

Public Comments from the LCPS Board of Education Work Session held on February 2, 2021

Renee Perry

Good afternoon, I was watching the Gov. updates earlier and I saw that she wants to re-open schools on Feb 8. I am humbly asking LCPS to re-think this. I know that you all will be voting this decision on Feb 2. My understanding was that NM had to be in the green for at least two weeks before we thought about talking about returning to in-person learning. Do we really have a safe plan? Do the schools have the protective equipment, filters etc. to effectively keep us all safe? Most of us haven't even received one vaccine yet. I am older and have underlying health issues. Unfortunately, I know numerous colleagues and friends that have perished to this deadly virus. I know you will be getting a lot of "pressure" to open schools up for in person learning, however we need to make sure everyone is going back safely. In one of my small groups today, two students had coughs...If we were "in person" how would we address kiddos that come with runny noses and coughs? My kiddos and families are finally logging into zooms, attending small groups, attending interventions, and are FINALLY getting the hang of canvas and all their learning platforms, do we really want to upset everyone's schedules yet again? We finally have routines in place and consistency. I realize that eventually we will need to go back in person, but our state is still in the red, hospitals are still seeing a lot of illness and death, and the bottom line, is most LCPS employees and families aren't vaccinated yet. My husband and oldest daughter have conditions that puts them in a High-risk category, it would be unacceptable for me to bring home an illness that could potentially kill them. I pray you all make the best decision to keep us all safe. This virus will soon pass, but lives lost can never be brought back. Thanks for listening to my concerns, I hope you all have a great day.

Catrina Palos

I am in agreement for the opening of the schools but I think February is too soon because we as parents would need to re-arrange our schedules and this is not enough time to do so. We would also need to get school supplies as well, and again February 8th is too soon to do so. I think rushing the kids back would not be beneficial only because their main focus for the first weeks would be seeing their friends finally. With only a few months of school left I think it would be too much of a rush for the kids to handle while trying to catch up with the school work.

Kacee Thatcher

My name is Kacee Thatcher and I am the mother of 2 high school seniors (twins). Please let our kids back in school ASAP. The CDC has supported this and provided helpful protocols to bring the kids back safely. The failing students and break in mental health are far more dangerous than the virus. My daughters play soccer. We do NOT want fall sports to come back for spring. It's too late. Club soccer is played in the spring and for man is the last opportunity to get seen by college coaches and get recruited. It is not worth losing that opportunity to play 6-12 local games. And kids should not have to decide between allegiance to their school and college

scholarship opportunities. You will wind up with half a high school team and half a club team...neither having enough players to run a program. My kids have already signed with a college, so I am speaking on the behalf of other seniors in the sport. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Amelia Hamilton

My name is Amelia Hamilton. I have two children that attend Mesilla elementary. We need to be able to go back to in person learning and or hybrid for those who feel uncomfortable going back. I will personally sign any waiver or vote any way needed. Thank you.

Summer Biad

To Whom it May Concern or LCPS School Board, It is time for you to step and do what's best for the students of Las Cruces. The NMAA just announced that they would like to start fall sports on February 22nd. If you delay putting our kids in Las Cruces back in school, and they miss the two-week trial to be able to start sports, you are doing a disservice to our local kids academically and athletically. A personal friend that's a pediatrician stated last week to us that she had five failed suicide attempts in her office and that one patient was referred to Mesilla Valley Hospital and that patient said they were so happy to be there because they finally got to be around other people. Please, do what's right by the kids and get them back in school in person immediately. You have had months to prepare for this and now it's time to do what's right. There's no reason we should be behind any of the other schools in the state. Our kids need to be in school with their teachers and their peers before we lose anymore to suicide, homeschooling or leaving the state to find better education and opportunity. Please put the kids first! The Biad Family (Mayfield Senior and Sophomore)

Connie Limon

Dear distinguished school board, thank you for all that you do for our community and children. First and foremost, I am a parent of two high school children and a high school teacher and coach of the Las Cruces Public School District. I would like to express my desire and willingness to return to in-person school in a hybrid model. I am confident in all the safety measures that the school district has put in place for us to safely to return to the classroom. Coming from the viewpoint as a teacher and parent I feel that returning to the classroom will greatly benefit the children and their overall well-being. Thank you for your time and consideration. Sincerely, Connie Limon

Steve Bradee

My son, Alexander Bradee, receives SPED services. I would very much like to see him getting back to school and socializing with his teachers and peers on February 8th. That seems like a daunting task. All the PPE he and the school staff will require to maintain is a chore in itself (Alex has limited use of his arms and hands and requires assistance - cannot put on mask, other

gear himself). Also, just having to provide wheelchair accessible bus service with all protective precautions in place seems difficult as well. After all safety issues are addressed, what time will be left for teaching and learning? How does LCPS address all this in 2 weeks?

Maureen DeArmond

Just wanted to let you know I am totally for in-person learning. My kids will be masked up, healthy and ready to see their friends this year. They will have hand sanitizer at the ready! Our whole family-grandparents included-are happy to have them return to school. Their mental health is in dire need of friends! I hope we can have a decent graduation for the seniors this year. My senior has definitely had the worst of the pandemic-no prom, no friends, no senior experience- no nothing! Thanks for considering the opinions of parents.

Kacy Robinson

Dear LCPS Management, It is time for our children to return to school. The CDC has published a report showing the lack of COVID spread in public schools. The facts cannot be denied, I have attached a link to the report for your review

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7004e3.htm>

James Lopez

I am a local primary care provider here in the Las Cruces area and have seen first-hand both the negative and positive impacts that COVID has had on our community. I have had patients pass away and families mourning their deaths. I have also seen advances in technology and medicine. We as a health care system have been able to come together to better prevent, recognizing, and treat COVID. We have come leaps and bounds compared to when we were first introduced to this novel virus a year ago. To be honest, I'm afraid. I'm afraid that you as a school board will choose to ignore the numerous and well documented studies that support schools opening for in person instruction. The benefits of opening schools strongly outweigh the risks. We couldn't (and shouldn't) ignore such strong suggestions in medicine, and we shouldn't ignore it when it comes to our future generations either. There are blueprints of schools doing all over our nation - two in our own backyard. Let's continue to move forward, together, responsibly, and with precautions. Please get kids AND teachers back in schools! James Lopez, PA-C

Kathleen Guitar

What if we split summer vacation? We could use February to get ALL teachers their vaccinations, give them a break from the stress of on-line teaching to build up their immune systems, and continue school through June to make up the days. It would effectively be a "split summer vacation". It doesn't seem that the benefits of students experiencing a few scattered in-person school days (where they must social distance while wearing masks) justifies putting

teachers at risk. Our county is still in the RED! Waiting one month would allow the teachers to go back safer and stronger. Too many have already been lost to this deadly virus. I believe that the trauma to students losing a teacher is far greater than having them experience a separated summer vacation schedule.

Karla Benefield

It's about the children. They need to be back in school. There's a lot more I could say but that really sums it up. Thank You

Katrina Armendariz

Good morning, I have received emails and notifications about the schools re-opening and I have some concerns. I know eventually we will have to return to in person learning but as of right now I strongly feel it is safer for all staff and students to remain online. One of my biggest concerns is not that all staff is/will get vaccinated. How can we assure everyone's safety? I worry even with a vaccine we can still be at risk for catching the virus through others and bringing it home to our own families. I worry because the majority of new cases have been children. I have small children at home with upper respiratory issues that have been hospitalized for days at a time and I worry for their health as well as my own. I am already taking extra precautions to ensure they stay safe and healthy. As a parent I feel I barely got into a routine and schedule with my child's classes that works in her interest and keeps her motivated. I would hate to break that now, after she's finally understanding canvas and how it works. With that being said I BEG to reconsider re-opening the schools at this time. Thank you for your time and consideration. Respectfully,
Katrina Armendariz Special Educational Assistant Central Elementary

Debbi Moore

On behalf of the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce, we stand in full support of the schools opening to students, based on the hybrid guidelines & in observance of all COVID safe practices. Bringing back a sense of normalcy to our children is so very important. From connection with their classmates, of face-to-face interaction with the teachers to the simplicity of being back in the classroom is key to providing a true sense of security that everything is going to be okay. We are confident that you, the administration & the entire LCPS staff are & will be abiding by practices that will create a safe, healthy environment for both our children & staff. The Chamber remains a partner with you as we continue to navigate this pandemic. We are so appreciative of your commitment to our children & their education

Annja Cox

Ms. Trujillo, My son was beyond excited thinking he is going to get to go back to school Feb 8th. All the kids spreading messages through social media thinking this is happening and that they are going to get to do their sports. We need to get these kids back in school and allow them to play their sports. We are one of the only states that this is not happening. It is just heartbreaking to have to tell them that no this is not happening. It irritates me that the governor didn't share this from the beginning. Her announcement gave them hope ... now our district must follow through. The CDC supports kids in school <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/education/2021/01/27/covid-schools-cdc-reports-how-classes-can-safe-prevent-spread/4278356001/> <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/26/world/cdc-schools-reopening.html> Let's get the teachers vaccines. It is not right that we are letting teachers and unions run the show here. We need to put our kids first. All I hear is that teachers feel they shouldn't be put at risk. Meanwhile I watch my teacher friends travel even outside the country and enjoy life not worrying about the risk. They don't even have to worry about quarantine for their jobs from travel because they teach online. What about those who don't have the luxury of working from home? Police officers, firemen, health care workers and all other essential personal. We have continued. Parents are continuing and kids are left to do education online themselves. I know you are very well aware our kids are failing. Suicide rates have risen, and NM still leads in suicide rates. I know personally of a high school kid that committed suicide and I feel this would not have happened if school was on and he had his support groups. https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/health-of-women-and-children/measure/teen_suicide/population/teen_suicide_hispanic/state/NM Sports can only continue if we move to hybrid by Feb 22. Sports and teams are what keeps kids motivated and bonded together to prevent these mental tragedies. The mental stability of our kids is what we need to think about. Let's let them play! NM continues to fall behind and not getting kids back in school will continue the trend. Most of the US kids are in some sort on face to face education. If other states can do this so can we. By keeping our state closed has not proven to make our numbers any better. Please make the right decision and at least let us try the hybrid model!
Annja Cox

Jaimee Ballard

My name is Jaimee Ballard and my son attends DDPRESCHOOL at highland elementary. I am in favor of students returning to a hybrid model. While it isn't ideal for everyone involved, I strongly believe that children need to be in the classroom. Yes, things will be different and kids won't be able to freely play with their friends, but it's better than not seeing them at all. Masks will be annoying to wear for several hours but if that is the sacrifice for being able to see their teachers and friends, most children will be okay with that. Also one thing that isn't talked about is the cost of children's lives and mental health and safety living in isolation. Children have committed suicide because of the isolation, I worry what being stuck at home has done to my son's mental health when he already has autism. Parents are abusing their children more because parents are frustrated, and the abuse goes unnoticed. Give these children their lives back, at least somewhat. They deserve it, parents deserve it, teachers deserve it.

Jerry Sanchez

Dear LCPS School Board Members, It is to my understanding that in order for sports to happen the schools need to be in a hybrid model. I believe that it is best that we go into this hybrid not just for sports that were taken away from all of us last year, but for the kids that need help with school. Some kids are falling behind because, well let's face it technology can sometimes be a mess. Some kids need a face to face interaction with their teachers so they are able to understand what is going on in the classroom. I do not think it is fair for the kids that are struggling to keep struggling since they do better in school face to face. The hybrid model would also mean so much to all the student athletes. We have all put in so much work just for the opportunity to practice. As a student I believe that the school board should agree to go into a hybrid model especially for the kids that are suffering in school. People should have the opportunity to succeed but if that opportunity is not shown then there is no moving forward. As a football player for Las Cruces High I wouldn't wish for anything else except for the opportunity to play on the field with my brothers. They have taught me so much. Never bringing each other down but always bringing each other up. That is what a family is. The seniors that have been in the program for four years deserve to play. They have made the most sacrifices out of all of us. Please consider having us go into a hybrid model. Thank you, Jerry Sanchez

Terry Hamilton

Please get our kids back to in person learning ASAP! The well-being of our youth depends on it! Thank you, Terry Hamilton (Mom of a 4th grader and a 9th grader)

Laura Valles

Good afternoon. My concern for returning to the classroom is as follows. Not every school building is prepared with the correct safety measures. There are thousands of COVID cases among children. I think we should wait until more people are vaccinated with both vaccines and until our county is in the green. I help care for my elderly mom. I do not want to expose her to the virus.

