. I don't recall there being any proposed model to make any of this work.

I am concerned that parents are getting a false sense of what is Really happening. As a fellow educator for another district, I have to know that my children will be taken care of educationally while I am working. But, I don't feel that the full time in class model is realistic when positive COVID Numbers are rising. In addition, most of the other districts are going hybrid.

I would greatly appreciate some type of schedule of how students will be in school and for what length of time so I know what is happening for 2020-2021.

Thank you very much for your time! I know you all are working very hard to do what is best for our teachers, staff and students.

Sincerely,

Meredith Komula

I have to boys one its going to first grade and the other one to TK. It will be better to have school in the morning and afternoon school. One group can go in the morning and other group in the afternoon. They can go 4 hours. Kids can't wear the mask all day at school. Its hard for an adult to wear it imagine the kids. Doing virtual classes its not the same of going to school. My oldest son its in summer school and i been notice that all the kids that are taking summer school online dont put attention or they dont show up. This is my opinion

Veronica Castro

Members of the Board,

I am writing this email in shock and disbelief. As our country surpassed 60,000 new cases of COVID-19 with over 900 deaths you, the board, have deemed it is safe to open our schools in five weeks to full capacity. As the CDC released guidelines on reopening schools that will be impossible for our district to meet, you, the board, have decided that, despite the evidence that this highly contagious virus spreads easily indoors and in confined spaces, children and teachers should ready themselves to enter a classroom in five weeks. As news from around the world comes in, as it has from Hong Kong and Israel, describing a resurfacing of COVID-19 cases spreading throughout the school system, you, the board, have decided that the Woodland community's children and teachers are worth risking disease and death. When the leading public health expert and epidimeologist predicts that our country may soon hit 100,000 new cases per day of COVID-19 , you, the board, have decided that this is not enough evidence to reconsider your position of placing the Woodland community's children and teachers at risk. When Dr. Birx, the hand picked Dr. of the President, a proponent of reopening schools much like you, states their is simply no evidence behind the misconception that children do not carry or transfer COVID-19 and we shouldn't push to reopen schools based on this theory, you, the board, have decided to test it out anyway.

I understand the importance of school and education. I love school. I love children. I know school, in a normal world without a deadly disease, is the best place for students to be. As a teacher, I am naturally inclined to PROTECT my students. I am naturally inclined to CARE about their well being. I am naturally inclined to SPEAK UP for their cause, since seemingly they have no voice in this matter. I know that you are in a difficult position of considering the financial impact this has on your budget and the effect that will undoubtedly have for the foreseeable future. But students and teachers are not a budget. We are not a future budget. We are people, we are valuable, and we should not be put at risk for something as arbitrary as money.

I would urge you to reconsider your position, but it is clear you don't care what teachers have to say as we overwhelmingly expressed our reservations to you. It is clear my children don't matter to you, as you made this decision without their input. It is clear you do not listen to scientists. It is clear you do not use examples from around the world to guide your decision making. This is an unprecedented situation, with terrible consequences playing out before your eyes. How can you decide to risk the future of this community at the expense of your budget? How can you place the health of the community at risk based on an assumption? Can you really live with yourself knowing that it is possible our children in this community may get sick, have long term damage to their health, or, unfathomably, die? Is it really worth it?

Signed,

Thomas Betz

6th Grade Teacher

Whitehead Elementary School

Dear Board of Trustees,

First of all, thank you for all of your diligent work in conjunction with public health officials, district administration, bargaining units, teachers and all other stakeholders in addressing the re-opening of our schools this Fall starting August 19th during this very difficult time.

Below are a few suggestions that I would appreciate being considered at the upcoming July 16th meeting regarding the re-opening of our schools.

To my knowledge the board has decided to opt for a non-hybrid approach to reopening schools in that children will either 1. attend in person full-time instruction on site or 2. opt out completely and attend virtually full-time.

I for one highly support children attending in person schooling full-time for a facet of reasons.

However, I would like to caution against a pure black and white approach given the reality of the surge in cases over this summer (which is no fault of our children, but rather the bad actions of adults failing to follow public health guidelines).

My main suggestions, if supported by public health evidence, are as follows:

1. That we keep an open mind and rather than just shutting down schools completely if the pandemic statistics call for it, instead consider a hybrid approach (2 days on site, 2 days of virtual learning) as the ripple effects of displacing children from school completely are dire to both the children and their families as we've seen from the prior blunt closure of schools last March and per the American Pediatric Associations assessment of the very real risks to children and families being denied access to the safety of going to school can and do cause such as increased child and domestic abuse, interruptions to their families abilities to work, children being left home alone (or not attending virtually at all), and the like.

2. That we consider limiting indoor class sizes to no more than 10 children at a time and utilize trustworthy parents, CDC, and YMCA volunteers/workers to assist teachers in enabling this.

3. That we utilize outside class time as much as possible which may mean providing for creative thinking such as erecting temporary shade structures. And that we do not hesitate to call on our very connected community (businesses, families, non-profits, and individuals alike) to donate time, money, and equipment to accomplish this as much as possible. We're all in this together after all.

4. The district utilizes PTO's to organize community helpers/organizers and driving campaigns to fundraise/acquire donations from our community (businesses, think Wal Mart, Costco, Raleys, Nugget, our local non-profits, our county community foundation, etc. as well as individuals) to accomplish this. Yes, some people will complain, but there are more of us who will step up. We need to know what the district needs though in order to gather materials, etc.

5. That we enter this school year with the understanding that children will need breaks from wearing masks periodically throughout the day and that creative socially distanced (and more structured) play will need to be utilized (and that we use going to parks within walking distance of schools to provide more space where feasible).

Some Examples are: jump roping, using "airplane arms" to socially distance when in line, flying kites, playing no touch flag football and similar games, etc. I highly recommend calling on our CDC and YMCA partners for ideas and help in these play endeavors instead of expecting teachers to do it all. What these organizations have been able to accomplish during school shutdowns is nothing short of amazing and I genuinely believe they will step up if collaborated with and utilized in this manner.

Children are amazingly adaptable and them being around each other is not only vital to brain development, but will actually help them adapt to wearing PPE and getting through this weird time and having to be more structured because they help each other and socially norm each other in irreplaceable ways.

(Both myself and my husband are essential workers and so our son has had to be in CDC care at Patwin Elementary in Davis since late March and they limited the amount of children to 10 and got creative in what they did with the children and have had no incidences of infection, so my family has direct experience with this approach being successful.)

I realize implementing this district wide calls for much more variance, work, collaboration and creativity, but I believe if we all work together that we can accomplish it and not have to abruptly displace children and families again.

Please consider myself and others like me as a resource to delegate to if the district needs community involvement. I believe there are many community stakeholders like myself who will step up in any way that we can to ensure the children of our district have the stability and protection of school.

On another note, we will continuously need clear, consistent and concise communication on what the district's plans are for both re-opening and what the plan of action is in case adjustments need to be made during the school year otherwise it seems that fear takes over from what I have been hearing from other parents. It may be best to set up a task force with a main team of communicators selected from each school (preferably with a spanish speaker or two involved for each site) to disseminate updates both via email and via a phone call. I'm not sure if everyone has access to email or understands where to find information on the school's website or even has access to an in-home computer in our district. I realize this may not be feasible, but it's just a thought.

Thank you for your time in reading my rather long email.

