

Monica Roque

From: Jeremy Taylor [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 7:00 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Re: Public Comment: Steps to Return to Campus Update

Categories: Blue category

Fixed spelling below in last sentence

On Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 6:57 PM Jeremy Taylor [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Board,

Please listen to your community. Please listen to your students. Let people who want to go back to school go back, and those who want to stay home stay home.

Children whose only safe place in the world on earth are experiencing more abuse. Children who are socially inept are falling even further behind. Children who are struggling reading have already forgotten.

The community is watching. Your decisions here will impact how Davis votes in the future. Listen to the community and students if your goal is to continue to serve on the board (and not get voted out.)

Thank you.

--

Best,

Jeremy Taylor
[REDACTED]

--

Best,

Jeremy Taylor
[REDACTED]

Monica Roque

From: Jeremy Taylor [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 6:54 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment: UPDATE ON TENTATIVE BOARD AGENDA CALENDAR

Categories: Blue category

Hi Board,

Why is tonight's meeting at the same time as the city council? Why didn't the meeting happen yesterday instead?

Please make sure no future board meetings are not on the same day as city council meetings. For example: have the meeting on Monday. I don't get why this meeting wasn't yesterday..

Thank you.

--

Best,

Jeremy Taylor
[REDACTED]

Monica Roque

From: Marla Cook
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 6:30 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: public comment

Categories: Blue category

Marla Cook, 6th grade AIM teacher at Willett.

As you ponder how we can come back to school, in the event we can come back to school, I would ask you to give some more thought to intermediate elementary. There is an enormous gap between what K-3rd grade needs, 4th -5th needs, and what 6th graders need. 6th grade is considered a middle school grade by both the common core standards and the CA State curriculum, and we teachers know how important our entire, secondary curriculum is. I would like to share with you how I, one teacher, has come to grips with Distance Learning this year and how I provide that curriculum.

I teach synchronously, or directly, with my students, for 4 hours each day, 5 days per week . . . 8:30-12:30 (20 hours/week). I teach 'periods' so that I can teach reading, writing, math, and social studies. In the freed up time that science teachers don't use, I teach Future Problem Solving, Math Olympiad, Project-Based Learning, or I extend the learning time of the aforementioned subjects. This format has allowed me to teach the same amount of content I teach in my non-COVID-influenced regular classroom.

In addition, I hold "waiting room office hours" from 12:30 to 1:00 daily for kids to ask questions privately. That's another 2 ½ hours/week of direct instruction.

At 1:00, I tutor, one-on-one math for 30 minutes, followed by a second session of tutoring for a different student. I do this 4 days per week, reaching 5 students on a regular basis. That's another 4 hours/week.

At the end of the week, I have directly instructed kids for 26 ½ hours. Your hybrid teaching model has me directly teaching 2 ½ hours/day for a total of 10 hours of direct instruction. All other instruction is to be done by the student, asynchronously, at home by her/himself.

During the day I teach through questioning and conversation. It is in that intersection that learning occurs. My students spend lots of time talking, writing, and thinking: individually, together as a whole class, and in various planned and spontaneous breakout room get-togethers. These conversations help my students to reason and think at high levels in all subjects. We are a successful learning community and would like to finish out the year that way.

PLEASE, CONSIDER OFFERING "OPTIONS" for learning that will allow students to maintain the close relationships they've already established between each other and their teachers. Our class is differentiated for our learning. Please revise your plan to include other options for the school year. ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL.

Thank you.

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Monica Roque

From: Jessica Jacobson [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 5:51 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Blue category

Dear Board of Education,

I respectfully request that you support school reopening, in accordance with the science and public health evidence that recommends it and in service to the majority of families in our community who have indicated that they would like to pursue an in person option. Our community relies on you for leadership to support our children's well-being and to follow the guidance and recommendations of public health officials. Please do not waste more time.