Peter Houde

To all concerned, I am writing lest anyone assume that Facebook is a valid method of community polling. I have deep concerns about premature reopening, despite the obvious deleterious educational and emotional effects that online schooling are having on my own high school child. To date, the studies of Covid-19 vaccine efficacy have been shown protection against death and/or symptoms. They have not demonstrated to provide protection against infection and transmission. It is not sufficient to vaccinate teachers if children are still capable of transmitting virus to family members. Increased transmission translates to increased prevalence and increased opportunity for viral mutation. Sincerely, Peter Houde Prof. of Biology New Mexico State University Note: this email is not a formal statement of the position of NMSU

Chris Davis

Good afternoon I am sending this email to let you know that I am in full support of opening schools. As you know 70% of parents are in favor. There is not much time left in this school year! It has affected my children more than you'll ever care to know! I have tried my best but we are failing our children every day. So I ask that you vote yes to allowing our children a chance at an education! We are last in education and only falling further behind but I believe we can change this and it starts with opening up. The science is behind this! Thank you Chris Davis

Jeanne Brown

Dear LCPS School Board, My name is Jeanne Brown and I am a resident of Las Cruces. I have a daughter who is currently a 5th grade student in a Las Cruces Public Schools classroom. While on-line learning is not ideal, I believe that it is essential that all LCPS teachers, staff and administrators who desire to be vaccinated have the opportunity to receive both vaccinations before they are forced on-site. I know for a fact that my daughter's teacher not only has not been vaccinated, but has family members in her nuclear family with severe health complications. I would hate to see her forced into returning and placing herself and her family members at risk. My family is willing to make the sacrifice to continue to have less-than-ideal virtual learning to ensure my daughter's teacher's safety, and those of the other teachers, administrators and other staff members around the district. I believe that returning to in-person classes without LCPS employee vaccinations is a redline that should not be crossed. Thank you,

Danielle Plane

Hello, Please allow teachers and staff that want to get vaccinated to do so. There have been few opportunities to do so so far. Also please allow for staff to be trained on new procedures and policies with the district provided supplies available. I know my school has to readdress some scheduling concerns and make sure class sizes will be compliant as well. Do not rush us into hybrid model without these factors addressed. Thank you,

Adrian Galaz

Hello, My name is Adrian Galaz, principal for Las Cruces Catholic School. I'm reaching out to learn more about your upcoming meetings, etc. as you all move forward with planning, options, and next steps for LCPS students, staff, and families. I would like to extend an offer to speak on behalf of "both sides" of this argument, as we have provided options for our families and students who are either in-person or utilizing remote learning. I will try to keep this brief: We opened in August and have had much success (Preschool through 8th grade, along with four high school seniors!). Yes we are a smaller school with roughly 230 plus students along with 40 staff members. However, that is still a considerable bunch to have on one campus. With several protocols in place, we opened up for 10 weeks before we had our first case. And even at that point, it did not spread. We had a few more isolated cases with the same result: no spread. For

the first time this January we had a class where some students did appear to spread it to each other, but it was contained to just a handful in one classroom (not spreading schoolwide. *this happened to be my daughter's class). We have seen the many benefits: academically, socially, emotionally, etc. in having our school open. We have also been able to support our online students with EVERY DAY/ ALL DAY LIVE instruction. This has been a great accommodation and service for those families. This has been a challenging year but with some planning, creativity, and constant communication, this has also been a very successful year. Not sure who the best point of contact would be but I would like to at least share our experience and story as a school in this community. Our teachers want to be in the building, and I have a couple that have utilized teaching virtually as well. So again, it really comes down to evaluating risk, looking at infrastructure of schools, giving proper guidance to staff, educating students on how school will look different, and laying out expectations of communication from parents. This is a tough situation because I know first-hand teachers and admin that want to go back to school. I also know teachers and admin who "love working from home" for all the wrong reasons, not due to fear of Covid. They like the fact that they don't have to Zoom until midday, the flexible hours, the minimum instruction time. *I also know this from the many parents we have on waiting lists, trying to get their children into our school. This I fear, is going to leave a bad taste in the mouth of many and it is an undeserving stigma to the many educators who are willing to give this a shot to help support students and families. *Risk is involved, we all understand this, but with several layers of protection and processes in place. Schools can be "safe" as recently reported by the CDC. Our plan has not been perfect, but it has been effective: Seeing and hearing kids in socially distanced classrooms! Wearing masks consistently. Seeing kids play everyday at recess (with masks) and having designated areas for mask breaks! Hearing instruction from teachers all day long in the classrooms (with online students logged on and part of the process the entire time). It has all been such a blessing. And yes, we have had times where we had to "quarantine a class" and guess what, it's a seamless transition with the simple protocols we have in place. We are not doing anything fancy or anything that requires lots and lots of money. All it takes is careful and thoughtful planning, implementation, and communication. Have a vision, create a plan, and be willing to adjust as needed. I think there is a way to at least create some opportunities to serve those that are ready for a return to school on campus and those who are not. I see this as an educator, administrator, and parent as I have two children in this school. Heck, I also see this as a coach, so I understand the point-of-view of those who are part of extracurricular activities as well.

Angie Deruyter

I am writing to you today in response to our Governors most recent ruling regarding public school openings. As I am sure you are aware, our students need to be in the classroom as soon (and as much) as possible! As a member of the Las Cruces Public School Board, I am urging you to do what is right for the students of Las Cruces and open our schools to all elementary, middle and high school students. Students are not thriving with virtual school, in fact it has become apparent that they are literally disappearing. It is time for everyone, including school teachers, to get back into the classroom. I am aware of the teacher's unions pushing back on administration regarding "unsafe" environments. It is time for the Governor and teacher's unions to stop using our children as political pawns! **The majority of the parents in this**

district went back to work months ago, before a vaccine was available and while their children were at home trying to log-in to school. Teachers are essential! Face to face, human interaction for students is essential! LCPS, it is time to do the right thing! Our state, county and city has fallen farther and farther behind in all measurable standards. It is not too late! We need to get teachers and students back in school as soon as possible.

Angie Deruyter

Please see the attached report that was published by the CDC regarding COVID transmission in public schools. It is time for our children to return to school, there is no disputing the research presented by the CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7004e3.htm>

Clarisa Sanchez

With the uncertainty of Covid still happening and it is in the best interest that LCPS STAYS virtual till August. Once they are able to go back teachers would be stressing safety rules more than actually teaching which makes no sense for the 2.5 months this will actually be happening once we are able to go back. KEEP US ONLINE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Stephanie Reiss

Please allow students to have the option to finish out this school year remote online! Returning to the classroom so close to the end of the school year is not only disruptive to the students and families but I believe that it will impact students grades as well as cause confusion for the kids. This will impact their grades and overall attitude towards learning. My son is 12 and in the 6th grade and although this school year has been extremely challenging and different he has been successful and found a daily routine that has been working well. He is on honor roll and I would hate to see him and other children struggling to adapt to return to the classroom when they are so close to finishing out the school year strong via remote learning. I hope that the outcome of the board meeting takes everyone's thoughts, feelings, and opinions into consideration. Speak to the children and see how they feel about this adjustment. Most just want to return to be with their friends and have interaction with other students which is scary. We don't know what precautions if any some of our communities families are taking so how can lcps guarantee our childrens safety? Thank you for your time and all you do for our children. Whatever the outcome I trust that you all will make the appropriate decision. You can't ever make everyone happy! Stephanie Reiss Mother of Exavier Fernandez-Reiss 6th grade Student at Sierra Middle School

Mary Daniel-Montoya

I would like schools to reopen for School Year 2021-2022, not in February of 2021. Staff and teachers need to be vaccinated (along with the general public), PPE needs to be in place-installed not just on order. We need clear plans for cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces and the training that entails. Students and staff require safe working conditions in order to be successful at school. Kids in elementary schools want to play on the equipment in our playgrounds, but how can they during a pandemic? Our infection rates in Dona Ana county are higher than they were when we shut down in March, so reopening now is scientifically contrary to CDC and DOH guidelines. I respectfully ask that we stay on the side of caution and remain in a virtual setting through the 2020-2021 school year OR until our infection rate falls into the Green.

Mary Daniel-Montoya Fairacres ES

Cecil Campbell

Good morning, here is my input for what it is worth. Every single government agency is now saying it is worse for kids to out of school than in. Every private agency is saying kids need to be back in school for a lot of reasons. CDC and every government agency is saying that it is safe for children and teachers to be back in school. We have completely ruined and economy, hurt our children's growth both socially and emotionally, by saying "we have to follow the science" Now the science is saying its safe to go back. Everybody out here is saying go back, Except the teacher's union. Why do you think that is. It was perfectly safe for them to go to Walmart, home depot and Lowes for the last year, it is safe for Walmart workers to be out there exposed to way more people in one day than the teachers will be in the rest of the year. The school district is the ones that should be there for the kids. The school board, is the ones that should represent the kids and the parents. The teachers union has only one concern, bettering the teachers. If it was for safety then would have all stayed home. It's time to put the kids first, and go back to school.

Georgina Apodaca

I believe it is in the best interest for the children in Las Cruces to go back to school in person in February, starting with the hybrid model. Children need social interactions to develop their personal, social and emotional skills. They need a positive learning environment to meet their educational needs. At home there are many distractions and they are not able to focus on what is being taught, by just looking at a computer screen. Many children's grades are being affected, by only using the remote learning model. The children are being isolated and we are having many more mental health issues of depression and anxiety in children. With the families that are below the poverty level, those children are at higher risk for dropping out of school, drug use, attempting suicide and having mental health issues. Please consider the future of the children in NM and let them go back to school and also participate in sports and other school activities.

Jessica Vigil-Sosa

Dear LCPS Board Members, If you are not 100% sure you can guarantee the health and safety of students, staff, and their families please do not reopen schools. There are so many building issues that need to be considered such as teachers in portables who do not have the same air filtration as the main building. Also, not all portables have sinks to wash hands. This is a huge concern for teachers with classrooms in portables. Some buildings are very old and the classroom dimensions are so small and should be a huge concern. Special education teachers who provide inclusion and resource (pull out of Gen Ed) services will cross contaminate classrooms as their schedule/caseload requires them to go to several classrooms a day or pull several students from different classrooms general education classrooms. These services may be forced to be provided in a virtual setting from their general education classrooms in the face to face setting. As a parent, my two 5th graders and my 14-year-old who has asthma will not have the protection of a vaccine in the near future. How can you guarantee their safety and well being? Who will pay those medical bills or those lost wages to care for them? Our hospitals here in Las Cruces do not have the ability to take an overload that reopening schools may create. The best choice for the safety and well-being of students, staff, and their families is to continue virtual for the remainder of the school year. We have just begun to adjust and make changes to support students who are struggling. If we again began to prepare for re-entry we take time and resources away from the focus of supporting students virtually. Every time we prepare to return to face-to-face our focus changes and students currently in virtual learning suffer. Virtual learning is not ideal but it is opening new doors for students, educators, and parents. We need to focus on refining and supporting students in virtual learning at this time until we can guarantee their safety and well-being. We should not waste time to focus on a plan that may set us back educationally. Where we may end up closing every month because of possible exposure. This is happening in schools that have reopened in states across the US. Give educators the support they need with virtual learning for the remainder of the school year because we will see the roots of virtual learning for many years to come. Also, when taking into consideration the social emotional impact that will happen when students and parents realize that nothing will be “normal” in their child’s school day. As a mother my children think they are going to go back to school and will be able to hold their best friends hand on the playground, play basketball with the other 5th graders, play tag on the playground, eat lunch with their best friends in the cafeteria, gossip in huddles with their girlfriends, share their favorite smelly markers, sit next to their best friend in class, and share their snacks. They think that they will go back to school social life the way they left it in March. They will be devastated to learn that everything they miss about school will not be possible and they will have to keep their distance and keep a mask on the entire day, besides meals. Their school will become a prison with cold distance between each other and they are not mentally prepared for that. I know you have a lot to weigh on when considering both sides but you are not just considering the education of students. Your decision is weighing life or death of students, educators, and their families in the middle of a pandemic with a virus that has already been reported to mutate and may be more contagious. Thank you for your time,

Elayna Cornelius

Good morning, I am writing to voice my opinion on returning to school. I am asking you to please continue remote learning through the duration of this school year. I just gave birth to my first child in November and have used the majority of my sick leave. What will happen if I must

quarantine, or even worse, become Covid positive? What will happen if I have exhausted all of my sick leave? Also, as a district we have always experienced a shortage of substitute teachers, more so now. Who will cover our classes if we become sick or have a Covid scare and must quarantine? In my opinion, the risks outweigh the benefits at this time. The science shows that kids are carriers. How can we risk our health as educators and possibly risk bringing something home to our families? This is absurd. I am pleading with you, for my safety and the safety of my parents and family, please continue remote learning until the Covid cases decline and we are all vaccinated, or at least see the effectiveness of the vaccine. Currently, Dona Ana is still in red. This pandemic is still very much real and still going strong. As we look at the re-entry plan, with all of the safety precautions that are put in place such as extended, staggered passing periods, the reality is that instruction time will only be about 25-30 minutes by the time we effectively and efficiently follow all safety protocols. The risk of my health does not seem worth 25 minutes of face-to-face instruction, when I can effectively teach online for my full 45 minutes per class daily, as I am doing now. My current classroom, as an AES facilitator is smaller than the average classroom-with no windows or adequate ventilation. I also teach an elective course. My largest class is currently 32 students. I know students will be separated, A-L students and M-Z, however, that is still about 15 students at any given time, in my smaller than average classroom. I also share this small classroom with another teacher who uses my room to teach during my off periods. My safety, the safety of my coworkers and my students is a concern at this time. I strongly encourage you to make an informed decision and one that serves the safety and concerns of your educators in our district. Please do not send me back to school to risk my safety and the safety of my family. Respectfully, Elayna Cornelius 7th Grade AES Facilitator Camino Real Middle School

Barb Ericson

As an AES teacher at Fairacres and Dona Ana I do not want to go back in person YET. I feel that ALL staff should have the vaccine first. With the new COVID-19 variants showing up, I think it will cause our numbers to rise. I feel we need to wait until after Spring Break and then see where we stand with this virus. Fairacres has already had 5 staff members and we haven't even been in school! This is a deadly virus! Barb Ericson Teacher of the Gifted Fairacres/Dona Ana

Jeannette N. Frieze

Good afternoon, It is **NOT** safe to return in person. I have 3 underlying conditions as well as my daughter. The vaccine does **NOT** prevent you from getting COVID. Not all schools have adequate ventilation systems. Classrooms would need plexi glass separating students from each other. Eating in the classroom or cafeteria would **NOT** be safe. Restaurants are still closed.