I look forward to hearing the result of the July 16th board meeting and learning what the district's "Injury and Illness Prevention Program" is.

With Gratitude,

~Marissa Sirota

Good evening, WJUSD Board of Trustees! Let me start by genuinely thanking you for your hard work these past months. No matter where we land on decisions for the fall, I can see that you care deeply for our students. As a WJUSD educator and parent, I am proud of the response our district had in the spring to this pandemic.

I work with kindergartners for our district. On our last day before the shutdown, after weeks of vigilant teaching and practicing of hygiene measures, I watched helplessly as the first student in my line sneezed and wiped the resulting handful of green snot onto the outside wall next to her. Then, the entire line of students behind her ran their hands over the same wall while their teacher—not having seen the sneeze—innocently called them inside.

As an employee in the uncertain age of COVID-19, I request official guidance from the board for future incidents such as these, as they occur daily. Should I have left the fight I was breaking up to stop the line? Would it be better to scream for students to stop, as my loudest 'teacher voice' didn't register? Will we need instead to spend the next 30 or more minutes washing everyone's hands and disinfecting the wall? What is the proper technique for snot removal from brick? Would testing and potential resultant quarantine for 2 staff members and over 25 students be required afterward? I look forward to any training or official guidance on how to safely handle extremely frequent incidents like these among our youngest students. I did not notice a page on this in the opening and safety plan, but perhaps I somehow did not receive a copy of the version with guidelines relevant for grades preK–3. Thank you!

Dear WJUSD Board of Trustees,

I write to you today to express concern regarding the reopening of school this August.

I have been an employee of WJUSD since 2013. I have worked as support staff at two different schools and a myriad of different classrooms. It is not a high paying job, but I love what I do and I am grateful to have a job that brings me such joy. I have had the privilege of working with some of the most dedicated educators and support staff I have ever known. I am humbled daily by their humanity and compassion.

When I read that WJUSD is planning to open schools 100% in-person this fall my jaw dropped. As I write this, I am still trying to wrap my head around the ever-rising number of COVID-19 cases in Yolo County, most significantly in Woodland. It is shocking to think that the school board would continue to consider this option under these dire public health conditions.

Overwhelmingly, this horrific virus is most dangerous to our Hispanic population. According to the CDC website, "Long-standing systemic health and social inequities have put some members of racial and ethnic groups at increased risk of getting COVID-19 or experiencing severe illness, regardless of age. Hispanic or Latino persons have a rate approximately 4 times that of non-Hispanic white persons". In a school district where over 75% of the population is Hispanic, this should certainly be a concern with regard to the students, their families, and staff.

There is no doubt in my mind that reopening school in-person will result in a rise in COVID-19 cases in our community. This was confirmed by Dr. Singh in the June 25 board meeting. Can we safely say that this will not result in severe illness or death of a child, a family member, a staff member? Can you reopen schools saying that having full classrooms of kids back on campus is more important than the lives of our community members both young and old?

I am aware of the complexity of this decision. Parents want their kids back in school, the American Academy of Pediatrics is urging schools to open, and politicians are threatening to cut federal funding. But how on earth is this going to work? Can we realistically contain the spread of this virus? What happens when a child or adult tests positive? Will there be contact tracing? Will teachers/students be asked to quarantine for 14 days? How will that affect families? What

will happen when a student or staff member becomes gravely ill or dies? Working at SciTech I am all too familiar with the collective pain that comes from losing a member of our school community.

And what about morale? Are we being supported, heard, considered? Teachers and school staff are, as a group, some of the most compassionate, hard-working, underpaid members of our society. What does this in-person schooling choice communicate to us?

I know you have some difficult and complex decisions ahead. I know this isn't easy. Your decision will affect the health and welfare of thousands of families. I urge you to consider keeping schools closed until we see a significant drop in local cases or, at the very least, begin the school year with a hybrid situation for K-12, where social distancing can be practiced.

Sincerely,

Barbara Silver

Technology Coordinator

SciTech Elementary

Dear Board Members,

1. Upon reading the proposed reopening protocols document for in person instruction under agenda item I.2, there was a lot of specifics on health protocols to be followed, but very vague (or no) reference to what the district will be doing to fund additional resources and staffing to aid existing staff, teachers, and students in adjusting to the new regimented schooling they will be entering into. This needs to be addressed specifically, especially since parents/volunteers seem to be called to be eliminated completely in helping on site during the school year.

As a note, the California superintendent's office does not call for the total elimination of volunteer help, it states to "limit nonessential visitors, facility use permits, and volunteers", not necessarily eliminate volunteers completely. Please see the source here:

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/documents/strongertogether.pdf>

(In a prior email I suggested partnering with YMCA and CDC partners to aid schools in our district in implementing and overseeing structured outside play, etc. because they have been doing it in their programs successfully for months now while limiting pod sizes and children under 13 NOT wearing masks at all.)

**I am concerned about the statement that ALL students are to wear masks at ALL times while on school site. How is this feasible for elementary age children for 6 hours straight (a normal 8:30-2:30 school day schedule) 5 days a week??*

2. In reading agenda Item M.2 there was a list of new hires/employment transitions taking place, but nowhere on this list was there mention of on site nurses being hired at every school site nor additional staff being hired to help everyone adjust to this new very regimented "normal". These resources are a must or in person instruction in this new "normal" will logically/likely cause harm such as increased anxiety, fear, exhaustion, and the like. Please reference the following recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics:

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>

3. And finally, in reading attachments to item number M.2 there are a multitude of duplicative financial requests for funds for different vendors who seem to be providing essentially the same things like bus maintenance, food services/items, and \$70,000 for motorcycle safety training courses, and funding two Woodland police officers to help with things like citations and truancies. Why are we spending \$70K on motorcycle safety courses ever, let alone in the midst of a pandemic? And why is this the year that we need to increase the policing of our students?

Shouldn't we be routing as much money as possible away from discretionary measures such as these and into measures that will directly aid in helping our community cope and adjust as much as possible during this difficult time?

Thank you for your time and consideration on the above matters.

Sincerely,

Marissa Sirota

Dear Board Members and Superintendent Prichard,

I wanted to know what your plans are for reopening the schools for in class learning.

Right now, I know you are planning to reopen fully, but there's no schedule of what it will look like. I'm very concerned about reopening full time. This will expose many children as well as valued teachers and other staff. Why wasn't hybrid considered?

As an educator for the 5th largest district, we are offering hybrid and even that plan may dissipate with our union fighting for full distant learning. Our county is not improving and more cases are occurring. It's not safe to return. Isn't that the same with Yolo county?

I want to be reassured that my children will be safe because we have family members who are at high risk and I'm sure I'm not the only one.

I want to be reassured that my children will get the best possible education whether in class or online. The model from the spring was not differentiated for all learners.

I know you are working endless hours to figure this out. Please consider The health and well being of our children and valued teachers.

Thank you,
Meredith Komula

My name is Alicia Cummings and I am an 8th-grade teacher at Lee Middle School. It is my seventh year in the district and my 27th as an educator. Before coming to Lee, I was the principal of Emerson Junior High in Davis, for 4 years and a vice-principal for 7 years in South San Francisco. I had 10 years of teaching experience prior to that which gives a breadth of experience not many have.