Sincerely,

Jessica Jacobson
Parent of 3

Monica Roque

From: Holly Istas
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 3:51 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Blue category

Dear Esteemed Trustees,

I am a Social Studies teacher at Davis Senior High School and have been teaching in the district for over 10 years. My 2 oldest children are DHS grads (class of 2017 & 2020) who are both doing remote instruction for their respective colleges, while my 2 youngest are a current DHS senior and a DVJC 9th grader. They are all extremely anxious to return to normal, to get back to “real” school, to see their friends and be regular teens and young adults again. I share this because I want you to know that I appreciate how difficult the past 10 months have been for everyone: students, parents and teachers. I miss my students terribly and cannot wait to get back to in-person instruction. Most teachers I know are exhausted. I’ve heard so many of my colleagues say that it’s like being a first-year teacher again due to the long hours we are all putting in. We all want to go back to our classrooms and be with our students.

Last March, a failure of national leadership and an absence of clear guidelines and information resulted in school districts like our own taking on the huge burden of making the decision to close schools. Nearly a year later, school districts across the country are still being asked to make decisions about the well-being of their student and staff populations with minimal guidance about when and how to do so. As one trustee stated in Saturday’s meeting “I don’t know enough to know how to lead”, which is precisely the problem (and not the fault of the trustee).

What we “know” about Covid is constantly changing. Dr. Fauci called for prioritizing the re-opening of schools (over businesses), but our country has largely chosen to prioritize the economy. The infection rate of children as well as children’s ability to transmit Covid is not fully understood. Over the weekend, Germany, Ireland, Austria, the UK, Denmark and the Netherlands all announced school closures as new research shows that children were “...equally, if not more infected by Covid than others”, during Europe’s 2nd wave of the virus (Wall Street Journal, Jan 16, 2021).

We *do* know that we currently have widespread community transmission. We *do* know that it is an unpredictable disease that can seemingly randomly take the lives of the young and the healthy, not just the ill and the elderly. We also know that there is a more contagious variant of the disease making its way through our state and we *don’t* yet know if the vaccine works for that variant.

The vast majority of teachers and a large number of families prefer to delay the return to in-person instruction until vaccination is widely available, until transmission rates are considerably lower than they are now and until more is known about the new variant. Will teachers who do not support a re-opening plan be forced to return to the classroom to teach students in person when they don’t feel safe? As another colleague pointed out at the last board meeting, teachers who are anxious and afraid won’t be able to be effective teachers. Inevitably, a teacher or a student will get Covid, then that student or teacher’s cohorts or multiple sections of classes at the secondary level will have to be closed to quarantine and online instruction will resume. The disruption this will cause to students and their families cannot be overstated. A DJUSD colleague who has a child in a private school that resumed in-person instruction reports that his daughter’s class recently had to shut down for the 2nd time in a month due to confirmed cases of Covid. The unfortunate reality is that this will happen in any district or school that reopens before the virus is contained. Ultimately, it’s not worth it.

I do appreciate all of the thought, time and effort you are all putting into this decision, but if the health and safety of the students and staff in Davis schools are your priority, reopening schools for regular, in-person instruction will have to wait a bit longer.

Sincerely,
Holly Istas

Holly Istas
Social Studies Teacher
she/her/hers
GSA Advisor
NHS Advisor
ISU Advisor
Davis Senior High School

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Monica Roque

From: Monique Garcia Gunther [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 3:13 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education; Joe DiNunzio
Subject: Public comment - Open schools in hybrid as soon as the state allows

Categories: Blue category

I have been following the DJUSD actions, words and progress since class ended in March. I was at school that day, teaching a class of fourth graders.

I'm a parent of a senior and 8th grader. I'm also a substitute teacher for DJUSD , board member of the Emerson PTA, former board member at Cesar Chavez and former committee member of Davis Parent University. I have spent countless hours as a volunteer in the schools over the last 12 years supporting our staff and students. I have spent countless dollars supporting this district and its schools. I have voted on every tax that supports schools and teachers.