Temperature checks on each student as they arrive would be chaos. Each teacher at every school would need a thermometer. Hybrid would keep certain students together then what happens the other 3 days? Daycare which means exposure!! It is said young kids are carriers for COVID. Many, many parents are comfortable sending their kids in person. They want to keep them safe. If we did reopen, even hybrid, we will be closed again after 1-2 weeks and how many **lives would be in danger?? COVID will spread quickly!** Continue the **CONSISTENCY** we have now for the remainder of the school year and begin in person in August. Jeannette N. Fietze
Kindergarten Teacher Fairacres Elementary

Judy Kinuthia

Dear Board members, I feel that we are not prepared to return to face to face teaching at this time and would like to wait until August to be safe. These are my reasons:

1. I am not vaccinated and will probably not be by February 22 as things look
2. My classroom is in the middle of the building with no windows and no ventilation
3. I do not have control over the heating and cooling apparatus in my classroom, it is controlled from elsewhere
4. The new hybrid schedule will rob students of instructional time while it creates safety issues

For these reasons I do not feel safe returning to a face to face learning environment. Thank you.
Ms. Kinuthia CRMS Waithera Kinuthia Teacher of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing/ASL Teacher
Camino Real Middle School

Eva Marie Marquez

To whom it may concern:

As a parent of a child attending middle school and one in high school, I feel that returning to a hybrid model this school year will undermine everything students and teachers have worked so hard to achieve. All their hardwork is essentially being thrown out the window. Routines, lessons and progress are to be disrupted? We will be looking at about 10 days of each class for older students and about 20 days for those in elementary for a hybrid reentry. That does not leave enough time to establish routine and continue progress with their educations. This increases the workloads of our teachers who are already stretched thin. They have overcome such hurdles this year in learning new technology and new ways to engage, as have their students. I would hate to lose great teachers over the summer because they were overburdened by the demand that the hybrid model will bring, so close to the end of the year. I would hate to see the students who excelled and became engaged in online learning become frustrated with this new and temporary routine. I feel a full reentry in the fall with proper precautions would be in the better interest of

Las Cruces students and teachers. I hope all this is taken into account during your decision on whether to enter a hybrid model for the remainder of the year.

Alba Navarrete

Dear LCPS Board members, As a longtime educator and currently an EA, I KNOW, how IMPORTANT it is for our students to return to in person learning. However, ARE WE READY to welcome our students and provide them a safe environment? Are we giving our families enough time to accommodate for the changes to their home and work schedules? It makes MORE SENSE to finish the school year remotely and start fresh next year in a Hybrid mode. This will allow everyone, parents, to make needed changes and students, to become acquainted and implement COVID policies and procedures in the classroom. So many concerns come up: Can you assure us that our campus is equipped with the appropriate air filtration? Will we have the PPE that is required to be safe? Can we be assured that cleaning materials will not lack? Will there be consequences for anyone not adhering to the guidelines for a safe working environment? Administrators, staff, students, and parents??? Because I am an EA, will I have to take on duties which might put my health in jeopardy? It would be very sad if COVID cases emerged because we prematurely opened the schools, even though it was done with the best intentions. The thought that I could be the one to infect my immunocompromised spouse devastates me. We have all had to make sacrifices and teaching conditions may have been less than perfect, but my classroom teacher and I, have given 110% and are seeing many student successes. Our mentality is that "It can be done" ! It's been a learning experience and we all have had to learn and practice PATIENCE and KINDNESS. Thank you, LCPS Board, for serving our community and I trust you will do what is best for our students, families and employees of this district. Sincerely, A. Navarrete Kinder EA

Magdalena Nava Barnett

NEA Board, thank you for the opportunity to share my concerns over possible re-entry in February. While I do understand the importance of social interaction, I am aware of all the countless risks we would be exposed to by returning now. We have a great staff that deserve to be respected and protected as the professionals we are. I am extremely worried about the conditions in which we are being pressured to return to face-to-face instruction in only a few days. Although infection rates have dropped statewide, our county remains in red and people are still dying and getting infected. We have at least three new mutations that we are aware of. Even if we adults manage to get vaccinated, we are not fully protected. It is worrisome that students won't be vaccinated, temperature checked, and are potential asymptomatic carriers. We are also seeing children coming down with multi-system inflammatory syndrome that affects several organs long-term and can be deadly. I am concerned families won't be completely transparent about any symptoms and infection diagnoses because they just want their kids out of the house. Additionally, many families do not follow CDC guidelines about social distancing, travel

restrictions, or basic Covid precautions. We all have families we don't want to potentially infect. Many of us already have underlying medical conditions or at a higher risk because of age. I strongly believe we are being asked to return to unsafe working conditions. Although our safety teams have tirelessly worked since last summer on re-entry plans, none offer 100% protection to all on campus. How can we assure all surfaces are continuously sterilized throughout the day? Many rooms have no windows nor ventilation, so germs are circulated in restricted areas and are viable for days. As a sign language interpreter, I need to stand much closer than 6 feet to both my student and the teacher(s) to ensure I can be seen clearly especially when working with technology like small computer screens. My student in particular has vision problems, needing new eyeglasses but for some reason hasn't gotten them. Working with masks and face shields impedes interpreters from showing facial expressions, a critical grammatical aspect in American Sign Language. It is much safer working without a mask at home. Many people are unaware that by returning to school would mean LESS instructional time because of all the staggering that would need to be implemented. Once you take into consideration all the transition times, lunch times, etc., there would only be about 20 minutes of actual teaching. How is that beneficial to students? It absolutely sets them back even more. It simply makes more sense to continue online learning to maximize their class time. Expecting students to constantly follow safety guidelines is unrealistic and risky. Excited to see each other, we can reasonably expect for them to refuse to social distance and touch, hug, kiss, etc., after so much time not seeing each other. We cannot monitor bathrooms, locker rooms and all areas all the time. It seems to me that all this is a result of people placing more importance on sports, politics, and money over human safety. Every single life is precious and priceless. I don't think sacrificing us to satisfy the urge to compete in sports is worth it or the responsible thing to do during a global pandemic. Please allow us to continue to work safely from home for all the above-mentioned reasons. Students can always catch up on academics and sports. Human lives, however, cannot be replaced. Respectfully, Magdalena Nava Barnett Sign Language Interpreter Camino Real Middle School

Sara Hicks

I have the highest respect for our teachers, district staff and school board. I recognize the countless hours spent on what I have to believe has been your best intentions. Please take these thoughts/concerns/suggestions to heart. I have done my research... 1st: I vote to open our schools. The RESEARCH and SCIENCE proves over and over again that with safety protocols in place we CAN indeed open our schools. Even though gears changed fast from your hands being tied at the state level, you have been preparing for this! For months! Almost a year even of our children being out of schools. You ARE and HAVE BEEN prepared Now it is in your hands to take action. We must move forward and OPEN OUR SCHOOLS. The most recent research and science the CDC has produced states VERY CLEARLY that school can be done SAFELY for all, even without the vaccine. No more fear driving our decisions. #2 Vaccine. I understand teachers wanting the vaccine before returning is a concern. I, like many of you, hope we ALL have access to the vaccine very quickly! BUT it has been proven that school does NOT have to be held up because of it. Dr Scrasse in the NMPED address this week said nurses, SPED teachers qualify as healthcare workers. Should have been vaccinated. Our most at risk 75+ and those at high risk are getting their vaccines. And from data he stated 50% of people have underlying conditions that "qualify" them as high risk to get vaccinated. Which means, he stated,

“statistically at least 50% of our teachers/staff would be eligible”. A recent local news article also claimed 1050 teachers were vaccinated at Mountain View hospital already and Memorial had more but hadn’t yet given a specific number. A few teacher friends I personally know have also received there’s since then so I know there were and have been more. This is significant! And we should see even more the coming weeks. But again, school does NOT need to be held up because of it. #3 Filters. It’s my understanding we are “waiting” still on specific filters? They’ve been “backordered” is the excuse. Per Secretary Stewart at his address this week stated, “we’ve pushed all schools to get UP TO or AS CLOSE to Merv rating. MERV 13 is the GOAL. We understand some schools are NOT able to get up to the MERV because their HVAC systems do not support it and so in those cases we have put forward a SERIES OF ACCEPTABLE air flow and introduction of air methods that will create the safest possible indoor air environment. Heppa filters are ONE of those possibilities. There are also a NUMBER OF OTHER possibilities including opening up of dampers, introducing more fresh air through increased air flow and a series of OTHER ACTIONS SCHOOLS CAN TAKE. We do have a more detailed set of guidelines and diagrams of what that can look like and we are happy to share that with you if you are interested”. He said to contact their communications team for that. While I don’t have that list(I’ve been searching for it-Im sure you do) it sounds a lot like SPECIFIC filters as it’s been presumed to the public eye is NOT MANDATED(I’m referring to these “specific filters” being on back order with our district). It seems to me there are various ways this could be accomplished and not a reason to hold back from opening. We ALL know the governor and NMPED previously had put in place impossible and unachievable standards to reach in order to open. We all can see that. That’s why she’s “ok’ing” school in “red” and even SHE is backing down from her impossible standards. I PLEAD with you to follow the SCIENCE and DATA. I know you’ve put the proper protocols and practices in place to open schools. I trust that. It’s time to trust yourself and put that into ACTION. No more fear but DOING what’s right for the children. Secretary Stewart in his address this week stated himself, “we will make decisions based on science and data”. I hope that the CHILDREN will be of your utmost priority as you navigate to open our schools. In Dr. Trujillo own words from her Q&A last week before the announcement from governor, “we are prepared. We are looking forward to the announcement. We have plans at the district level, plans at the building level and we’re hopeful that even if it is the last 9 weeks that it’d be worth a shot to try and do as much as we possibly can.” I hold you to your word. Thank you for your time,

Aubrey Duncan

Good afternoon, My name is Aubrey Duncan and my input for going back to school is I am excited but my mom is kinda nervous because she works at the hospital. I believe that my grades will go up if I go back to school in reality. Sincerely, Aubrey Duncan

Victoria Gier

To Whom it may concern, I was asked to give my opinion about returning to school in February. I would like to express that I DO NOT feel comfortable returning to hybrid school. I feel that we are so close to getting New Mexicans vaccinated and ready, but we are not there

yet. Not every teacher can get the vaccine right NOW and are waiting their turns. Even if all teachers were vaccinated by the date of Feb. 22nd, it still wouldn't be ok to return. The students have a chance of catching COVID and bringing it home to their parents, grandparents, caretakers, etc. This is a risky situation as it could lead to a worse off situation for these students and their families overall. I am NOT willing to take that risk for their sake. It would be a shame if we all sacrificed so much for so long to stay home, only to open up right before everyone has the opportunity to get vaccinated, and then we just to go back to the devastation of this virus and shut down again because we did it too soon. If we do go back in a hybrid situation, it is being suggested for students to continue their work on their laptops in person. Why not just keep them virtual if they would be completing assignments online anyway? Students are not getting to socialize; it will be more hectic for all involved and I do not trust my coworkers/administration fully that procedures would be completely followed. Right now, everyone has adapted and gotten into a routine of online learning. Changing now would cause a big disruption to families that would have to reschedule their entire lives. Especially for only 2 days a week. I understand that there are difficulties and barriers for families and students with online learning. I am here to tell you it can be successful. I teach kindergarteners, 5- and 6-year old's, and WE ARE SUCCESSFUL. There is so much learning going on and engagement happening over zoom in our virtual world. Yes, it has its challenges and difficulties, and we have had to think outside the box, but it IS working. If it can be done with little Kinders it can be done at any level. MINDSET and WILLINGNESS! We need to consider students, families, teachers and all community members and how this will affect everyone. At school and at home. Again, we should remain in remote learning for the rest of this school year. We need to give it more time for the state to get more vaccines to all who want it, so come August we will be able to return safer in person. Thank you for your time, Victoria Gier MILK Motivator (Methods In Learning Kinesthetically) Kindergarten Teacher Fairacres Elementary School