As an administrator, I knew that one of my main goals was to keep my campus safe so that students might have an optimal learning experience in the classroom. As a teacher, I know that I must keep my classroom safe and create a positive atmosphere for learning.

Right now, in the midst of this surging COVID-19 pandemic, this is not possible.

I am asking the Board of Trustees and Superintendent re-think the opening of school on August 19th with face to face instruction.

Students and staff WILL get COVID 19 if we do this. What is an acceptable risk? What is the district liability if students and staff get COVID due to face to face reopening? Distance learning is the safer, ethical, and more responsible option right now until we flatten the curve of the virus.

I want to be back with my students. I miss them! The end of the year was heartbreaking. But we must be safe. National and state data has shown that communities of color and low-income families are hit the hardest with COVID-19 and lack of proper health care. This IS OUR community. How will we protect them? Most of the counties around us are back on the state watchlist for closures.

I understand that parents need to work--I need to work too...but opening school as a form of childcare is not an option. There are still too many unanswered questions with the plan presented to us and how classrooms can be made safe with PPE and social distancing. I want to go back to regular instruction but NOW is NOT the time.

And I respectfully ask you, each and every board member--are you, personally, being asked to work in unsafe conditions... To risk your life or the life of a family member--by being exposed to COVID-19? This is what you are asking every staff member who works on a school site to do.

I know this is not easy for any of us. But I ask you to consider all the lives which are at stake.

Thank you.

Alicia M. Cummings

Dear Board of Trustees,

You are being asked to make a decision that is potentially life and death for students and teachers. I am hoping that you are reading about how Covid is spreading as obsessively as I am and that you know that students do contract and die from this disease. And that Woodland has 20-30 new cases each day even while we are partially shut down. The CDC's own internal memo says that opening schools is one of the highest risk activities.

As I see it, there are 2 options:

- 1) We start in person school, people get sick and possibly die, and then we are closed and start distance learning.
- 2) We do distance learning from the beginning and avoid more people getting sick.

I am not arguing that distance learning is ideal, but neither are the other options. It is simply the best of the horrible options.

I am asking you to be the grownups in the room and make the unpopular decision that will keep more people from getting sick. This is not time to merely do what people want, too many people are not taking this seriously enough as evidenced by our increasing cases.

In making this decision, if you decide that in person school is necessary, please consider a hybrid scenario with true 6 foot distancing, non-negotiable mask wearing, outside classes, and reduced class size as a minimum.

After what we have all been through these past months, imagine that you teach at Woodland High School. You have 5 classes with between 30 and 39 students each. The classroom is relatively small. There are no windows. The ventilation system is iffy at best. Classes are 51 minutes or 93 minutes each. Students are between 14 and 18 who have not necessarily been social distancing or believing that this disease can affect them. Would you be able to sleep at night? Would you trust your administration, district, or school board to keep you safe?

I could go on, explain my own risk factors or those of my family, but why should I have to? Why should I have to write this letter arguing for my own, and my students, safety?

If it is not safe enough to have an in person board meeting, it is not safe enough to have in person school. Yolo county's Covid cases are increasing rapidly, and even the governor is placing more restrictions on us. We cannot go back to in person school until we have Covid contained and when we do, we need to be sure to assiduously follow all of the health guidelines or just end up closed down again.

Please follow the trend, take the safest option for us all and let us continue with distance learning until new Covid cases are contained. You will literally be saving people's health and lives.

Thank you for reading my thoughts on this matter.

Sincerely,

Jessica Dille

Math Teacher, Woodland High School

Hi WJUSD Board,

I am the parent of a soon to be 3rd grader at Sci-Tech. With the rising cases of COVID-19 in the community we are planning to continue distance learning. We heard other school districts decided that if students are not in school they will need to sign up for independent study. I urge our school district to not follow this model and instead try to keep students learning with their peers as much as possible. Whether it is having students follow along at home virtually with their classmates in school or having a separate class for kids doing distance learning. I know we do not have enough teachers to have a virtual teacher and in school teacher for every class but I believe talking to teachers and administrators we could come up with a plan to make it work.

I think it would also be beneficial to encourage families who are able to distance learn to do that so school sites can be safer for kids whose families cannot do distance learning. Our family is lucky to be able to provide an environment at home to continue distance learning. I know some families are unable to do that and need their children to go back to school full time. We need to make sure the students and teachers that do in school learning are safe. If we can reduce the number of kids per class by having a portion of the kids do virtual learning we can better adhere to social distance guidelines in schools.

We also need to talk to the teachers and see what is in their best interest. Some teachers may need to do distance teaching to protect themselves and/or their families. We may need to allow individual schools to come up with ideas to best suit their students and teachers needs. At Sci-Tech specifically there are grade combination classes. Maybe these combo classes could be virtual and taught by teachers that wish to not be on campus.

I believe the more options we give the schools, teachers, and students the better we will be able to deal with the current pandemic and adapt to changes that may arise in the future.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Linda Donnelly

Dear President Childers and Distinguished Trustees,

We are writing to the board to applaud your decision to offer both full time in person classes as well as a virtual academy this fall. We believe that decision is the only way to live up to your mission statement of "Excellence for All". To achieve "Excellence for All" the district must offer the most comprehensive education options possible within the guidelines of the agencies whose mission and expertise it is to protect our health at the local, state, and federal level, none of which have recommended closing schools.

To achieve "Excellence for All" the district must consider the recommendations of children's health experts like the American Academy of Pediatrics who state "the AAP strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school".

To achieve "Excellence for All" the district must respect the complex and unique risk/benefit calculation that each family must make not only regarding COVID 19, but also the risks of not being in school and parents not being at work. The district has done this by offering both the virtual academy and full time in person school options.

To achieve "Excellence for All" the district must be willing to stand up to the inevitable vigorous opposition to having in person classes. I believe that those who oppose the in person option are sincere in their belief, and noble in their cause. But those that oppose in person classes even as an option are not coming from a position of advocacy for our children. They should be welcome to enroll in the virtual academy as a student or as a teacher. But the surveys make it clear they do not speak for the majority of parents who clearly see the need for our children to be in school in person to achieve excellence.

We understand that there is no perfect answer here. A pandemic is a natural disaster just like any other. Just as one cannot stop a hurricane or earthquake one cannot stop this pandemic. Mitigation is the only sensible or logical approach. The plans presented by the district are reasonable and have evidence in current scientific literature to show they are effective. The district has also been very clear that the situation is fluid and a transition to a virtual academy must be a viable option for all students if case numbers begin to rise.

Thank you Trustees for making a reasoned analysis and doing your best to provide “Excellence for All” and advocate for all of our children, students, and teachers. Your courage and leadership have been an example to us all.

Sincerely,

Norman & Rebecca Weitzel

Dear School Board,

I am a healthy, active 26-year-old science teacher with no pre-existing health conditions, but please don't make me choose between my life and my career. I've paid for my own classroom supplies, worked hours of unpaid overtime, and bought food for my hungry students, but I am not willing to give up my life by going back to school in-person.

According to Kaiser Family Foundation, “one in four teachers have a condition that puts them at higher risk of serious illness from coronavirus.” That doesn't mean they are the only teachers who will be infected. Being a healthy 26-year-old does not make me immune to this virus. In fact, 25-34 year olds are the most affected age group in Yolo County making up 22% of all positive cases.

But let me set the statistics aside for a second to explain why this virus scares me.