Like everyone, I watched cautiously as news progressed over the summer and fall about the virus. I lived abroad and have family in Europe and was curious why other countries and parts of the US were able to keep classrooms open or open them again last fall when Davis didn't. When the health experts began to see that k-12 school settings were not the high-risk environments that we thought, I breathed a sigh of relief, certain our local school district would follow the advice and expert opinion of local, state, national and international scientists and doctors, and begin to work towards the hybrid phase of our reopening plan. Our district has done that and has now come up with an excellent hybrid plan that includes the feedback and work of hundreds of staff, students and community members.

Our local health officer believes schools can open and operate safely when mitigation efforts are put in place - she has said this strongly in the last two board meetings she attended and pointed to data from private schools already open and feedback from other region local health officers. So agrees Dr, Ghaly, multiple governors (including our own), Dr Fauci , WHO , UNICEF and countless others who remind us that schools is fundamental - more fundamental than the farmers markets, Costcos, restaurants and retail stores we see open up and down our region.

Dr Bowes and the board always said we would follow science and listen first to our health experts when it came to reopening schools. This is why I am bewildered at the recent board meeting conversations taking place. If this board doesn't demonstrate this is being done, I can't help but wonder what other agenda there is. Leaders make tough decisions that follow data and expert advice, instead of spreading uncertainty or fear that is not based by data or fact. Education leaders put what's best for students first. Based on the last survey, the majority of Davis families - your constituents - want a return to school in hybrid, many citing extreme hardships at home as we come up on a year of classrooms being shut.

DJUSD and Davis is in a uniquely good environment to reopen safely by looking at best practices from small cohorts already happening, Healthy Davis Together testing and vaccines that hopefully will begin being administered to teachers in the coming weeks.

Reopen schools in hybrid as soon as the state and local health officials say it safe. Follow the advice of experts, as you promised us you would.

Monique Garcia Gunther

Monica Roque

From: Peggy Deulloa
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 2:05 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment for Board Meeting

Categories: Blue category

Dear Davis Board of Education,

Thank you for taking the time to truly consider all the options for our schools. As the second grade teaching team of Pioneer Elementary School we have many concerns about this important topic.

We would like to bring up four areas of concern; safety, mental health, logistics and the timing of this decision.

1. Given the current tier of Yolo County and widespread cases of Covid, we are greatly concerned that you are considering opening schools while we have not been able to be vaccinated. Without this vaccination, we will be forced to risk our lives and the lives of our family members. We are also worried about the new highly contagious strains that have been detected that drastically are affecting and hospitalizing children and adults. We know that our seven and eight year old students are working on self control and covering their sneezes and coughs. Many students in the primary grades put their hands in their mouths as well as in their noses which will make wearing a mask challenging and we know contributes to the spread of Covid. Common colds spread quickly in classrooms and Covid will too.
2. After discussing all the hybrid possibilities with staff members, the implementation of the safety protocols as well as switching all that we are currently doing puts our mental health at risk because it does not seem achievable. We have adjusted everything we do to meet the new needs of our students. It has taken so many hours above our contract time to make this happen. The thought of changing this plan is truly overwhelming.
3. Logistically if we go to hybrid, we will spend much of our time ensuring safety protocols are being met. We want to teach and are able to do this well in distance learning (and are able to differentiate- which will not be possible in a hybrid setting.) We are concerned with student engagement for the distance learners because we will be dealing with student behavior in class (while wearing masks and a face shield) therefore, students will not be able to see our facial expressions.
4. Is this the right time to make this decision? With all the new information on Covid, this does not seem like an educated decision. Shouldn't all staff and teachers be vaccinated and Yolo County be in the Orange Tier before opening? Please listen to your staff and teachers. Is opening the schools worth the risk of even one life?

We appreciate your careful consideration of all of the points we addressed above before making any decisions.