Egla L. Hernandez-Lamb

To Whom It May Concern: Thank you for taking the time to read my thoughts. Although I would like to see the students back in the classroom, I don't think that it is the right time to do this. I will make it brief, as I am sure, many have overwhelmed you with their opinions. I feel that we have finally found momentum for this current school year and stopping our new normal to return to the classroom will not be as beneficial as some may see. New norms will need to be established just as any new year brings but even more so with more safety protocols. I feel that this stop-go situation will break the momentum and any gains we have made thus far. Not to mention, having to shut down schools for periods of time should there be an outbreak. Which leads me to my next concern. With the new variants that are starting to come out and them being more contagious, it worries me. I am not too sure that we should take the leap just yet. If most of our community had been vaccinated, I would feel a little more at ease to say yes please reopen. We are not there yet. I feel that opening too soon will cause us more problems than it is worth at this point. I would vote for us to come back stronger in August. New year, hopefully many more vaccinated, our district and teachers a little more prepared to tackle our new challenge to help our students succeed after this remote learning year. I would not even be opposed to entertaining the idea of year-round school starting in July. Our community has not been so willing to do this in the past, but I think that with us being forced into this remote

learning due to the pandemic and so many unknowns, many might be a little more willing to see the benefit to transitioning to year-round school. All in all, I will do my best as an educator to do what is necessary. I just want us to all be safe, healthy, and able to thrive. Respectfully, Eglá L. Hernandez-Lamb

Laura S. Simpson

Dear School Board Members: I am writing to you as the mother of 2 LCPS middle school teachers, 4 LCPS grandchildren and as a currently employed RN in one of our local hospitals. This is NOT the time to send our teachers and other school staff back into their buildings to work in person with children. The teachers are adults, NOT children, thus they are more likely to contract the COVID-19 virus when exposed or one of it's even more transmissible variant viruses that are currently circulating in the US from S. Africa, UK, & Brazil. Adults, esp those who are mid aged or older have more of a likelihood to not fare as well as their younger colleagues. Children aged 10 and above, are targets for spreading the virus unknowingly to their teachers, to their parents and other family members as they are usually asymptomatic when they test positive for the virus. The COVID-19 vaccine is currently not being offered to teachers as it is for the health care providers and persons aged 75 or older, or those 16+ with serious comorbid health conditions. My 30 yr old son is diabetic, has high blood pressure, is also overweight. As an experienced RN, I recognize that he may not contract a mild case of covid-19, but more likely a more serious case, possibly even developing pneumonia and requiring the assistance of life support, i.e. a ventilator. He is the father of 4 young children...!! Please be aware that many 30-50 yr old adults have passed away, or they remain on the ventilator, unable to be weaned off as the virus has ravaged their lungs, their heart and kidneys. As an RN, I have personally cared for patients who are so debilitated from 3-4 weeks on life support, that they are 100% dependent on oxygen, a wheelchair and a full-time caregiver as their brains have also been affected by the covid-19 virus, leaving them confused, psychotic at times and depressed. Las Cruces Public School district is located in Dona Ana County which has the second highest number of positive covid-19 cases every single day as I have monitored the Dept of Health website daily for the past 10 months. DA County's proximity to El Paso is problematic, thus causing our numbers to be high, only second to Bernalillo county. El Paso was in the not so recent past one of the epicenters for patients with severe covid-19 requiring hospitalization and ventilation. Please school board, push the state DOH to offer vaccinations to the teachers and other school staff before having children return to the hybrid mode of attending classes. I recognize that some parents have the concern and need for competitive sports to be held, so that their kids may receive scholarships to college. This is NOT the time to pull back on the current health and safety concerns in place that allow teachers to work remotely. I am not in favor of teachers returning to in person education of their students at this time. **TEACHERS LIVES MATTER!!!!** Thank you for your consideration regarding this immensely serious health that does affect the lives of our older students, teachers and all other school employees! Sincerely, Laura S. Simpson, RN

Michael D. Simpson

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the return of students and staff to the school setting. Is the pandemic over? No. Have we been able to significantly mitigate the number of new cases. No. Dona Ana County remains a "Red" County. Signifying a very high Covid-19 risk. Are a significant number of citizens vaccinated against Covid-19. No. Are students capable of catching and spreading Covid-19? Yes. Are Teachers and other School Staff placed at a greater risk for catching Covid-19 by returning to the classroom? Yes. Teachers and School Staff make daily sacrifices for their Students. They should not be asked to risk their health or even their lives. Sincerely, Michael D. Simpson, Ph.D. Retired Psychologist

Terry Claar

Dear School Board Members: I am very concerned that the governor decided that teachers are no longer on the essential workers list (1B) and are no longer a priority in getting the vaccine shot for Covid. I know the vaccine is not required for teachers to return to work but it is our health and we have the right to be as safe as possible. My second concern is that I work at Centennial High School and it has been almost one year and our school still does not have the appropriate air filters that are required before our school is deemed safe. I do not feel that putting fans in our classrooms will do anything to keep our environment safe. Finally, I am very curious as to what has changed in the state of NM. Covid numbers have not gone down, teachers are not vaccinated, not all schools are the safest environment to return to. As a veteran teacher of 23 years, I desperately want to be back face-to-face with my students, if it can be accomplished in a safe manner. The health of my family and myself should not be in any jeopardy due to the governor's announcement that districts could return to school campuses. Respectfully, Terry Claar, M.A. Secondary English Educator

Samia Killmar

Will community-based instruction will be allowed during hybrid learning?

Valerie Carrasco

Hello, my name is Valerie Carrasco. I am a parent to three young children. One is a second grader and one is a kindergartener. My youngest is in early PreK. My husband is active duty military and stationed at Holloman while we reside in Las Cruces. I just wanted to say that I am not in favor of reopening and changing the schedule for the kids in the last quarter of school. My children are finally in rhythm and have a routine to follow. Changing that for them in the last quarter is not worth the interruption. Also, expecting the teachers to change their lessons plans again in such a short time and now provide dual lessons for virtual and in-person is too much. I fear we will lose more teachers this way and we cannot afford to lose any. Furthermore, they have not been offered vaccines and given time for their efficacy to take place. You are asking for more upheaval for the last quarter and it is not worth it. Once rates decline, once teachers have received vaccines, open summer classes. Let's get ready for fall in a big way. Let's not casually risk lives for one quarter of instruction. Ask the teachers how they feel. I support their input. For

me, it's not worth it. My family lost 3 family members in December alone. It is a virus that no one knows how they will react until they have it. Is it worth a student's life, a staff member's or educator's? Continue with support for virtual and offer summer courses once we have a declining rate and vaccines are widespread. My husband and I have received our vaccine, I am concerned for the community. Sincerely, Valerie Carrasco

Xanthe Phillips

Dear Las Cruces Board Members, I would like to start by thanking you for keeping me and my husband safe during the pandemic. Without babbling on, I will get right to the point. Doña Ana county is still red. There are new more dangerous variants. School personnel are not vaccinated. Please, do not allow us to return to school until all have been fully vaccinated as well as the 14-day period following to ensure full protection. If we are to return, make it after Spring break. Sincerely, Xanthe Phillips Camino Real Middle School

Lisa M. Weinbaum

Dear School Board Members, 450,000 dead and counting with 4,000 new bodies piling up every single day. This is what the science tells us. The science also tells us that COVID cases are on the rise among children, particularly minority children, and the more dangerous South African strain is already here in the United States. Vaccines may not be enough to stop it. Based on a CDC study <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7004e3.htm> of rural Wood County, Wisconsin (population density less than 100 per square mile), involving 1529 students in eight elementary buildings (averaging just 191 students) and nine secondary schools with a total population of 3347 (averaging only 372) with a predominantly Anglo population, the CDC has cautioned that schools can open safely, assuming all safety measures have been taken. Those measures include school staff receiving both vaccinations. LCPS has not met that hugely important standard. Another safety measure supported by the CDC includes proper filtration systems installed and working. Although those systems were ordered months ago, LCPS has not, as of yet, met that standard either. In many schools, including mine (Centennial), not only are filtration systems not installed, but the windows can't open, thus trapping potentially virus-laden air to circulate for hours, infecting everyone in the building and everyone they live and interact with. Of course, Las Cruces is not rural, not Anglo, where the virus has much less of an impact. Rather, we're a city with a population density of 1360 per square mile where transmission is much more rampant. We're a predominantly Hispanic community where the virus has ravaged, and continues to ravage, our citizens, as evidenced by our ICU's still at near capacity and reading our neighbors' obituaries almost daily in the local newspaper. And lastly, our schools are much larger; our high schools educating as many as 2000 students, far more than little rural Wisconsin. The moving pieces are just too difficult to control. For example, having enough personnel is also critical for our safe return to school. This includes substitute teachers. My first 22 years with LCPS I spent at Lynn Middle School. We constantly had a sub shortage and teachers gladly

filled in when needed. The past two years I've enjoyed teaching at Centennial, and the situation was the same, not enough substitutes. Again, teachers were asked to fill the void, but this was not during a pandemic. I can't imagine subs willing to sacrifice their health and life now, especially for the low compensation they receive. Nor should they. If LCPS teachers are expected to juggle hybrid learning simultaneously with in-person and remote students, clean our rooms between classes, monitor the hallways and restrooms between classes, AND fill in for sick or quarantined teachers in buildings without proper ventilation, how can you ensure parents that their children won't come home infected? Despite your best laid plans, I don't believe you can. Especially when we rush to judgment without all safety measures securely in place. Last April I delivered a eulogy via Zoom for my 32-year-old cousin. His weeping mother sat alone in the funeral parlor with her dead son's body encased in the casket. Here in Las Cruces, we've already lost too many educators, too many of our friends and loved ones to this deadly disease. Some of them were just with us a few months ago, even a few weeks ago, walking and laughing among us. But what is tragic most of all, is that in some of those cases, those deaths could have been prevented. Surely, none of us want to contribute to the untimely death of a colleague, a loved one, or a child. But despite what sometimes has been an unpopular stance to stay home, LCPS has chosen to do what is right. In fact, we will never know how many lives we have already saved with remote learning. Unfortunately, there IS no science that can tell us that. 450,000 dead and counting; 4000 new bodies every day. I don't envy the decision you have to make; I am glad I'm not in your position. But know that if you vote to continue with 100% on-line learning, you have done everything in your power to minimize the death toll here in Las Cruces. Anything short of that, I fear the worst for our city. Yours in education, Lisa M. Weinbaum

Melody Hagaman

Dear admin and esteemed members of the school board: I would like to express my opposition for returning to school until all teachers are vaccinated (at very least), we have revisited what hybrid learning would look like and developed a more appropriate plan, and we have a deeper understanding of the newer, more contagious strands of Covid-19. While I know long emails are rarely read, please consider the following: 1) The study that showed that returning to school can be safe was done in a majority white, single generational, higher income community in the Midwest. The demographics of our students and their families put them at higher risk, as does the lack of access to medical care in many communities throughout the state. As we are a boarder community, we have been hit hard and our hospitals and healthcare workers are already maxed out. Further, this study did nothing to address the new mutations of the virus that have been shown to be more contagious, even among children. The vaccine is currently not approved for anyone under 16, and studies have shown lasting effects (many potentially lifelong) for the children who have contracted the virus. 2) The hybrid model does little to engage students and is nothing more than glorified online learning with higher risks. Might we consider some more creative solutions, like small cohorts of outdoor classrooms, nature walks, etc, before we commit to a schedule that has made students and teachers miserable in other states? Perhaps for older grades we might consider a model that exposes students and their teachers to fewer people per day while allowing them to still receive support? Something with advisory and specials only may suffice. Or only bringing seniors back to ensure connecting with them as they meet graduation requirements. People may be more open to going back in if the schedule they were implementing

were thoughtfully created rather than a futile attempt to recreate the current online schedule or the in person schedules of yore. There is no need for secondary teachers to see all of their classes in person when half the students or more won't be physically present. 3) The hybrid model forces teachers to do two jobs at once and has been linked to a mass exodus of teachers from the profession. We are already critically short on teachers in several content areas and cannot afford to exhaust and push out more. The burden of cleaning between classes and monitoring the hallways as students change does not help matters. 4) Consistency. Students have been in remote school and have formed relationships with their teachers and learned routines. If we could guarantee that after we went back to hybrid learning we would not have to shut down, it might be okay, but the potential for closing down individual classrooms, schools, or the district again due to an outbreak will be an emotional and logistical nightmare for everyone, particularly kids and their parents. 5) Subs. What happens when our already short supply of subs runs out and we cannot find people willing to risk their lives to replace them? Will we really ask teachers who will already be doing the work of two full time jobs to give up their planning period? Will there be compensation for this? And are we comfortable putting existing subs, many of whom are retired educators and/or of advanced age, at increased risk for infection? Please consider the above points and feel free to contact me if you would like any further information. Sincerely,
Melody Hagaman Centennial High School