My firefighter-paramedic father is on the front lines in the epicenter of Los Angeles. My 62-year-old roommate has COPD and another roommate cares for her elderly mother. But worst of all, one of my best friends suffered from (and survived) Covid-19.

She, too, is a 26-year-old healthy young woman who exercises and eats organic - supposedly not “at risk” of this disease. And like me, she wore her mask and socially-distanced and avoided crowds at all costs. I listened to her recount the painful 5-week-long recovery. The anxiety attacks in the ER when her husband (who also tested positive) wasn't even allowed in the hospital to be by her side. After TWO mini-strokes, her doctors tried out a cocktail of medications that didn't work because this illness is unpredictable and affects everyone's bodies differently. Her doctors would start each conversation with “I wish there was something I could do for you, but...” and sent her home with the instructions to only come back to the ER if she literally couldn't breathe.

Please don't let that be ME. You have the power to protect our teachers and students from unnecessary harm. We cannot morally return to schools without accepting what Dr. Singh and Mr. Vaughn told you repeatedly in the last board meeting: it is not a matter of IF but WHEN our teachers and students get infected.

The list is growing: now more than 30 California districts are protecting the lives of over 1.5 million students and 66 thousand teachers by starting the school year online.

In Yolo County, there have been 599 new cases since your last meeting on June 25th. There were also 4 deaths. That was only 3 weeks ago. How many will there be if we start our school year in person? At what point will we shut down again? 10 cases? 100 cases? 1 death? 10 deaths? The acceptable answer is ZERO. If you value the lives of our students, teachers, and community members, you will make the right decision to start the school year online until it is safe for us to return in person.

Regards,

Rebecca Bernard

Greetings WJUSD Board of Trustees,

I thank you for all of your time and energy you are spending with the important decision to safely reopen our schools. I understand that you are being asked to simultaneously be experts in public health, infectious diseases, education and the needs of the community. Unfortunately, we don't know enough about transmission and mitigation of COVID 19 with children to make calculated risk decisions. Although it is still very unclear which is the best way to start the year, it seems very clear that the school district will need to pivot very quickly between educational models this coming school year as health risks fluctuate locally. I think it would be wise to develop three phases of educational models; 5 day a week in person, a hybrid at half capacity and distance learning. This will allow you to make an opening plan today based on today's information with a prepared shift as the knowledge and landscape of the virus evolves. We need to be able to flow between models without a disruption of education for our students. If you are worried about the time to develop multiple options, there are templates and examples of multiple types of K-12 hybrid and distance learning model produced by the state and county offices which can be replicated and adapted to fit our district, so we don't need to reinvent everything on our own.

Given the uncertainty of which model will be possible in a month, please direct the district to spend the few weeks we have remaining to prepare some of the few certainties we know will be important. We know for certain that either some or all students will be involved in distance learning, so it should be a priority. Distance learning needs to be as robust and engaging as possible. It is not about replicating the class but reimagining what is possible with new parameters. I have heard very little about the changes to virtual learning for the upcoming school year and that leaves parents to make decisions based on their experience from the spring. There are distance learning success stories across California which can inform our design and goals. The second thing we know is that teachers will need substantial training and time to

prepare to teach in all of the models but especially in the distance learning. All teachers need to be prepared to teach virtually in order to shift models successfully. If paid summer training is the only option that should be least you provide. Ideally, teachers should be provided during their contract days but that might not be possible. The third item that will be certain to benefit any model will be family engagement. As families are increasingly expected to assist in learning from home, it will require the district to fundamentally rethink the approach to family involvement. Families are being asked to become educational partners therefore we will need more support such as detailed and timely information on learning strategies and academic outcomes. Essentially, we will need an educational and training plan for families as parents assume new roles. Please request and expect the district to produce a plan to work with their new educational partners, the parents.

Finally, as you think about the quality of education, don't forget about the attributes of the profile of a graduate from Woodland that you approved for our district back in February. As you hear about the various models please ask yourself or the presenter how this model is being made to develop and foster the attributes that our community deemed important.

Sincerely,
Eric Garber

Dear Board Members and those in attendance,

As a 20 year elementary school teacher, I am asking you to reopen school with 100% in-person instruction and student attendance. There needs to be a connection and relationship between teacher and student that can only be accomplished through in-person teaching, learning, and interacting. I was deeply saddened by the loss of that connection with my students at the end of the 2019-2020 school year when we went to distance learning. Even after having that personal connection with them for 7 months, many of them were disconnected by the end of that experience and hardly participated in that "learning" format. Please don't continue to stunt the growth and education of our WJUSD students. Please allow us to reopen our classrooms and teach in-person.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my experience and my opinion.

Laura Ziegler

I have worked as a Special Education teacher for Woodland Joint Unified School District for 16 years. During this time I have worked at Woodland High School for 12 years, Beamer Elementary School for two years and Lee Middle school for two years in General Education classrooms and my own Resource classroom. I believe each Community member/Family should be allowed to make an informed decision choosing between the Virtual Academy or 100% In-person Instruction. Below are facts our community members/families should consider.

On Thursday, July 9th, Brian Vaughn, the Public Health Director for Yolo County met with the WEA Health and Safety committee via video conference. During that meeting he stated "six feet is the preferred distance between students, but four feet would be enough distance with face masks. More distance is better in all situations."

At a June board meeting District M&O personnel presented using 6 feet physical distancing, classrooms could have 15 - 18 students.

Using 4 feet physical distancing, classrooms could have 20 - 24 students.

For secondary sites the student to teacher ratio will remain approximately 30:1. (If 30% of students choose the Virtual Academy then 30% of the teachers will need to be assigned to the Virtual Academy, leaving 70% of students taught by 70% of the teachers for In-person Instruction.)

Using the current student to teacher ratio there will be at least 31 people in many secondary classrooms.

Our community members need to recognize that it is not possible to meet the recommended minimum Social/Physical distancing in many secondary Classrooms.

Respectfully,
Scot Stearns

Hello,

My comments are in regards to the schools being reopened in August.

I find it interesting that you, the board, are so concerned for your own well being and safety that you now have these meetings virtually, but you're asking for us to send our kids back to their schools.

I do understand that school is a safer place for some, however I find your overall lack of concern for our children, our families, our safety, and our teachers appalling.

In regards to the lack of options you're allowing us, the parents, to choose from, the lack of information for either of those choices were, and still are abysmal.

If we voted for online full time what does that entail?

What does the at school full time option entail?

You asked us to vote and gave us no information. You still have not provided us the information we need to make informed decisions. What if later we find the option we chose wasn't the best fit?

Taking a survey like the one you provided just leads to more confusion at an already extremely confusing time.

The last board meeting most seemed to agree that a hybrid option would be favored; however, that wasn't even an option? Why is that? If you're telling me it's funding, I'd like to see those numbers. I'm sure others would as well.

If my child goes to school full time what are the ramifications? Have you considered what your options provide, or better yet, don't provide, and in doing so, what these options are doing to the mental health of our children and our teachers?

Are masks to be worn full time? If so, what physicians have you corresponded with to know if this is healthy for small children and adults? I'd like to know the name of the expert(s) you've spoken to in regards to this.

How have our teachers been dealing with this pandemic? We might want to address that before having them spend hours of isolated time with our children. How do they feel about coming back? What are their concerns? Are the teachers being considered?

I don't expect you to have all the answers, but I do expect more information.