Please hear our voices,
[Peggy Deulloa](#) , [Laurel Fields](#) Kim Patchett [Kristy Powell](#)
Pioneer Elementary Second Grade Teaching Team

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Monica Roque

From: J F [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 1:14 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Fwd: Public Comment

Categories: Blue category

Dear DJUSD Board Members,

We are writing once again in support of getting our students back in the classroom in some form. We won't list the many experts that have shown this is of utmost importance. We now have many months of domestic and international data, demonstrating the success and safety of in-person school. Here in Davis and Yolo county, we have private schools in person, yet public schools are not. The inequity alone, is a long and needed conversation.

A litany of respected health organizations have strongly endorsed the safety and necessity of in-person school. The counterfactual must be acknowledged. Science is showing very troubling reports on the adverse impacts of virtual learning on the education and mental health of our children. We have always appreciated Davis and California as a progressive and science-based community; however, in this area, we are lagging far behind the science and the world.

We appreciate the time and effort you have all put into this extraordinarily difficult decision, but we urge you to listen to the medical professionals, science, UNICEF, CDC, and our students to get our students back in the classroom with safety measures in place.

Thank you,

Jennifer and Greg Farwell

----- Forwarded message -----

From: J F [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, Nov 2, 2020 at 5:33 PM
Subject: Public Comment
To: <boe@djUSD.net>
Cc: Greg Farwell [REDACTED]

Hello,

This email is regarding reopening Davis schools.

Thank you for your efforts to keep our community as healthy as possible during this time. As background, my husband works with COVID-19 patients, I am a nurse, and my daughter is a student at Emerson Junior High School. We know so much more than 8 months ago when schools in Davis shut down. We have knowledge on how to mitigate COVID-19, our hospitals are not in threat of a surge as they were in March, and we have had time to plan and observe others successfully go back to school. I would like to see our district move forward to a hybrid form of learning.

Although my daughter may choose to do virtual learning, our community is suffering mentally and academically. We will have this virus with us in our community for an unknown period of time. We need to learn to live with masks, distancing, and outdoors when possible. It is the job of a student to be at school. It is essential. It is the job of health care workers to work on the health of their patients. It is essential. It is the job of our teachers, grocery store clerks, first responders, pilots, to continue living, learning, and working with masks, hand washing, etc. It is essential. I urge you to give an option for a hybrid/ in person teaching format ASAP. Our children and their future require us to step up at this time. I believe volunteers would be happy to help assist for COVID guideline management to facilitate this transition. Thank you for your consideration and your time,

Jennifer and Greg Farwell

Monica Roque

From: Rachel Klein [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 11:59 AM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT

Categories: Blue category

Dear Davis School Board Members,

I am writing to ask you to open Davis public schools as soon as possible. Online education has been a poor substitute for in person instruction, particularly for elementary students. In my son's kindergarten class, learning relies heavily on extra work/tutoring by parents behind the scenes, which is a huge equity issue and puts strain on already overwhelmed working parents.

I am a scientist and I believe the data is very compelling that in-person instruction can be made safe for children and their teachers and families. I am happy to provide my sources for this conclusion, although I hope you are already familiar with the research.

I will personally be teaching at Woodland Community College in a face-to-face format starting next week (Jan 26) because I believe so strongly in the value of in-person instruction for my students.

Please recognize the importance of in-person education and help our schools open as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Rachel Klein, PhD

(postdoctoral fellow, adjunct professor, and mom)

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Monica Roque

From: Heather Jones [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 11:45 AM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Blue category

Dear Board of Education,

I can only begin to understand the amount of pressure you must feel on the decision to re-open schools. When making your decision, I ask you to consider the younger children who are really struggling with Distant Learning. There are so many tears, so many meltdowns and so much stress over distance learning. Each day of distance learning is painful and each day their hate of learning grows. It is heartbreaking to watch. Davis private schools are open. Public Schools should be open too, at least for hybrid.