Delia R. Arzapalo

Hello, As a mother of an elementary student and the spouse of an LCPS educator, I strongly urge the board to delay opening school in-person during the spring 2021 semester. There are still too many variables with the current pandemic which place our students, teachers, families and the community at risk of illness and/or death. The speed with which the reopening has been suggested, the fact that our county is still in red, the lack of adequate time to have all teachers and staff vaccinated and fully protected are only a few of the reasons that reopening should be delayed. Our community is not yet fully open with many restrictions still in place. The reopening of schools will likely cause a false sense of security to our community. This is extremely dangerous and puts us all at higher risk as we all depend on each other to follow safety guidelines. Our teachers and staff are valuable and deserve to be as safe as possible in their work environment. We all want school to open and return to normal. That is the ultimate goal. When it is safe. Please delay the reopening of schools to the fall 2021 semester and give our teachers, families and community the chance to stay healthy by allowing teachers and staff the time needed to get vaccinated and to be as protected as possible before reopening. Thank you. Delia R. Arzapalo

Sasha Azua

To Whom it May Concern: I am a parent of an LCPS student. While we did not expect the school year to go as it has, we have learned to be flexible over the past year. My child wants to go back to school as much as the next student, but I do have some questions, and want to make sure the safety of all students, teachers, and staff are considered before returning.

1. Will all PPE and COVID-19 safety precautions be followed properly? If so, how can this be guaranteed?
2. Will there be desks provided for each classroom? Our classroom, for example, only has 6 tables. If so, will each child have their own desk to prevent cross-contamination?
3. Will teachers be able to control the temperature and air for their classroom?
4. What will happen with students needing the restroom? Will they go when they need to, or will there be specified times of the day for each class?
5. Will there be deep cleaning of the restrooms after each use to prevent cross-contamination?
6. Will there be supervision of children when they go to the restroom to make sure they aren't touching things along the way and are washing their hands properly?
7. For lunch, if students are in the classroom, does the teacher lose their lunchtime? Or if someone else will come in, (which is additional exposure) will they be going from class to class?
8. If students have lunch in the cafeteria, will it be one class at a time, or will they be exposed to other classes?
9. Will there be deep cleaning before each group for lunch?
10. Will recess be one class at a time? Will there be deep cleaning between each group?
11. Will each child have their own set of supplies/manipulatives necessary to prevent cross-contamination?
12. Will adequate and proper cleaning supplies be provided per classroom?
13. I know there will be deep cleaning of the school on Wednesdays, but what about after Group B? Will there be deep cleaning on Saturday or Sunday?
14. Are the proper air filters installed at ALL schools and ALL buildings?
15. Will classrooms with one door and no windows be provided air purifiers for ventilation?
16. Our school had several teachers move classrooms. There are still several boxes in classrooms and hallways. During a normal school year, teachers are in their classroom weeks before school starts preparing their classrooms. Now, teachers will have to move their classrooms and heavy furniture while teaching. Will they be provided ample time to do so?
17. Will someone at the school building be able to assist teachers who are unable to lift or move furniture (ex: pregnancy)?
18. From what I understand, teachers will have to provide pre-recorded classes for students on their virtual days. When are they expected to make these recordings?
19. Will teachers be paid extra for all the extra work they are having to do?
20. I know there weren't enough janitors, furniture, cleaning supplies, school supplies, equipment before. Has that all been ordered and if not, do we have the budget to order it?
21. If teachers are high risk and cannot take a vaccine (ex: pregnant), will they be allowed to teach virtually like the PED document mentions?
22. Will all teachers and staff be given the opportunity to receive both doses of the vaccine and for it to be effective before the return to school?

My family has always been involved in athletics and school activities. I know how important these are, but we cannot let our personal motives overshadow the health and safety of our community members. I hope the push to return is not just to get these programs back again when we are not ready. Nothing is worth losing a life, as our family has personally experienced due to

COVID-19. I know I had several questions, but I want to be GUARANTEED that the safety of all of our students and educators are taken into account. While being virtual is not ideal, it does take all of us as parents to step up and take the responsibility for our children's education, which should be done whether in-person or virtual. I feel like my son has still received a great education this year while being virtual with a superior teacher. I know there are many teachers around the district working their hardest, and it needs to be appreciated. If our teacher decides to stay virtual even though there is an in-person option, we will stay with them. Their safety is also important, not just my child's. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions.

Jennifer Martinez

I would like to take this opportunity to explain why the school board of the Las Cruces Public Schools should vote no to reopening schools. First, the health of all staff and their families are just as important. Staff are afraid of bringing the virus home to their families. Staff should not be put in that difficult situation like that. Many staff are vulnerable to the virus if not they have other family members that are. Second, all educators were not given the opportunity to receive the vaccine. That opportunity was taken away due to a mistake made by the state. All educators and staff need to be given the opportunity to receive the vaccine, especially if they're putting their health at risk during a nationwide pandemic. Third, I would like for each board member think about the long-lasting impact that reopening school will cause. Some Staff will develop long lasting health issues or they may lose their lives like many other educators across the nation. That is a burden I would not like to carry for the rest of my life. I urge each board member to think about the lives of all staff members including family members. Our job is to educate children, but our job is to voice our opinion to what is right. Which is voting no to reopening schools. Sincerely, A Worried Educator

Cindy Ortega

It is unsafe for kids to go back. Family members need to be considered that are at high risk. The kids will be bringing all that home and pass it on. I have a son at home with cancer he will be exposed to what the kids are exposed to. We have lost too many teachers as well to Covid and too many teachers are high risk. They have not been immunized and it's not right that they be asked to go back without a vaccine.

Allison Boyce

Las Cruces School Board: I would love to send my children back to school, and goodness knows they want to go back. However, the teachers should all be vaccinated before schools are allowed

to reopen. Vaccinating teachers is the ethical thing to do, and will also mitigate a staff shortage that's sure to occur if there's a Covid outbreak. I urge you all to keep schools completely virtual until you've ensured the safety of Las Cruces' educators. Sincerely, Allison Boyce

Eric Munoz

To Whom It May Concern: I am writing to express my concerns about going into a hybrid setting for our students and teachers. I feel that this is something that should not even be considered at this time. There is still a pandemic going on. Do you feel that our students' and teachers' lives matter? By opening the schools, you are saying that their lives are expendable and you are allowing them to be put in harm's way. Teachers are being sent into a war zone. Yes, I understand, you are providing PPE wear and other equipment, that is your choice, but, if you make this choice to send them into a hazardous position, then why are they not given hazard pay or vaccines? I guess I have to ask you a very important question, how would you feel going into a classroom every day and teach our kids and still manage to teach the ones online as well? For the pay of one, the teachers are doing the job of two. Would you feel safe being in a building where you're not sure if the person next to you has been exposed? Temperature check is not as efficient as you think. I feel if you can't see yourself in this position, then you shouldn't put our kids or teachers in it either. Their lives matter. #keepthemsafe Sincerely, Eric A Concerned Parent

Emily Writer

My name is Emily Writer, and I am a teacher at CRMS. I among many other teachers and staff of LCPS are concerned about the exponentially increasing number of COVID cases and subsequent hospitalizations and deaths. As these numbers continue rise, our jobs put us at particular risk, given our extended exposure to numerous people in enclosed and poorly ventilated spaces. We need recognize that we have to take care of our teachers and our staff or else we can't help those students at all. Dona Ana county is still in the "red zone" and has been for months. The CDC does not advise schools to open if their county is in "red". We are twice the positivity rate that the CDC recommends to open schools. Amending this to go into hybrid will be a huge mistake that will cost many lives. This is not a matter of if this will cost lives, it is a matter of when and how many. Teachers and staff have not been able to have the opportunity to fully vaccinated. And even with vaccinations, they can still carry the virus and pass it on to other people like their families. We need to wait until these numbers go down. This Hybrid schedule provides less academic time for students while this model, and the only reason we are considering opening is to due sports. Sports is not worth the risk of thousands of lives being lost. Every school board meeting, including this one, for this year has been online to protect yourselves from the virus... the same precautions should extend to teachers and staff. I feel like I am being put in a position where I am going to have to choose between my career and my family. Covid is reckless. Opening up schools right now will be reckless. Your decision to allow to go LCPS to go back into hybrid will either cost or save lives. Please take this into consideration as you make your decision. Emily Writer Camino Read Middle School 6th Grade Science Teacher

G Gonz

Has no one heard of the Brazilian variant of Coronavirus? About the time that we're back in school there will be a spike owing to one reason or another and everyone will quickly scramble back to 100% online. Also, the assumption seems to be that teachers are willing to take on yet more non-teaching duties at school. I have zero interest in policing mask wearing and social distancing! Maybe we can return after spring break, but more likely in August. It's too soon now. It's too soon in February and March. The first flare-up of the virus, and there certainly will be one, parents will panic and from all public schools in Las Cruces, parents will yank their children out of school. It will be emotionally VERY damaging.

Katrina Selberg

Good morning! I want to begin by first recognizing how difficult the decision you will be making tomorrow truly is. It's obvious that no matter what, not everyone is going to be pleased. For that, I thank you, for doing the hard work that I don't think most are willing to do. I am first, a mother to two daughter that go to school in LCPS. One in 6th grade, one in 9th grade. This year has been more than challenging, on so many levels. They started this pandemic missing many of those milestone activities as they were leaving elementary and middle school and moving up. It was devastating. But we knew it was necessary. We started the new year, at new schools (that would have been a huge transition to begin with in normal circumstances) and we struggled, hard. Learning canvas was a challenge for them, figuring out how to zoom at the right times and manage their own work time independently was a struggle, just a basic schedule was hectic but we did it. My freshman suffers from severe anxiety and we have seen the ramifications of what this pandemic and online learning can have on a child with mental health issues. Many tears have been shed and restless nights filled with worry, because they both need social interaction so badly. But we have overcome many hurdles and we know have a schedule to works, they both know what to expect and they are thriving. So would I send them into a hybrid model, one in which a ton of new struggles would arise this late in the year? Absolutely not! They need the consistency. Not to mention the risks they have coming into the building and being exposed to COVID. They will not be going back into the building. I am also a 3rd grade teacher in the district. And let me tell you, remote learning has, of course, been no walk in the park. When we first started remotely, I was the first to start it was the worst idea possible, that our students needed to be in school and deserved more. But being as I of course had no choice, I did what I had to do and embraced it. I have worked tirelessly to create and provide the best environment possible for my kiddos. I have established a daily routine and expectations for them and we are thriving. I make sure we do just as much academic learning as we do social. They have consistency, every day. Now we are facing the possibility of moving to a hybrid model. Sounds great because I miss them dearly. Let's paint a picture. Half of my students will come in two days a week and half will come in the other two starting the first week of March. Knowing kids this age, I should anticipate at least 5-6 days of learning just the routines and norms, which of course will be completely different because we now have to keep them safe as well. So it's a whole new process, for us all. So that puts us at the last week right before Spring break, because

remember they will only be with me two days a week. So time wasted. We come back from Spring break and leaves about 9 weeks, about 18 days to see each of them face to face. That is nothing!! Students will have to sit socially distanced of course, so collaboration will be difficult. When I want to work with one student individually, the others must work independently as well. And those students not in class, they will have to rely on my live instruction (assuming they can hear me with a mask on, and I am betting they won't so I will be re-recording everything in the evening). They will be on their own to complete work and using Canvas still. Ultimately, the interaction time I would have with them would be far less and not nearly as meaningful as what I am doing now. It makes no sense to start something new when we will be seeing them so little, given that we will already be in March by then. That is assuming we don't get sent home at some point because of exposure, which is almost guaranteed at this point. There are new strains popping up so quickly that are becoming more contagious and more dangerous. How are we okay with students being exposed? We have no idea what these new strains mean for them. If a student were to bring COVID home to an elderly or compromised family member and that person died, imagine the grief that student would have for life. They should not be out in that position. And of course, all staff should be vaccinated and have the allotted amount of time for it to be fully covered before being asked to be exposed like that. I personally, would not be fully covered (the 14 days after my second vaccine) until the 2nd week of March. I am terrified to be there before and bringing it home. Ultimately, we are exhausted and all doing everything we can. But at what point do we start losing even more teachers because it is becoming just too much? Because that is what is going to happen. We already cannot afford to lose anymore teacher. I am begging you, for the sake of teachers and students, please keep us remote for the remainder of the year. We need the consistency and more than anything, we need the support. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yesenia Luna

Hello I am Yesenia Carrera mom of 2 boys one in Early Prek and one in 2nd grade. Opening up is a bad idea first of all that will not be the traditional school children are looking forward too. Also, case numbers and deaths have not decreased we shouldn't risk our teachers and community members. Plus, you never know if you will have a bad outcome until you have it children are not exempt yes children's bad outcomes are lower, but why risk it. I do agree with maybe opening in July once numbers are down and more are vaccinated. For now let us finish the semester virtually and prepare for a strong return. I know many are tired, but this is life now. We need to try our best to protect our children's health and community. During this time health takes the priority education comes in second. Thank you.