The way this whole situation has been handled is egregious and if I were any of you, I'd be concerned about my seat on that board. You're elected officials, you would all be wise to remember that.

Aurora Malsack

Dear WJUSD Board of Trustees,

My name is Caroline Thompson. I am a parent of two young, elementary age children. I have also worked in our district as a classroom teacher, and a substitute teacher. I am writing to express my concern about your reopening plans. There are many teachers in the district that fall within the high-risk group or have family members that do. I personally fall into that category, although I am relatively young and healthy, but my husband is even more at risk. I worry about my children bringing home this virus and what that would do to his health. We could not afford to have either one or both of us end up in the hospital, or worse, dead! We have many teachers in the district that are recently recovered from or currently fighting battles with cancer or are in other ways immunocompromised! Many others that have an immediate family member that is immunocompromised. There are many teachers in our district terrified for their health as well as the health of their students and families!

I understand that the move to switch over to an all or nothing approach (traditional schedule or online only) was driven by the very real need by parents to have a safe place for their children during the workday. I understand that this safe place is normally (for a majority of the day) at school, but let us not forget that school is NOT childcare. Let us not forget that before this pandemic, childcare BEFORE AND AFTER regular school hours was a necessity. That before and after school care was largely met by the ASES program, and the other options for childcare around town were sparse and often expensive, if not provided by grandparents or even great grandparents! I must caution you all, that going back to a full-time traditional school model will NOT alleviate the need for childcare, and those students will still be exposed to other groups of children outside of the classroom cohort. We will NOT have a reduced chance at exposure, especially if we cannot keep the student cohort size small!

I recognize that there are no easy answers right now, but I implore you to look first to the safety of our teachers, students, and families! I implore you to look at ways to reduce the risk of infection while in the classroom by keeping classroom cohorts small and adopting a reopening schedule that is flexible and responsive! I implore you to look at and consider the flexible and responsive reopening schedule that is being adopted by the Vacaville Unified School District! PLEASE, put the health and safety of both Teachers/Staff and students and their families at the forefront of your decisions! Both of your medical experts at the last meeting refused to directly answer your question about sending their own children back to school right now, but we all could see that they wanted to say NO!

PLEASE, put health and safety first, and adopt a model that will allow teachers to stay safe! The online instruction (yes, actual instruction!) that was being implemented at both SciTech and Woodland Christian School need to be a model for the teachers in the rest of our community. The hands of the teachers in most of our district were tied, and the impersonal approach to distance learning that was put forth during the emergency closure was largely unsuccessful and subpar. We have the opportunity, NOW, to allow our teachers to learn and prepare to actually teach remotely, while local numbers are rising. When the spread of this virus decreases, we can then look at safely returning to in-person teaching. Other than that, we have a recipe for disaster!

Other school districts in our surrounding area are adopting more flexible and cautious plans for the upcoming school year. Please look more closely at those (most specifically VUSD) models to ensure the safety of your teachers, staff, students, and their families!

How are you planning to have full traditional schedules, while virus rates are rising around us?

Here are only a few of the questions that need to be answered before going to traditional in-person instruction (I am sure there are many more than these):

How are you going to reduce class size to accommodate social distancing and small group guidelines?
How are you planning to improve air circulation in small, crowded classrooms when most of our schools have outdated and substandard HVAC systems (per the report made to the board two years ago by Nick Baral)?
How are you planning to address the social-emotional trauma of a school community when a teacher becomes ill and dies due to exposure from being in the classroom? Or a student? Or a student's family member?
How are you planning to address when a student, or teacher tests positive for COVID-19? Or when students and teachers have symptoms, but must wait for a week or two before they get their test results?
Is each class or student or teacher going to need to stay home for 14 days to self-quarantine each time they have any of the possible symptoms while they wait for test results? The possible symptoms include such common things as a headache to coughing to fatigue!
Who is going to teach the class, if/when the teacher needs to be out due to illness (any illness) when we have a shortage of substitute teachers?
What can we do now, to plan and prepare for inevitable illnesses/shutdowns?
I know and understand that there are many different needs, concerns, and questions to be considered in this decision. I ask again, I PLEAD with you, to PLEASE, make the decision to put health and safety FIRST! 100% in-person traditional school model is NOT SAFE at this point in time!

Respectfully,
Caroline Thompson

Dear School Board,

I understand that you have to make an almost impossible choice today in deciding to further continue your plans of reopening school or go to a social distancing model. I urge you to PLEASE continue with your original plans of opening school. My husband is a firefighter and I work in law enforcement. We are both considered essential workers and do not have the option of staying home with our children to oversee their education during this pandemic. I have twin boys who are currently enrolled at Springlake Elementary and will be entering into the first grade this next school year and two older children in middle school and high school who are enrolled at Woodland Christian School (who will for sure be attending school this year). One of my twins had the hardest time doing social distancing during the remainder of the last school year. He is a loving, social, and smart kid. However on his Google Meet calls he would shut down and refuse to interact with his friends or his teacher. He had a hard time focusing and it was so hard on my husband and I to watch. I was able to take him to say goodbye to his teacher during the last week of school to turn in his books and it was amazing to see the difference in him. He immediately perked up when he saw his teacher and all of a sudden he had to tell her EVERYTHING that he had been doing the last couple of months. I got to see remnants of who my son was before the pandemic. He was excited to be at school, excited to have that interaction, and was very sad to leave that day. It was heartbreaking. In addition, I do not want to worry about finding childcare for my younger two children at the last minute along with everyone else or burden a complete stranger with having to ensure that my children get a proper education. I understand that there are risks with reopening but there will be an even greater risk if these kids (especially those in those early grades who are learning all the fundamentals of education) if they do not get the proper education and social interactions that kids thrive upon. Those who do not wish to attend have the option to do so, the majority of parents want our kids to attend as well as many WJUSD teachers. Please grant us those options as well.

Thank you,
Corinne Elsea

My name is Brigit Huxsoll. I've written to you all before regarding my concerns about internet access in rural areas and having 4 children attending the district and the problem with internet supporting 4 kids at once. We're trying one last ditch effort to improve our internet services but I wanted to ask or suggest one idea for a back up plan. I know I'm not the only parent who is going to have this struggle. I understand given our numbers that distance learning is likely going to be our only option. My request is that you consider offering a traditional independent study version. This is where kids can do their assignments on their own time, offline. The assignments could be given on actual paper via the mail or emailed. It is attending video streamed classes that is our biggest struggle with the internet. Also trying to have multiple kids on google classroom just does not work either with our current WiFi situation. If kids had actual text books and written assignments that I could supervise, I would have no issues with distance learning in our current Covid situation. Thank you for your consideration.

It is way too soon to restore any kind of in person school instruction.

On July 14 Science News reports that a new study finds people without symptoms can spread the coronavirus and are responsible for transmitting more than half of all corona virus infections. They say that detecting and isolating many of these silent spreaders is essential to bringing the pandemic under control.

Until we have reduced new cases by increased testing and widespread contact-tracing this pandemic is out of control. Virtual instruction for now will protect the health of school children and school staff.

Diane Henry

Esteemed Board members:

As a teacher at Pioneer High, I would like to go on record as supporting regular class attendance with safety measures for this fall semester.

The restrictions of online learning can sharply reduce the quality of learning for many students. For some students, online learning is nearly impossible.