Thank you

Monica Roque

From: Kari Oldham [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 18, 2021 8:25 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Blue category

Dear School Board Trustees,

I am writing to you today as a front line healthcare worker. Being a nurse in the emergency room during Covid has been very difficult. The fear of Covid and the complex mental health issues associated with isolation have been devastating.

What used to be an uncommon sight is now a regular occurrence of suicidal children in the emergency room for days on end. I struggle with the comments from board members who claim to care about children but also deny their hardships. Saying things like being in person will not solve any problems. Claiming the children who suffered before are the only ones suffering now.

Why are we using emotion and hearsay to guide our philosophy here at DJUSD? The philosophy should be based on building these relationships between parents, teachers, and students, while nourishing a child's place within the greater community.

School-based relationships go a long way. I noticed this when my kindergartener said the highlight of his day was 1:1 time with his teacher during an assessment. We asked for this again during his parent teacher conference time because we know that this relationship is the most valuable part of the education he is receiving. With exception to 2 children he has met in person, he does not know the names of the other students in his class.

We have created an adverse childhood event through school closures. The number of ACE's a child experiences has been demonstrated to have lasting health consequences see CDC links below.

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/fastfact.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6949a1.htm>

But there is hope. There is a 95% effective vaccine that is prioritized for teachers as essential workers. This vaccine also shows effectiveness in as little as 2 weeks. This is only one layer of the many layers of protection the controlled environment of schools will have. Transmission in schools have been shown to be a rare, almost 0 occurrence. However, school closures adversely effect children. The difference between the infection rates of teachers on the other hand does not reflect an increased risk of teaching in-person versus teaching in a distance-learning format. This evidence (cited below) along with guidance from federal, state, and local health officials should make this choice easy: Reopen the schools.

My 11 year old son is part of the 1% in a pod at school. It's the relationships with the staff, the principal, the school nurse and the other students on site that is currently motivating his work whereas his inability to attend

to and focus for hours on a screen was previously holding him back. I hope more students will have the opportunity to return to campus soon.

Kari Oldham BSN, PHN
DJUSD parent.
North Davis K and 6th

Evidence (no need to read aloud to save time just please read and consider in your decisions):

The research showed out of 100,000 students and staff there were “no instances of child-adult transmission of SARS-COV-2” within schools.

<https://nsjonline.com/article/2021/01/new-study-on-covid-transmission-in-nc-schools-shows-no-reported-child-to-adult-transmission/?fbclid=IwAR1UU1eVorQh2ionUpaeaT0PoF-yTsywbKjh7r0CuGLNqEQ4OJUeGtCeEt8>

Through October 29, 2020, 1.5 million students and 387,000 staff across K-12 schools offering in-person learning shown infection rates of 0.2% for fully remote versus 0.23% for staff back five days a week. (Staff infection rates for hybrid are even lower.) At the elementary level, the staff infection figures are 0.16% for five days a week, 0.17% for hybrid, and 0.22% for all virtual.

<https://www.brown.edu/academics/population-studies/news/article/2020/covid-19-school-response-dashboard-equips-parents-teachers-and-policymakers-0>

“COVID-19 incidence among the general population in counties where K–12 schools offer in-person education (401.2 per 100,000) was similar to that in counties offering only virtual/online education (418.2 per 100,000)”

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/pdfs/mm7003e1-H.pdf>

Current DJUSD staff illness rate during full distance learning 26 out of 1,500 staff or 1.73%

Yolo county Illness rate is 10,500 out of 220,800 or 4.75%.

Marin county has 86% of schools open for in person learning at a level greater than 10% attendance. Their illness rate is 34 staff confirmed cases out of 5,301 or 0.64%

Marin county illness rate is 9,400 out of 257,900 or 3.6%.

Most elementary schools in Marin county sought a waiver to open and the secondary schools opened during two weeks in the red tier, or by county permission. This may have provided a protective layer for their communities and notable reduction in cases for staff.