Carlos Briseno

As a teacher, I believe that in-person learning is best for students' education, yet oppose the reopening of our schools at this time for numerous reasons. Below I have listed three.

1. Many of our students and teachers live in INTERGENERATIONAL HOUSEHOLDS. While it is true that MOST students, and MOST young teachers would be just fine (though we don't

know long term effects), it is not morally right to ignore the spread beyond those two groups. To think about how this virus will be taken to our homes and communities, to the grandparents who are raising children when parents cannot, brings a physical pain to my stomach. It is not right. We should not go back to school in person until numbers are down and the vaccine is publicly available and ALL staff who would like the vaccine have received it.

2. This might be my MOST IMPORTANT point. All of the science and experts point to remaining closed, not because they don't care but because that is what the data says. They data and experts say that life will not return to normal until we get this virus under control, even if we ignore it and open everything. What message are we sending to students, whom we are educating for critical thinking and positive citizenship, if public pressure guides our decisions, rather than the best data available? What a sad lesson.

3. MOST EYE-OPENING, I find it incredibly insulting that any board or state official would vote to send teachers and students back to school while safely meeting online from their home. The fact that the board will not yet meet in person, open to the public, is very telling.

Carlos Briseno
Teacher

Brittany Johnson

Hello LCPS School Board members, I am one of the many concerned LCPS staff members regarding returning face-to-face/hybrid. Our county has been consistently and remains in the "red zone", the CDC does not recommend any face-to-face learning, for counties within the "red zone" (with few exceptions). I understand that we have started to make the proper changes and began taking steps in the right direction for us to be able to return to a hybrid, or even a full face-to-face model; however, I do not feel that we have made enough of a change to return THIS SCHOOL YEAR. Our Governor's decision to halt teachers being among those to be vaccinated, puts us at great risk of potential infection. While some teachers and staff have been able to receive their vaccine, I do not feel enough of us have. Waiting for the remainder of our district's staff to be vaccinated, if they choose to do so, would be of great benefit to not only us, but the students and their families as well. My husband works in law enforcement, and has had to take COVID leave twice, since being at his current department since October, and has had 2 rapid tests in 2021 alone! We did not know that he had been exposed to COVID until days later, in that time, he had been home with his family, exposing us. I would feel absolutely horrible if I unknowingly exposed my fellow teachers and students, they then would be exposing their families to the virus, only perpetuating the cycle of our numbers increasing. There are still so many unknowns of how this virus spreads, new mutations, and lack of vaccines. Do we really want to take the risk of a bigger outbreak in our schools? With great respect and hope. Brittany Johnson 6th Case Manager - 8th ELA Inclusion

Trudy Nevarez

Will students who participate in athletics be required to attend face to face instruction? If not, why?

Carmen Merlano-Whitlock

Good Evening Board Members and Superintendent Trujillo, Please know that Dr. Trujillo pulled off nothing short of a miracle for 149 other teachers and myself this past Friday! I belong to a group of teachers that are extremely high-risk due to more than one qualifying criteria. I was not able to get into the vaccination round the first time and she went above and beyond to find 150 vaccinations at Memorial Medical Center. She personally texted me to let me know the opportunity came up and I was able to get my first vaccination! Hooray for her! My concern is that other teachers aren't so lucky to get the vaccination, it is irresponsible to expect teachers to go back for any amount of time without being vaccinated. Do I believe children (especially K-2) need to be in a classroom, yes! However, not if the teacher is vulnerable to the deadly virus that could take their life. Our LCPS Mantra should be: No vaccine, not to be seen...at school buildings. Thank you again, for your hard work and for watching out for the safety of our children and employees. You are valued~ Carmen Merlano-Whitlock, MA Jornada Elementary Teacher, 4th Grade

Jennifer Kemp

Overall, I think that schools opening in February 2021 is an unnecessary risk and a needless rush. PPE: Firstly, a co-worker of mine recently visited our school to exchange a laptop. This individual stated that the plexi glass, and other PPE had not been installed or put in place yet. Also, for some of us, our classrooms are in portables. We do not have access to sinks, or special filters, or in some cases a way of physically spread students out 6 feet apart. If we are returning perhaps port a potty style sinks can be installed outside each portable, or at least each general education & SPED portable. Next: We've been tasked with documenting students who contract Covid-19, but not asked about parents/adults living with the student's contraction percentages/statistics. Many teachers have experienced at least 1 parent if not a large percentage of our current class contracting Covid-19 and families continue to contract it. Many people cannot or are choosing not to follow the public health orders to stay home as much as possible. Many parents are essential workers that have both received a vaccine and many that have not. Some families are very sports oriented and have consistently been traveling to other states such as Texas and Arizona to continue to compete in organized sports. Other families have traveled to Mexico, and other parts of the U.S. to visit family and in some cases move in with their family. Since they are only "zooming" they can do that from "anywhere." Therefore, some families will only be recently arriving back in Las Cruces to attend in person classes. Next: Vaccines are only very recently being administered to educators and there's already talk of returning to in person. The majority of educators have not yet received their 1st dose, let alone their 2nd and were discussing in person learning. Even if the students aren't the primary carriers, we could still

spread Covid-19 between the staff as we have seen before. I personally just recently received my first dose and will not receive my 2nd until just around the date we are to return. I did experience many side effects over the course of 3 days. There will be many teachers down and out with symptoms and side effects for the next several weeks/month. Let alone the educator deaths we've already experienced, plus let's consider the 95% accuracy rate of the vaccine, some will still not be "immune" to Covid-19 even after receiving the vaccine. Next: Too many tasks for teachers to be both in person and on zoom daily. With the current proposed models of being both in person and having kids "in the classroom on zoom" it seems like a circus act for the teacher. There are moments of inappropriate behavior on zoom when the teacher is fully focused on zoom alone, let alone when they are trying to juggle both zoom and in person classrooms. Plus, there is not a single family who is going to have their kid on zoom for 5 straight hours; or even more than 3 per day. Even to be concerned with filming lessons, posting them later, monitor/police students PPE use/ safe practices, monitoring our new Covid safe procedures in general, scheduled bathroom breaks per class (right, we can mandate young students bowel activities), maintain classroom separation, even considering family members, bussing concerns, etc. Finally: For those that want to return to ensure end of year milestones, such as competitions and/or graduations. There will still be limitations and procedures in place. In my opinion, we as a district can still have these events without having in person school. Ultimately, I need to be safe to perform my job.

Sarah Keesling

I feel like it would be a knee jerk reaction to reopen school at this time. We are still working on getting teacher vaccinations and having time for those to start working at their full potential. In addition, we are not able to vaccinate the kids who will be coming back and forth being exposed and potentially taking this home to their families. We have to think of our medically fragile and at-risk populations who have not been able to or are not able to get the vaccine. We also have to recognize the vaccine is not a 100% guarantee that it will protect you. Also keep in mind that the students who have not engaged all year are going to have missed 75% of the material. Unless they keep 100% in all their classes it is impossible for a student who has not engaged to this point to pass high school classes and making 100% in classes is going to be extremely difficult when they have missed so much material. We are not helping this population by reopening school we are simply putting a new group at risk. Please just give it till the end of the year so we can get the buildings ready to go back in the fall.

Leslie Highsmith

It is unfair and unjust to ask not only teachers, but also cafeteria workers, administrative support, and especially custodial and PPD staff to put their lives at risk to allow children the benefit of socialization for the last 8 weeks of school. Even in looking at photographs from the protest to reopen schools safely, you'll see that families ignored social distancing and children had masks that didn't fully cover their noses. COVID-19 particles can remain in the air for hours so when a student in an ineffective masks coughs or sneezes, those particles remain in the air when the custodial staff has to go in and sanitize, wearing their own simple cloth masks and not the N95 masks that would provide them with protection. The fact remains that the schools simply do not have the proper PPE to safely re-open and doing so would be irresponsible. Teachers and other

staff members who are in vulnerable populations, or have family members that are high-risk, in other areas that are forced to return to in-person schooling are resigning rather than risk their lives or family members' lives. Are you prepared to deal with this turnover? While teachers may be able to continue to work remotely if they are high-risk, essential workers like cafeteria, custodial, and PPD staff that have been working in-person this entire time cannot. Asking them to choose between this job and their health or family's health, after praising them for their hard work, is completely unconscionable. Please consider the health and safety of ALL your staff members and wait until you can provide proper PPE like N95 masks or hazmat suits to all employees who work in higher-risk settings, or until children are able to be vaccinated, before allowing students to return to school. Thank you for your consideration. I hope you will make the right choice.

Antonio G. Avalos

Greetings; I, Antonio Avalos, am opposed of the re-opening and changing structured schedules for children in the last quarter of the school session. Children have readily adapted to the virtual arena and many have excelled and made great progress. As a Grandfather of three children participating in this type of learning/schooling and then proposing changes at this late of time, would only serve to interrupt and disrupt their progress. In addition, others with children have voiced their same concerns, not to mention, that hundreds have yet to be Covid-vaccinated. To include, many teachers themselves have not been vaccinated. This was the main reason schools were initially closed because of this pandemic. I strongly suggest we wait until after the end of this school year in May to consider re-opening our schools after a lower infection ratio is achieved.

Thomas Wildman

I have several questions/issues that need to be considered by the Board

1. Linear thinking on this issue is not good. Teachers and students cannot be thought of a just Teachers and Students.
2. Experienced Teachers are most likely older and more susceptible to Covid. Hiring quality teachers is becoming more difficult as time has gone by. Math and Science holes in staff are filled with Subs. A Teacher cannot be thought of as a quantity – 1 each Teacher per classroom.
3. Teachers are breadwinners for a family and if they are disabled or die from Covid what will the School District's responsibility be for the Teacher and their family?
4. Even though a parent gives permission for their student to attend in school classes a student might get Covid and be disabled for life or die. What is the District's responsibility be after the school is declared "safe"? Will the parents just say "It wasn't your fault."?
5. The custodians, the essential part of school life, also have families. What is the District's responsibility to these important people?

6. Additionally, hiring Substitute Teachers, who are in my experience older, will be difficult to hire. They also support families.
7. As a minimum shouldn't the District wait until all school personnel are vaccinated? Covid is not a Cold or Flu even if some parents might think it is. In the paper today, the list of deaths include people in their 40s and 50s with no previous conditions!

Thomas Wildman, Retired Math Teacher

Jason & Dottie Gunn

Dear Las Cruces Public Schools Board of Education - Our family is with the utmost respect asking for you to please agree to the ***in-person learning option*** for the Las Cruces Public Schools. My three children go to Centennial High School and they ***need*** in-person learning. *Our reasoning for this request is as follows:* The individuals that ***do not want*** in-person learning have the **OPTION** to attend school on-line. The individuals that ***want*** in-person learning should have the **OPTION** to attend school in person. BOTH individuals should have a **CHOICE**. Respectfully, Jason & Dottie Gunn

Janice Venable

To Whom It May concern, I wanted to take a moment and express my concerns about returning to campus not only as an educator but as a parent. This pandemic is being felt and experienced all across the world. We are living in very uncertain times. I firmly believe that we should not be sending our children back to school. Dona Ana county is still in the red with new positive cases every day. If we send our children back to campus now, we will be putting them in harm's way, as well as the rest of the community. This entire time we have heard stay home, stop the spread, why would you (the district) want to send our children to school? That decision is not proactive and certainly not safe. I really urge the school district to put our children first and keep them remote learning. Janice Venable 7th Grade Language Arts Teacher Camino Real Middle School

Lupe Mendoza

Good afternoon, Will we have additional janitors at the school during the day? How can one janitor inspect restrooms hourly for the whole school? What is plan B for when we don't have enough subs? Please let us know during the meeting.