Therefore I support at least the option of in-person learning at its safest levels, such as wearing masks and sanitizing surfaces regularly.

The science supports this option. "The United States could get the coronavirus pandemic under control in one to two months if every American wore a mask, a top Centers for Disease Control and Prevention official said Tuesday (this week)."

Thank you,

Rebecca Henry

Board members, colleagues, parents, and students,

I have been a Douglass Middle School teacher in the Woodland School District for the past eight years. I love my students more than anything in the world, and my heart aches for them and their families in this season. I understand that the decision we have to make tonight in regards whether or not to reopen our schools is a difficult one. In a more perfect world, you would be hard-pressed to find a teacher who didn't deeply desire to be back in a physical classroom with his/her students. We miss them. However, given the current crisis, I urge you, as someone who loves her students and their families, please, if we can't provide proper PPE and safety precautions, we must start the semester with distance learning for all students and work to create opportunities for in-person student support as the semester progresses.

We know that COVID-19 affects minority populations at significantly higher and more severe rates. In fact, according to the CDC, as of July 4th, 41% of those hospitalized due to COVID-19 were Hispanic or Latino. We also know that our district is comprised of 68% Hispanic and Latino students and families (some schools, like Prairie with a much higher percentage, 82.5%). In a time in our country, where we are coming face to face with our chronic systemic disregard for the most at-risk populations, it feels as though returning to school at full capacity places our most vulnerable families at high risk. Thus, going back to full in-person learning seems like it's not actually about looking-out for the majority of our students and their families.

We also know that so many of our kids live with other family members. I lie awake at night thinking about the probability of a student carrying the virus home to a grandparent without health insurance, or a parent who is the primary income earner who then is out of work for multiple months. Or worse, that the choice to reopen school too early or without proper PPE will expose someone who then has a terrible reaction and passes away (again especially if that person is the primary income earner for the family). The maximal viral shedding happens two days before any symptoms even present themselves, so you may have a teacher, staff member, or student unknowingly shedding virus that is then impacting countless others.

Let me take a moment here before going further to pause and say I am fully aware that there are parents who need to work (though, candidly the push for that reason alone makes me feel devalued as an educator). I know there are kiddos at home in unsafe conditions, or even home alone. My push for beginning the year with distance learning is in no way disregarding those serious issues. As a teacher, those kiddos and situations have kept me awake at night for the past eight years. Teachers know there are risks on both sides. So let me say this, if in fact, you do vote to reopen, we need to allocate money (regardless of our proposed major budget cuts) to provide and enforce extensive PPE to keep everyone safe. We know children and teens love to be near one another, and it will be very difficult to mitigate those behaviors. Therefore, sanitization supplies, protective equipment and additional custodial staff must be provided. Ventilation systems need to run constantly to ensure clean air is being circulated into the classrooms and reusable water bottles need to be provided as we close drinking fountains. These things and more are what need to be done in order to mitigate the risk of transmission and create a safe working and learning environment. Can we find the funds for this? When we are forced back into a situation that is known to increase the spread of this disease without the outlined PPE, the district is taking on the liability of those it has a mission to serve. The reality is, it takes one teacher or staff member getting gravely ill to create this huge liability. Will there be a plan in place to provide extra sick days, disability coverage, etc. in case a teacher or staff member gets sick? What if this happened to multiple staff members within the same site? Do we have enough substitutes? I know there is worry that kiddos will receive a less than stellar education with the implementation of distance learning. However, is it not also true that our kiddos would receive a less than stellar

education from someone(s) who is not their teacher over multiple months while their credentialed teacher is recovering?

Here's the bottom line, enforcing going back into the classroom right now, without all of the proper safety precautions, communicates that you don't care about your teachers and staff, that we are not important enough to keep safe, that we are not valued as anything more than childcare workers, and when good teachers don't feel valued or protected, you lose them.

Again, I know this decision is a difficult one, and I trust you will do what is right for your students, families, teachers, and staff members. Thank you for your time.

Anda Robinson

I respectfully request school be distant learning only. Putting teachers, paras, janitors etc. in a traditional school setting is careless and will jeopardize the health and safety of both students and teachers. Please make your decision based on science and statistics.

Thank you

Jan Penrose

How will physical education for my sophomore look if we do remote learning? I'm concerned for his lack of exercise & since his motivation to do anything outside just isn't there, I'm worried about his mental state & physical as well! Video games is all he wants! He's a typical 14yr old! Eat junk food & play video games. He's now nocturnal because of the covid quarantine!

So how will you be sure our kids aren't going to get overweight? With PE in school I knew our kids are properly getting that mental & physical exercise needed daily.... but now, PE isn't mentioned or can it even be enforced? I suggest that 1-2 days a week should be offered for the PE & elective courses at high schools.

2) Special needs kids - need that socialism that school offered! If it's going to require my autistic child to wear a mask, he'd just touch & mess with it all day & that's more risk to him than it is protecting anyone! Please consider a zoom type of classroom for our kids to see others in the same situation (at home) summer school that just ended was lacking in so many ways!

Thank you for everyone's help!

Carrie Galvan

Dear Members of the Woodland Joint Unified School District Board,

I am writing tonight in favor of children returning to school. We, as teachers, are not prepared to teach virtually. Most of us can "figure it out," but OUR children deserve more than us "figuring it out." I know the administration from the school district has said "virtual learning will be different this time." My question is how? We are one month out and have had no new training, no expectations have been set and quite honestly we have not even really had discussions about what next year will look like amongst our staff.

I know many counties in California are going back virtually, but if you look at a list of many of those counties, they all have 60+ deaths and many more cases than us. We have 29 deaths and NONE are children. Actually, according to the Yolo County dashboard, we have had ZERO deaths in the age range from 0 to 54. We need to make sure we focus on OUR town stats not what everyone else is doing. It is time for WJUSD to stand up and be leaders not followers. Do what is right by our community.

I have been teaching for 24 years. 21 with WJUSD. This is been by far the hardest summer I have ever had. I have not been able to enjoy my summer vacation at all because I feel like I am not being heard by my district or my union.

Everybody has their own opinion. I am willing to listen and acknowledge that there are people that wish to stay at home and teach. Those people should also give me the same respect. I want to be back in the classroom with my kids.

In conclusion, I teach kindergarten. I cannot imagine starting the year virtually. I do not know these children or their parents, and they do not know me. One of the biggest parts of kindergarten is building relationships. I can't build a relationship online. I need to see their faces, and they need to see me.

I am urging you to return those of us that can return. For those of us that can't for whatever reason, they can be the online teachers.

Thank you for your time,

Jennifer Richter

WJUSD Board of Education,

For several weeks I have been composing and re-composing in my head what I could possibly say to the Woodland Joint Unified School District Board of Education to make you realize that the danger to staff, students, and families of those students is just too great to reopen face-to-face school. The time, space, personnel, equipment, and especially money is just not available to make it safe enough.

Then as the numbers of cases moved higher and higher in Yolo County, as the governor again closed down many businesses because of those rising numbers, and in the last 24 to 48 hours as I have seen school district after school district, in both northern and southern California, announce that they will be 100% distance learning this fall, I realized it should be obvious to everyone that it is an impossibility.

Does any teacher want to do distance learning? No. We want to start school regularly, but it just isn't safe! Are there problems with access for every student? Yes. We can work on those problems. Let's put our energies into a solution that doesn't risk anyone's life or health. I would hate for any student to live the rest of their life with lung damage. Or for someone's parent or grandparent to die.