<https://coronavirus.marinhhs.org/schools#status>

Monica Roque

From: Sandra Black [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 18, 2021 2:28 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment - School reopening

Categories: Blue category

Dear Board Members,

As a parent of two elementary aged children living in Davis. I am writing to strongly urge the Board to not only plan, but act toward opening schools. Children need to be in school.

There are myriad precautions that private schools and businesses have successfully demonstrated can keep people safe.

There are multiple studies that have demonstrated that children are not good vectors for the virus. There is no reason teachers and students who need to stay at home, can continue distance learning.

We live in a climate that is close to ideal for outdoor learning. I teach fitness classes at a facility where people even do yoga outside; masks, layers, and motivation to be there. That is what we need to see from you: some creativity and actual motivation to get the kids back, not just talk about it. Every single campus has ample outdoor space that goes un-used while children sit in front of computers, losing time, losing social skills, and losing desire and love of learning.

Thank you for your attention,
Sandra Black
Parent of 1st and 3rd grade children in Davis

Monica Roque

From: Rosa Garcia-Ramirez [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 18, 2021 2:20 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Blue category

Esteemed Board Members:

As the teachers and staff of César Chávez Elementary, we want you to know that we are experienced, passionate, and professional advocates for our students and their education, safety, and social emotional well-being. We are writing to express our belief that now is not the right time to reconvene classes on campus.

Students are learning and feeling connected with their classmates and teachers. Teachers, students and families now have WELL-established routines in place and learning *is* happening during Distance Learning. We see improvements in our students from one week to the next. We are collaborating with fellow staff, colleagues, and district-wide action teams in order to provide the very best language immersion instruction that we can on a daily basis. We believe the consequences of a premature return to in-person learning will be at best, disruptive to our students' academic growth and social emotional well-being and at worst, will be the cause of fatal losses to our community.

We want to remind you that a return to campus is not a return to the way things were pre-Covid. Visualize this:

- In class, new content will be minimally taught since the first 4-6 weeks will have to be spent teaching students classroom routines.
- Much of the day will be spent washing hands and receiving reminders about Covid-19 prevention.
- Students will have to continue using their chrome books in class to prevent materials from going hand to hand.
- In class, students won't be able to get close to other classmates or staff. Many students and staff will have difficulty following this protocol.
- Students will eat separated from friends and outdoor activities will have to be reinvented to prevent close contact.
- Students will have to wear masks and probably many will lose them throughout the day.
- There is a likelihood that students will end up with a different teacher and/or classmates.

Like other members of the community, we are also juggling parenting and work. Many staff members have their own children from infants to college-aged sons and daughters. Several staff members are caring for aging parents, while others have medical authorizations not to return to campus until it is safe. We are real people, just like you. Please know this: we want nothing more than to be with our students in the classroom when it is emotionally and physically safe for all.

Returning to school in person prematurely is an added trauma for our students. Is returning to in-person learning now, truly in the best interest of our students? We're asking you, the board, to make this difficult decision. We put our trust in you to ensure our students' safety, our community's safety and our own safety.

Respectfully,

[Laurie Garibay](#)
Tina Lokkbakk
Rosa García-Ramírez

Mayra Ramos
Lisa McClintock
Roxanna Vazquez-Garcia
Gigi Bugsch
Natalie Johnson, School Nurse
Elia Chavez
Rachel Mclemore
Andrea Flores, School Counselor
Angie Velásquez
Kaitlin Post
Erica Lara
Fiorella Leon
Osvaldo Rubio
Martha E. Rodriguez
Maite Sureda
Jeff Nelson
David Nieves

Monica Roque

From: Kendra Shigematsu [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, January 17, 2021 4:09 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: A letter for consideration
Attachments: DJUSD Letter.pdf

Categories: Blue category

Dear Board Members,

I have attached a letter for consideration as you plan to move forward with in-class instruction. I am hoping to provide a different perspective.

You may read the letter aloud during your board meeting; however, it seems to be slightly longer than 3 minutes.