Jeffrey Thomas Painter

To the Las Cruces School Board: Your Superintendent emailed me on 26 January requesting support and patience during this time. I can assure each member of this board that I have long since run out of both patience and support for your continued refusal to provide an education for

the students of the district. I believed your actions have exposed truths that should never have seen the light of day. The standard for an acceptable education in the last year has dropped to appalling standards. Teachers have become used to receiving full pay and benefits to provide less than 10 of weekly instruction. Teachers unions have exacerbated this situation by demanding greater and more onerous precautions for their members that defy basic science and common sense, and you will witness their continued resistance when you regrettably yield the floor to their representatives following public comment. Students can earn near perfect grades with very few work submissions. My daughter's teacher is on bereavement leave this week, and your district could not manage to provide alternate instruction. So our school just won't have 4th grade this week. The only reasonable conclusion is that the corrupt unions and most of their members will NEVER concede safe conditions, and you will ultimately be compelled to force them to return to work. The longer you delay this decision, the more difficult and damaging the results will be to our students and public education in general. It is already widely known that Ms. Flores cares nothing for our students and will vote for schools to remain indefinitely closed regardless of any evidence presented. She will probably play the race card to justify her indifference to any reasonable set of values and remain in the pocket of the teacher's union and deaf to reason. I implore the rest of this board not to follow her poor example. While I have little confidence that will be the case, the longer you delay reopening, the more painful and chaotic it will be for everyone involved. The only right decision is to immediately begin educating our children in their schools and classrooms while excusing students whose parents don't wish for them to return. The alternative is that this district becomes the sole outlier in the Southwestern United States where teachers will be perceived as cowardly laughing stocks who refuse to do their jobs because the members of this board lack the intestinal fortitude to compel them to return. Our students will lose the most and remain in the bottom rung of educational opportunity in the entire country, all while the teacher's union laughs behind the backs of the taxpayer. The future of this school system is at stake and I pray that you will make the right decision. Alternatively, I will pray for a new school board in the next election cycle.

Caitlin Pfeifer

Dear LCPS Board of Education and Superintendent Trujillo, thank you for the opportunity to participate in this forum. I am concerned with the proposal of sending students and staff back into the school buildings. As of this point in time, despite the amazing efforts of Dr. Trujillo, we still have teachers and staff members who haven't been vaccinated. LCPS employs approximately 3,200 staff members and of those staff members only 1,487 have been vaccinated. All staff desiring a vaccination must have their **final** vaccination plus the CDC recommended 14 days to make sure the vaccine is fully effective before returning to any in-person work. It is important to remember that vaccination does not mean people aren't carriers. Many of our students and staff do not live with people who have been vaccinated which means that there is a potential for virus spread leading to increased numbers and possible school shutdowns. Thus, causing a logistical nightmare for parents and a loss of in-person learning for 2 weeks. Shutting down is simply the best-case scenario, but we need to remember that it also means our infection rates have increased and health has been compromised. Any infection with COVID-19 can lead to death. In fact, just this past week we lost two more employees to COVID and students are continuing to lose family members. I ask you to please table the conversation regarding a return to Hybrid Learning. In fact, Lt. Governor Howie Morales recommends that the School Board wait to vote until the PED releases more guidance and clarity on this issue. He also

recommends districts reevaluate a Hybrid return when teachers have been vaccinated fully. Please heed this recommendation and wait on moving forward.

Shane Carrasco

Hello, my name is Shane Carrasco. I have three young children in the Las Cruces Public schools period. One is a second grader and one is a kindergartener. My youngest is in early PreK. I am active duty Air Force stationed at Holloman Air Force Base but reside in Las Cruces. My wife Valerie stays at home and is able to be with my children during their remote school day. I just wanted to say that I am not in favor of reopening and changing the schedule for the kids in the last quarter of school. My children are finally in rhythm and have a routine to follow. Changing that for them in the last quarter is not worth the interruption. Also, expecting the teachers to change their lessons plans again in such a short time and now provide dual lessons for virtual and in-person is too much. I fear we will lose more teachers this way and we cannot afford to lose any. Furthermore, they have not been offered vaccines and given time for their efficacy to take place. You are asking for more upheaval for the last quarter and it is not worth it. Once rates decline, once teachers have received vaccines, open summer classes. Let's get ready for fall in a big way. Let's not casually risk lives for one quarter of instruction. Ask the teachers how they feel. I support their input. For me, it's not worth it. My family lost 3 family members in December alone. It is a virus that no one knows how they will react until they have it. Is it worth a student's life, a staff member's or educator's? Continue with support for virtual and offer summer courses once we have a declining rate and vaccines are widespread. My husband and I have received our vaccine, I am concerned for the community.

S. Alirez

To whom it may concern: I am writing this hoping you will read and consider my opinion. I have lost 7 friends to Covid in LC since Oct. My daughter and granddaughter have both had Covid. I have been exposed twice so I quarantined twice. Our state is still in red. I've seen my granddaughter's teacher work with her. My granddaughter loves her and is learning. This is for the safety of everyone. This will surely pass. To you my granddaughter is a number on a spreadsheet but to me.... she's my world.

Algele Sumulong

1/31/2021

To whom it may concern,

My name is Dr. Algele Sumulong, a family medicine physician practicing in Las Cruces. For years, teachers have strived and sacrificed for the students under their tutelage. Their role in shaping and preserving our communities has been unrecognized for far too long. I am writing this letter in support of progressively returning to in-house teaching with the caveat of making sure we protect our educators as much as reasonably possible, including providing them with lifesaving COVID vaccinations. Unfortunately, the majority of teachers will NOT have had the opportunity to be fully vaccinated, with 2 shots, by the proposed February 22nd start date. I am aware of the frequently cited MMWR January 29,2021 article that suggests in-school transmission of COVID is less common than that found in the community in rural Wisconsin. Upon further review of the MMWR article, the study did not take into account a critical aspect of the COVID19 pandemic that has made it exquisitely difficult to control: asymptomatic transmission. Per the article, “this study was unable to rule out asymptomatic transmission within the school setting because surveillance testing was not conducted.” Consequently, since we do not have corresponding data on asymptomatic transmission from the Wisconsin study, we have to assume that risk is NOT zero. Asymptomatic transmission, which can account for 25% of cases, is still possible, so any means to prevent transmission (hand washing, consistent mask use, adequate ventilation, social distancing etc.) needs to be implemented. However, this also means we need to protect the health of our educators by having them fully vaccinated prior to resuming in-person learning. By fully vaccinating teachers prior to potential in-school exposure, we can:

- 1) reduce risk of severe complications (like respiratory failure from SARS) and even death. Training new teachers to take up the consequent vacancies would take years to compensate. We know advanced age and chronic medical conditions increase risk of mortality. With the average teacher age in New Mexico being 45.6 years old and 24.2% of New Mexican teachers being 55 and older, the state is at risk of losing a significant portion of the work force to COVID 19 complications and death. Since it takes at least 4 years to train/educate teachers into the work force and given the state’s difficulty to attract teachers, it would take years for our education workforce to recover.
- 2) reduce risk of developing long term complications from COVID 19 and minimize teacher sick time used to recover from COVID 19 related complications/symptoms
- 3) send a unified message that teachers are important to the state. In doing so, we can show our current teaching force that we value them for the unsung heroes they are. By vaccinating, we can provide our teachers with the opportunity to educate for more years to come. We also will show prospective future teachers that we value our educators and hopefully encourage them to join the New Mexico Teaching Faculty. Now, several months into the pandemic, I continue to provide care in the form of telemedicine and in-person visits. I continue to see patients in-person because I know there are certain ailments that require an in-person visit. I am able to do so using adequate ppe, masks and because I have received the Covid vaccination. I have the privilege of caring for my patients because my colleagues and community respect and recognize the work I do to keep our city as healthy as possible. It is time we show our teachers the same respect by allowing them to be fully vaccinated prior to returning to in-house education. Thank you for your time and consideration. Sincerely, Algele Cid Sumulong, MD

Terry Hamilton

Please get LCPS students back to in person learning ASAP! The damage being done to our youth, by not allowing them back to a classroom setting, is devastating! Study after study has shown that schools can safely open. State's all around us have had schools open for months without any major problems. There has never been a time in history, nor will there ever be a time that anything is 100% safe. If we wait for a guarantee of 100% safety, none of us would ever leave our homes. It is not possible! We have to weigh the harm caused by keeping kids out of school against the data (from multiple sources now) showing that schools should never have been closed in the first place. Please remember what the goal of public school is. It is not about politics or teachers unions. It is about ensuring students receive a quality education. Keeping kids out of school does not do this and harms the most vulnerable and disadvantaged of our youth the most! Respectfully, Terry Hamilton (Mom to a 4th grader and a 9th grader)

Richard Vickrey

Esteemed School Board, I would like to express my 100% disapproval of in-person/hybrid teaching at this time. It is dangerous and irresponsible to consider re-entering schools before all staff have had the opportunity to receive both vaccinations and build up needed antibodies (14 days after the second administered dose). Also, many of our schools do not have protective barriers in the classroom, buildings and/or portables don't have proper filtration systems installed, and having enough PPE for all involved is doubtful at best for the rest of the semester. Returning to the classroom sounds like a wonderful idea until you consider the changes that will be initiated to feebly try to keep staff, students, and all families safe. Students won't be able to play or socialize the way they desire. Teachers and staff will be expected to work and cover more than they did before plus teach online students. Also, think of the mental, emotional, and physical toll this move will take on all staff members and the students. Please vote to continue online remote learning only for the rest of the semester. Please think of staff, students, and all family members involved. Out of 16 students, I have had 14 parents, 3 students, and 2 grandparents test positive already for COVID. One of the Grandparents passed away... How will students cope with the trauma of a staff member passing (maybe their teacher)? How will teachers cope with one of their family members being infected and possibly dying because they bring it home? I personally knew several of the district staff that passed away from this horrible virus. It doesn't help that I work at a different school or hadn't seen some of them in 3 years. It isn't comforting to know some may have had underlying health conditions. All I know is that they are dead, and more staff members will be endangered if we return to in-person hybrid teaching too early. Thank you for your consideration, Richard Vickrey Fairacres Elementary School - Fifth Grade Educator

Frances R Alirez

I strongly urge the school board to vote in delaying the return to classroom teaching until more teachers, parents, employees and the public receive the vaccine. Doing so at this time puts too many people in grave danger. There is absolutely no way of knowing whether students and any employees are correctly following protocols to insure the protection of others. There are simply too many unknown variables at this time. Co-vid 19 is extremely serious and dangerous. The

variants we face are even more concerning. We should not be putting anyone at more risk than we, the public, already are. We have already lost too many teachers, employees and everyday citizens to this very ugly illness. PLEASE...let's put the return to the classroom on hold until more citizens are vaccinated.

A Wilson

Going back to in person learning is not safe now. Two employees died of COVID-19 this week! And, the board is meeting virtually to protect themselves from being infected. Until safety is guaranteed, schools should remain virtual. It's sad, frustrating and so many other things, but going back and then having to quarantine because someone tests positive will be expensive and dangerous. The entire world is frustrated but students will catch up and at some point, it will be safe to return, but now it is not safe

J. Tim Query

My child is in Special Ed at Centennial. They only meet 45 minutes twice a week on Zoom. Adapted PE meets once a week for 45 minutes. Even though he's supposed to have Speech Therapy twice a week per his IEP, he is rarely has a session. Unfortunately, he is regressing. Please open the schools, for his health and safety. I have grandchildren living in the Midwest. Their schools have been open all year, with no problems, but education is a high priority there.

Jim Coyle

As a parent, I do not support re-opening at this time. I would like to see all teachers get vaccinated first. I also see no point if my child is going to sit in one room all day and continue with Canvas courses. Face to face teaching: yes. After vaccinations

Anthony Medina

Dona Ana county is still a red county. It is unwise to send staff and children back to in person learning. My suggestion is to continue to do remote learning until everybody gets vaccinated, and start fresh this fall. I feel for the kids, we are all tired.