Lastly let's remember this is not forever. My father was in elementary school during the 1918 pandemic. He never mentioned it negatively. Of course The Great Depression and World War II may have dimmed his memory.

I am writing to ask you to please choose to safeguard lives. Academics can be caught up.

Thank you for your time and service,

Phyllis Avalos

Dear School Board,

I viewed the helpful "Reopening Schools" PowerPoint. Based on the info there, it looks like "Phased In-Person" was the most popular choice by both Staff and Teachers by wide margins.

"Phased In-Person" wasn't an option on the parents' survey, and it doesn't appear as one of the two "Educational Options" (Virtual and Traditional) presented on slide 7 of the Opening & Safety Plan draft.

Question: How will the "Phased" approach be adapted for the upcoming year? Will any/all of the steps listed on the last slide of "Reopening" be used, or is the "choose one or the other" model going to be the plan? If the latter, why given the survey's options and results?

Best,

Nathaniel Williams

Hello,

I would like to ask the board to vote no on the proposed contracts put forth today. I believe it to be fiscally irresponsible to enter into a 3 year contract given our current situation. I am in no way saying these individuals are not deserving of these contracts, but I think now is not the time. I think entering into a one year contract would be a wiser choice if that's possible. Our district may have to look at furloughs and termination for some of the lowest paid people. It would not be a good look to increase pay, or have an extended contract for the top paid people in our district at this time.

Also, as far as the recommendation for reopening plan PowerPoint that was just added to the board packet, please ask what the criteria is for moving through the phases. Staff is recommending this plan, they should be expected to have an answer. It is unacceptable to recommend a plan with no details (again). The plan they were asked to investigate has a ton of detail and is very well thought out. I would imagine they have plans for the phases if that's what they are recommending. Please stop accepting the answer of "we are waiting for board direction".

Thank you,

Rebecca Rossiter

To Woodland Joint Unified School District Board:

Please do not open in person classes this Fall. This would be the same hubris exhibited by states and cities currently surging. Our baseline is too high, and our testing is insufficient. The risk is too great. Offer child care for those who need it.

Sincerely,

Alexander Knaack

Woodland resident and kindergarten parent

Dear Honored Trustees,

For the health and safety of our students, staff, and Woodland community, I urge you to consider science, not politics, and begin the school year with online instruction.

As of early this afternoon, California recorded 359,212 cases of the corona virus, and 7,386 deaths, according to the New York Times. The San Jose Mercury News reports that the positivity rate in Northern California now averages 16.1%, and hospitalizations have risen 222% in the last month. Yolo County is part of this surge, with 1023 cases, 90 hospitalizations, and 30 deaths as of yesterday, according to the county dashboard. Nearly half of the cases, 492, are in Woodland.

If these numbers aren't convincing enough, let's consider other factors:

the logistical challenge and expense of implementing and following CDC guidelines

the problems involved with opening and then closing schools again when there is an outbreak

the potential legal ramifications if students or staff contract the virus at school

the lack of available testing and delayed testing results

the inability to conduct contact tracing because of the sheer number of people contracting the virus

the shortage of ICU beds in Yolo County

the trauma experienced by everyone if a student or staff member dies

I think we all agree that in-person school is best for students, but not when facing a global pandemic. Other places that re-opened schools have only done so once corona virus case numbers were down, and even that has produced mixed results. In Israel, for example, school re-openings resulted in 2,026 students and staff contracting COVID-19, and schools were forced to close again.

Internal documents from the CDC conclude that opening schools in person, even with protective measures, is a potentially deadly health risk to all involved. As much as I would like to return to my classroom and see my students, I know that we must prioritize safety. Other nearby districts have already made the choice to begin with distance learning, and WJUSD should do the same. Using surveys to guide decisions about public health is akin to establishing airline smoking rules by leaving it up to a passenger vote. Rather than prolong the debate, please do what your leadership requires of you and help protect the Woodland community. We must focus our efforts on delivering online instruction that provides our students with the education they deserve.

Sincerely,

Lisa Gaskill

English Teacher - Pioneer High School

Good evening,

My name is Jessica Duarte and I am a community member, mom of three and a 3rd grade teacher at Beamer Park Elementary School.

According to today's agenda, LCAP funds are used to pay the district's two school resource officers. The total is \$130,433.43.

According to the 2019-2020 Budget Overview for Parents on WJUSD's website, WJUSD received \$15,174,011 in LCAP funds based on the enrollment of foster youth, English Learners, and low-income students.

It is my understanding, that these funds are to be used to "increase or improve services" specifically for these high-need students as they are the ones who generate this money. To meet this requirement, districts must demonstrate that these services are both "principally directed" and "effective" in meeting goals for high-need student achievement. According to the ACLU, there are two reasons why using LCAP funds on resource officers doesn't meet the LCAP requirement.

First, law enforcement and security expenditures do not increase or improve services for high-need student groups. They have not been shown to be effective at improving school climate and student engagement, and, in fact, the evidence shows the contrary. Numerous studies demonstrate that law enforcement and security on campus tend to push out, criminalize, and otherwise harm high-need students and students of color. Indeed, the students who generate these funds for their districts are most likely to be harmed.

Second, such spending generally provides the same basic level of service to all students and thus is not principally directed because it fails to address any "particular needs, conditions, or circumstances" of high-need students. Counselors and RTI specialists, among others, meet the LCAP requirement. Now more than ever, our students need these academic and social-emotional supports.

Thank you for your time.

Jessica Duarte

With the 685% increase in cases in the past few months, we do not feel safe sending our kids to school or allowing teachers to teach in unsafe conditions. Will the district finance hazard pay for these teachers and other staff? How will the classes be socially distanced? Will all desks, supplies, and full classrooms be sanitized after every single use, multiple times daily? Will you listen to the health experts who are urging continued distance learning or will you crack under the pressure? How are you willing to send kids to school when you have to meet through video chat to discuss this matter in the first place?

Sincerely,

A concerned family.

Hi,

I live in a household headed by two immunocompromised parents, and two siblings who attend schools in the district. I am concerned that it will be very hard to effectively, rationally, and fairly enforce social distancing expectations throughout public schools in the district. I am urging you to come up with a remote learning model until such time as there is determined to be no community spread. Otherwise, this disease is going to explode in our community, and our low-income, immunocompromised, BIPOC populations will be devastated.

Kyle Gray

I am a 20 year employee of this school district. The fact that I would even need to write a letter to the board asking you not to put my life at risk is incomprehensible.

Donna DeLong

Dear WJUSD Board of Trustees,

Tonight I am asking that you still move forward with your plan to offer 5 day/week in person instruction in addition to full time distance learning. As many districts across the state go to 100% virtual learning, I am pleading with you to give our students and community the option of attending school full time, if that's what they choose. It will be beyond devastating to our children and families in the community, if a full time, in school option is not offered.

Also, for those families that feel they have no other choice but to pull their child(ren) out of the district to either homeschool or attend a private school, I am requesting that the child still have a spot at their home school, if they decide to attend public school next year or in the future.

As our state continues to deal with closures and this huge mess, which has become largely political, I am begging you to do the right thing for our children. Please continue with your plan to offer full time in person instruction, with distance learning for those who choose that.