Sincerely,

Kendra Shigematsu

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

January 16, 2021

Dear Esteemed School Board:

As you continue to examine ways in which to satisfy the growing desire to move our students back into the classroom, I would urge you to take a moment to read this letter and contemplate the possible outcomes of such a decision.

I am a parent of a fourth-grade student currently enrolled at North Davis Elementary. I have first-hand experience in dealing with a deadly virus believed to have been contracted at my child's previous school. I also wish to share how distance learning has brought a measure of safety to our family while providing quality education.

In September of 2016, my then first grader contracted a virus which presented similarly to how Covid-19 can present in children. Her formal diagnoses of *Viral Encephalitis* was caused by the virus HHV6. While not a typical presentation, HHV6 caused my daughter to suffer a series of grand mal seizures, dangerously elevated liver enzymes and encephalitis. She eventually slipped into a coma. Subsequently, she spent two weeks at UC Davis Children's Hospital in intensive care and eventually rehabilitation care.

Though she has made a full physical recovery, the acquired brain injury left her with significant cognitive delays. In the winter of 2019, she was extensively tested by a neuropsychologist at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital. According to the report, her diagnoses of ADHD is one of many long-term side effects of encephalitis.

We have fought hard to secure appropriate services for our daughter. I am grateful that she is finally in a situation where we are seeing academic growth. **While distance learning is not without its challenges, the level of education she is receiving is not in question.** Daily, she is engaged and challenged. She has access to many of the same programs that she would have in the classroom, with the added bonus of social and emotional support. But most importantly she has bonded with her teacher. A bond that is helping her to thrive both socially and academically.

We have been asked to complete surveys on our opinions about returning to the classroom. One of the questions was worded in a way to suggest my daughter may lose her teacher should we decide not to return to in-class instruction but decide to stay in distance learning. Given our concern over contagion, and alternatively her academic growth, this has left us stuck between the proverbial "rock and a hard place".

Children may be at lower risk of developing symptoms from Covid-19, at least for now. However, the facts remain that we know little about the long-term effects of this virus. We do know, through The Center for Disease Control, that the very real danger of *multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children* (MIS-C) can occur when a child is exposed to Covid-19. I have added a brief description of MIS-C taken from the CDC website.

["Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children \(MIS-C\)](#) is a condition where different body parts can become inflamed, including the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, skin, eyes, or gastrointestinal organs. We do not yet know what causes MIS-C. However, we know that many children with MIS-C had the virus that causes [COVID-19](#), or had been around someone with COVID-19. MIS-C can be serious, even deadly, but most children who were diagnosed with this condition have gotten better with medical care."

I cannot begin to imagine the enormous responsibility you have in making decisions that will benefit everyone. However, I do trust your decisions are not politically motivated but speak to the health and welfare of our community as a whole.

As you move forward with your planning please do so with an open mind and the utmost of caution not only for our children but also for those who will have the unfathomable job of keeping them safe.

Sincerely,

Kendra Shigematsu

Monica Roque

From: Shanaz Hazel [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, January 16, 2021 5:11 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Cc: Maria Clayton
Subject: updated letter for public comment
Attachments: BOE letter - Jan-2.docx

Categories: Blue category

Good afternoon,

This letter is for public comment at the next BOE meeting. This replaces the letter I submitted in December which has not been read - you can delete the December submission and use this one instead.

Thanks,
Shanaz

Dear Members of the Davis Board of Education,

I am writing today to express my concern regarding the lack of a clear plan for Davis students to return to campus for learning. I do not represent any parent coalitions, schools or other organizations.

I am the mother of 3 children in the DJUSD school system. Eighteen years ago we chose to live in Davis not only because of the family-oriented community and university setting, but because of the highly regarded public school system. Until now, my kids have flourished in the school system, as I'm sure is the same for many.

The immediate switch to distance learning in the spring was not ideal, but I truly feel there were lessons learned; lessons that no one could have predicted would be so valuable. And I appreciate how much improvement in distance learning I have observed between the spring and the fall/winter quarters. When I am home, I hear caring and concern in the teachers' voices. I hear my kids interacting with their teachers and classmates – it's hopeful and heartbreaking at the same time.

In the fall I made it a point to get more involved and begin listening to the Board of Education meetings, wanting to understand the decision making process. After listening to the BOE meeting of January 7, 2021, I felt compelled to amend my earlier letter submitted in December. During that meeting, there was a presentation by Dr. Aimee Sisson, the public health officer of Yolo County. Her presentation was explained why it is safe to have return to school options and her evidence was in line with Dr. Anthony Fauci and every other body of well reputed scientific evidence in our nation. However, after her presentation board members attempted to dispute her facts, almost cross-examining her. There were suggestions made that in-person learning led to greater inequity - the absolute opposite of what the evidence shows – that distance learning has widened the equity gap. A board member admitted that they performed an internet search during the meeting to see what Marin county was doing and then presented their findings as contrary to what Dr. Sisson had described. Later verification showed that this board member was, in fact, mistaken. And a board member also asked Dr. Sisson how it was ok for kids to go back to school when this board member was not allowed to have 15 friends over to their house, effectively comparing our children's schooling to a dinner party. THIS is what our board members asked of a public health officer, a medical and scientific professional. Dr. Sisson handled herself with grace and respect.

As a medical professional and as a parent, I was aghast as I listened to this. How could the board members, who are not epidemiologists or public health officers, cite non-scientific, fear-based rhetoric while refuting clear evidence? Perhaps most concerning to me was that particular exchange further added to the dystopian reality that has defined this pandemic.

Rather than get to the business of figuring out a plan to return to live instruction, it feels as though our School Board is still busy question the public health aspects. In the fall, I was bothered that we were not being presented with a plan, and greatly disappointed that in Davis of all places, where the University has been nationally recognized as a leader in community testing, there would not be any effort at innovation. At this point, I don't even expect innovation – I just want to see a plan. In fact, we've waited so long, there is no need to re-invent the wheel at this point – there are numerous districts statewide similar to Davis on any number of dimensions who have successfully presented and

followed a plan. And I have to ask myself, if other high quality public school districts can do it, what is preventing the DJUSD from presenting something similar? What is so different about Davis?

I also resent that the School Board has insinuated that in person learning would exacerbate the equity gap, this could not be farther from the truth. I work in medicine, and when we observe patients unable to access care, we don't separate them more from the medical establishment to protect them, we find ways to bring them to care and deliver more care. That is how you close equity gaps.

My own children are able to manage distance learning – from the technical standpoint. I have observed, however, the light in their eyes is gone. They turn in assignments because they are due, sometimes without fully understanding the material. I see their desire to learn, excel and achieve mastery disappearing as each week passes. Every single teacher has provided them with the support they need when they reach out. But, they are tired, depressed and without hope. I no longer worry about the “learning loss” because I can't. I am singularly focused on their mental and emotional health.

No, I don't want to compromise anyone's safety. I am not advocating to force any teacher or staff member who is high risk back onto campus. I am a physician working in healthcare and highly aware of how to mitigate risks. We eight months into this pandemic and there are tested and available ways to reduce risk and viral spread. And as the vaccine becomes available to teachers, there will be an additional layer of protection.

And after the January 7 Board of Education meeting, I am truly worried that our children will not return to campus as what I perceived was an unwillingness to listen to the scientific evidence, make rational non-fear based decisions, lay out a written plan with metrics, goals and contingencies. Our young people's lives depend on us getting this right; the physiologic brain structure is changing in response to isolation, excessive screen time, angst and fear– this is not a small matter – this is permanently affecting the generation who we need to lead us to better days. I respectfully call upon the Board to present their plan for return to campus, even if it begins in the spring.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and for allowing the public to comment and participate.

Sincerely,

Shanaz Hazel