Thank you.

Rebecca Hester

Dear WJUSD Board,

As a teacher, parent, and community member I find myself in a very interesting position during this unprecedented time. While I understand and feel for myself and my colleagues who want to make sure we and our students are safe, I also empathize with the parents of our community who are struggling with the big emotions of figuring out how to continue to put food on the table while finding a safe educational place for their child if we are to move to a complete virtual model. With that said, I have included below my thoughts as a professional, parent, and community member who is hoping to find answers that don't necessarily make everyone happy, but rather that validate the concerns, feelings, and realities of the situation we face.

First, I'd just like to say that virtual education is not a long term equitable model for learning. While it may be necessary to allow for safety, the reality is we don't know when numbers will go down to the point where it would seem safe to return in person. If our district were to adopt such a plan to start the school year, it would be completely short sighted to do so with no plan on figuring out a way to have safe, in person interaction for interventions to take place. In my professional opinion, the board should only adopt a virtual start to the school year if they are also directing that our district look into a way to allow our most needy of students to have access to our school sites. An example of this would be a tier model that prioritizes our students of most need to have access to the classrooms for support, moving down the tier as space allows with safety precautions. This model would also allow for implementation of counseling and mental health services.

Second, we must offer in person education for TK-2 grade without exception. There is simply no way we can expect children in this age group to obtain the foundational skills they need to succeed in their educational career via virtual instruction. This group of students are not able let alone be able to login to their virtual classroom and then participate without an adult in the room to supervise. As a parent of an ingoing second grader, I have spent many sleepless nights wondering how she will continue to learn such critical skills that will set the foundation of her educational career when she is already defeated and giving push back to what she calls 'computer learning'. This age group is simply too little to be expected to learn their letter sounds, reading, writing, and math skills via a computer. My suggestion is to, at the very least, stick to a hybrid model for this age group. This model was suggested in June however I would suggest exploring the idea of A.M. and P.M. waves for students OR having the students in pods attend M/Th and Tues./Fri. To me, this is which called for pods of M/Tues. and Th/Friday which was suggested in June because it allows for kids to either attend everyday half day OR 2 full days in person and 3 days virtual but instead of having 5 days off in between each in person session, you'd only have 3 days in between each session. Such a model would need to take into consideration providing safety precautions for staff such as social distancing, recess times, wearing of masks, etc. Not offering in person education for this sub-group of students is simply incomprehensible.

Third, there needs to be tons of training for teachers, students, and parents. From a teacher stand point, zero training has been given to me to prepare me to be an online educator. With roughly 5 weeks left until school is supposed to start, training is going to be critical in preparing me to start the school year with some sort of confidence in my abilities to effectively teach all my students. From a parent perspective, there were many frustrating hours spent on my part trying to figure out how to access, submit work, and interact with SeeSaw (the platform used for elementary). Children also need to be trained on how to be online students. This is new to them as well. So just as much as we would have to teach them how to keep a face mask on, to wash their hands, and social distance, we also need to teach them how to

navigate websites, access assignments, etc. We need to ensure that we are providing our parents and students with tools to make them feel confident and comfortable with whatever platform we choose to use. If we don't make this doable for our parents and students, many are going to give up. A way to alleviate this would be to offer in person, social distance training for both parents and students alike. Instead of a normal open house that typically occurs after school has started, we could create social distance opportunities before the school year starts that focuses on training and providing tools for parents to better support and help their child with virtual learning. Such topics should include not only how to navigate learning sites but also provide tips on how to deal with the social/emotional well being of their child and ways to navigate arguments and push back to learning (because well all know kids will do things for teachers that they won't do for their parents).

Other concerns that need to be addressed include: teachers having access to teach from the classroom, realistic expectations and schedules for both students and teachers, grading policies, legalities of having students have their cameras on while learning, monitoring academic progress, and most importantly attendance (how we will provide live instruction to students who can't attend for the plethora of reasons families are facing).

In closing, I think that is important to keep in mind that while we are all weathering the same storm, our boats are different. Choosing an all virtual model would be dismissive of the concerns and needs of our community while an all in person model would be dismissive of our teachers and staff members. Our goal in navigating this storm should be to use empathy to find solutions that address and validate the concerns of all that are being expressed. Such solutions exist. Simply adopting one extreme or the other (i.e. in person vs. virtual) will not yield equitable long term positive results. Our district will need to listen to all stakeholders (parents, teachers, administration, students, etc.) to create and devise such solutions. It is my hope that you, the board, will keep this in mind when making your final decision in what direction you choose to steer all the different boats through this storm safely to their final destination; an equal opportunity for all to have access to what they need and deserve to learn.

Thank you,

Concerned teacher, parent, and community member

My name is Tahnee Sweeney, I am a fourth grade teacher at Tafoya Elementary School, and a member of the WEA Executive Board. Even if a state order is made on Secretary of Education Tony Thurmond's recommendation that most California schools begin the year with Distance Learning due to the surge in COVID19, my comments pertain to our duties moving forward to ensure schools are safe for return after the virus is contained. We know, The Board of Trustees, and our cabinet do not at any point want to be in the position of having passed the buck of accountability for the safety of Woodland students, the educators that serve them, or all of our families to another agency who will in turn pass it on. Our colleagues in the medical field have appealed to us not to put the medical infrastructure under so much strain that it breaks. We invite the Board and and look forward to our colleagues on the Cabinet to join WEA, an affiliate of California Teacher Association and the National Education Association to say the buck stops with us, we will not contribute to further spread of the virus. CDC has stated physically reopening schools poses the highest risk to COVID19 virus spread. We cannot allow students and educators to return to campuses until COVID19 is contained, until our county has gone 14 days with no new cases, and mitigations to prevent spread are in place. According to the CDC, due to lack of testing available to the population we know that if 10 new cases are reported in a day that is a subset of actual cases in Yolo County. According to the CDC, not every case is captured through testing. According to MIT, the actual number of cases in a region is 12 times higher, and the death rate 50 percent more. If there are 10 cases there are really closer to 120 cases. If there are 4 deaths reported in Yolo County in a day, there have been closer to 6 deaths. As a teacher, I cannot break the trust I have with Guardians and Parents by taking actions to communicate that it is safe for their child to be in a classroom at this time. As we all teach students, broken trust is a difficult thing to repair and it makes it harder to keep everyone safe. The American Association of Pediatrics, and the School Superintendents Association joined National Education Association and American Federation of Teachers in stating, COVID19 must be contained before children and educators return to campus. When objective data indicates it is safe to return, there are hundreds of mitigations we are mandated to ensure are in place to protect students, educators, their families, and our community. Our schools are far off from being prepared for that: our school air systems are not capable of meeting CalOsha COVID19 guidelines, at my site paper towel refills have been discontinued for dispensers so they do not work, there is no plan to ensure the level of safety daycares currently have of having students in cohorts of ten with hourly cleaning, just to name a few of hundreds of risks that must be mitigated before a physical reopening. We are all committed to working hard for that day, but it is not August 19.

Voicemail: Vicki Fu, 4th grade teacher at Dingle ES expressed her concerns regarding returning to the classroom.

Voicemail: Laura Brubaker expressed her support for returning to school with 100% virtual learning.

Voicemail: Sara Mills expressed her desire for a split hybrid model with all virtual learning being the least desired option as she wishes her kids can return to campus.