Sheila Walton

Teachers, I hear you saying you don't want to risk your lives by going back to the classroom. Have you taken a moment to think of all the people who "have risked their lives" over the last year to do their jobs for YOU? They have picked up your garbage, made you coffee, changed your oil, stocked your groceries, given your dog his shots, made sure there is

cash in your ATM, fixed a leak in your sink, delivered your package, or patrolled your neighborhood? ***Teachers, I hear you say you would rather continue to educate virtually.*** Have you taken a moment to think about the countless children at home by themselves all day with no guidance, no interaction and nothing to look forward to? Or the countless children who aren't getting regular meals without school? Or who are taking beatings from financially strapped parents who are losing their jobs? Or the teenager who sees nothing but hateful comments on a screen all day who feels they have nothing to live for? Or the kids who have had months and months of no physical activity? ***Teachers, I hear you say we are asking you to teach in a virtually impossible situation.*** Have you taken a moment to think about the mamas and what we are asking them to do on a daily basis that is virtually impossible? Asking them to continue to do their own work all day from home while educating their child, while supervising younger children as well? Asking them to educate their children without the training to do so? Please, please, show our kids their education is our greatest priority. Please show our kids that life is about adapting, pushing through, finding solutions. Our kids see the rest of the world functioning. They see us picking up food in the drive thru; they see many, many people continuing to go to work every day to keep us healthy, keep us safe, and keep us comfortable. Our kids see businesses adapting. Our kids see private schools adapting. Our kids see kids in other states going to school, playing sports, and participating in activities like student government or theater. Please, please show our kids how to rise to a challenge and work hard for what's important.

Mark Gemoets

Good morning, thank you for asking for input. I respectfully request that we continue to do the online schooling as it is currently being done. It is important to remember that if the children go back to school, they may have contact with adult family members, such as grandparents, aunts, and uncles, etc. and we may see spread to them. Also, more infection increases the chance of mutation. I do not want my children to go back yet. I have a special needs child who was hospitalized last year with a high fever. Thank you!

Kirk Clifton

Mr. Chair, members of the School Board, Superintendent Trujillo; I would like to comment on the Board item "Re-Entry in Hybrid Model for Las Cruces Public Schools. My name is Kirk Clifton and I am a parent of both 9th and 12th grade students in the Las Cruces Public Schools. I am not only in full support of re-entry in a hybrid model, but a re-entry plan on a full-time basis for students. With the exception of one Board member, none of you can say you honestly understand the harm that has been done to our students by not being able to attend school in person. You truly do not see on a daily basis the struggles that these kids face. Not only has learning the appropriate material been an issue, but the social aspect that kids so desperately need in their development no longer exists. We are rapidly approaching one year out of school. The damage that has been done is irreparable. The unfortunate reality is that (from what I have personally witnessed) is that the teachers are not teaching and the students are not learning. I realize that the Board is beholden to the Teachers Union to an extent. However, it is time to put

the needs of the thousands of students of the LCPS over the needs of a handful of educators that do not feel safe and prefer to teach from their couch. Last semester, the district actually developed a hybrid plan which was highly commendable. Fast forward to 2021 and the NM Governor directs school districts statewide that they can re-open on February 8th. The LCPS states that they cannot be ready until February 22nd. If you already had a plan, why delay? I implore the Board as elected officials working for the taxpayers and more importantly the parents of students in LCPS to re-open with a hybrid schedule at a very minimum. Let the kids be kids. Bring back learning. Fulfill your obligation to these students who are the most vulnerable of our local population. Thank you for your time

AMY BRUNTON

Dear Board Members,

I have taught in our district for over 20 years. During those years, I have devoted countless hours of unpaid time and thousands of dollars for classroom supplies, all with no complaint and because I love what I do. However, as much as I love my students and being in the classroom, I am unwilling to risk my health and/or my life. If we are going to return to school, it is imperative that ALL teachers who want the vaccine are able to receive it and are FULLY vaccinated (5 weeks from first dose) BEFORE we return to school. To return before is CARELESS. Additionally, our county is still in red!!! We are unable to dine inside a restaurant and you have even made the decision to meet remotely!!! How is it safe to return to school? I feel for the protection of all involved, we need to stay with the original plan of remaining remote until we are in green. That along with the opportunity for all teachers to be fully vaccinated is the SAFEST course of action. Please, make staff health and wellbeing a priority and wait to reopen schools. OUR LIVES ARE ON THE LINE!

Karen Paulson

I am writing to voice my opinion that the LCPS schools should continue online learning for the remainder of the school year. Waiting until the vaccine is widely distributed is the best way to protect teachers and students, especially now that the new, more contagious, variants are becoming more widespread. Stay safe. Thank you. Karen Paulson

Randy Cahall

Dear LCPS board, my son is a junior at Centennial HS. He now attends classes remotely. I understand that you will consider having students attend classes, partly in person, starting soon. I think such a proposal is very ill considered. By the end of this current semester, many students and teachers will have received a vaccination that gives them nearly 100% immunity against a "severe" case of Covid-19. I see no reason why you would not wait to open full in person classes, or hybrid classes until August of 2021. By this time, the number of cases will have drastically reduced and vaccinations will be on board. We are already seeing a drop in

cases, due to some vaccination in progress. Please reconsider opening classes to a hybrid model, until August of 2021. Protect our children and our teachers. Respect the science.

Brandon Hicks

Of all the many things that have been said, and of all the many emails and phone calls that you have undoubtedly received, I want to make something very clear. History and parents will judge you forever on the decision you make this day. We know the ties that many of you have to the teacher union and the financial backing they have given you. But the children have no union. They have PAC fund that has paid for your campaigns. But ironically, they are the ones that suffer in silence with no voice. They are the ones that you were elected to serve. So, I want you to know that I will do everything in my power to hold you personally responsible for the decision that you make today. Whether it is in favor of teacher unions, or weather in favor of the all-encompassing safety, and future of children. In the Months and years to come, stories and accounts of child neglect and abuse both physical, sexual, and mental will inevitably come to the surface. Statistics of the devastating loss to children's futures will come up light. All from the refusal to go back to school. Many of you will take that opportunity to hide from accountability. You will blame it on Covid, you will blame it on Governors, you will blame it on Power's outside your own. But you have power to choose. And I promise you, you will be held accountable for your decisions. Because you have the power, you have the opportunity to save the children. The children must be back in school. Teaching children is an essential service. "Zoom school" is not school and never was and never will be. The 60-70 percent fail rates are a testament to this pathetic attempt of school. So when you vote today, remember that we all will remember your names. You have a decision today to either vote for the teacher unions that has paid your way and got you elected, or vote for the children who stand powerless and voiceless. The ones that you were asked and given responsibility to protect. It's truly that simple, though you will try to make it much more complicated in your mind to justify so many things. The damage to children has gone on for way too long. The science is there. School can be done safely. The precedence is there. Its being done in many states all around us safely and effectively. Ray Jaramillo, Carol Cooper, Terrie Dallman, Teresa Tenorio, and Maria Flores, the large majority of parents all over the city stand in solidarity. We wait to see who you will serve. We pray you will serve and save the children. Sincerely, Brandon Hicks Loving parent of three beautiful children.

Rick Clark

To LCPS School Board members: I am a bit dismayed by the Governor's release of school district's to re-open. What has changed since March of 2020? Yes, there are viable vaccines being produced but have all individuals that desire them managed to receive them? January, 2021, has been the most devastating month since the onset with regard to the numbers of infections and deaths. If it is safe to re-open schools, what has improved to an acceptable level to proceed in that direction? Why have restaurants, saloons, large capacity venues, salons, and large gatherings of people not been approved for resuming at least fifty-percent capacities? A case in point is that the Las Cruces Public School Board meetings are still being conducted virtually. This seems to be hypocritical. Do as I say, not as I do!!!!!! How can the classrooms be the only place where it is safe to have each individual exposed to 15 other family units? I

believe re-opening schools, even on a limited (50 %) level is not a prudent move at this time due to the history leading up to this point in time. You will be un-necessarily exposing children to the SARS-2 virus with its devastating after effects, such as multiple organ failure and long-term lasting repercussions. I also worry that they may unknowingly transmit the virus back to their families and elderly relatives with disastrous results. How many children and adults must be sacrificed? A bit more time to allow the adult population to become vaccinated and possibly a viable inoculation for children to be developed and dispensed would be intelligent rather than risking a deadly outbreak. I implore you to delay re-opening schools or even considering a hybrid model until the adults (who are most vulnerable) are able to get vaccinated and we can provide a safe place for the children. Thank you for your consideration.

Stephen Jeffries

Given the inordinate amount of Covid deaths in our relatively small district, how can we even contemplate a return given our lack of a real plan...not a superficial plan...but a plan that protects students, teachers and staff...also why is surveillance testing a requisite for staff but not students...more and more data indicates these newer strains impact younger people as well.

W Hughes

To: The LCPS School Board: It is inexcusable that it is going to take at least three more weeks to get any form of in-person learning to take place in our schools. Back in October we were told all that was needed to open to a hybrid model was filters that had been ordered to come in and be installed in the ventilation systems. That was to have been completed in November. Which I assumed has happened. Here we are 4 months removed from October and we are being told LCPS is not ready. What have you guys been doing??? This isn't rocket science! We know how to limit class size, socially distance, wear masks, sanitize and take all sorts of other steps to make the classroom safe for teachers and students. We are at critical mass with the damage being done to our kids. There is no time to waste. It is apparent that leadership is the problem, either by their failure to be ready for this moment or their inability to get people to do what they need them to do. As board members you wield incredible power to make things happen. It is time to use that power to get schools open now. Every day past February 9th to open school doors is a reflection of your failure.

Rebekah Shepherd

Hello, After I sent my previous email, I received some clarification by teachers, on what our children's school day would look like in the hybrid model. I cannot support the type of structure that would be in place. Children need to be children. I do not want to have them going to school and coming home completely stressed and upset because school is not the school they remember. And, as I said before, COVID is not going anywhere. I pray that we can work together to come

up with a plan that will allow our kids to be educated in the manner they need. Thank you, Rebekah Shepherd

Leanne Hering

I don't feel there's enough information to make an informed decision. Initially there was a plan for teachers with their own students to attend the "off days" in the school building of the parent, now there isn't a plan. Teacher's should be given vaccine priority again. It feels that there are more questions compared to answers and those powers that be are making decisions that could adversely impact our community.

Jason and Piper Gibson

Good morning, I highly recommend the schools are reopened, they're only kids once they need to be educated and engaged with teachers and peers to grow intelligently, emotionally, and physically. New Mexico has been one of the poorest and worst educated states for decades continuing to keep the schools closed will only further negatively impact their futures. As educators, administrators and public servants your mission is to provide the best education possible to our children. There is overwhelming studies and data that shows in person, hands on learning is required for an education. There is also significant data from other states and countries that show schools are safe in relation to C19. Good leaders do the right things for the right reasons. Thanks Jason <https://www.krqe.com/news/albuquerque-metro/report-new-mexico-needs-plan-to-address-high-suicide-rate/>
<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2021/feb/01/covid-could-cost-children-350bn-in-earnings-through-lost-learning-says-ifs>
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/26/world/cdc-schools-reopening.html>

Debbie Hart

I'm wondering what will happen to those children of teachers if teachers go back to the buildings full time and students only go 2 days a week in person. Will the board help make arrangements for those students?

Voicemails

Hello. My name is Michael Jones. Please wait until at least the beginning of the fourth nine weeks, March 15th, to consider opening in a hybrid model. The risks far outweigh the benefits. Delaying until the fourth nine weeks will give us more time to (voicemail ended here)

My name is Daphne Spencer. I'm calling in regards to two items. One, it's regarding the hybrid program. I would like to hopefully see that the kids can be able to go back to school. My two little ones are dying to go back. The remote learning is great and everything but at the same time, the one on one, face to face time with the teacher right then and there in the working environment would be a lot better. I have one child, my youngest who is ADHD positive and she's in first grade. My son is in second grade and he is on an IEP program that I just learned recently that the school district does not have a speech Pathology person. I would really like to see the school district to be able to receive another speech Pathologist because of my son and all of the other kids regarding that program. As far as the hybrid goes, I'm pretty sure, I don't speak for a lot of parents, but I'm sure that a lot of parents would agree with me that it's been a long time coming. The kids have waited too long to be able to physically go to school and physically be able to play with their classmates they had this year and actually have that in school environment and classroom with the teachers to be able to not really get the full experience from the learning of the materials and activities. The remote learning is great like I said, but at the same time, it does lack in the one on one face time that students do need with the faculty. If at all possible, if it can go to the hybrid program, great, awesome. If not, then just the rest of the school year we're doing great with the canvas. I know a lot of students and the parents have mastered being able to use it, but for the one parents, limited parents that have a student with some type of learning issues like my son with the IEP program or my daughter who is ADHD or other parents who have other medical conditions or other limitations that keep their kids from being at the grade level that they are. If they can go back great, if not the remote learning is working great. The speech pathology people or person would be great with the IEP program. I'm at my limit with what I can do to help my son with the speech pathologist that is lacking in his IEP program. Outside of that, if schools can open back up great. All in joking, we love our kids, but at the same time they need that one on one time in the classroom with their teachers. Thank you.

Eva Navarro

I am calling the School Board to let them know that I am totally for school attendance. I have found that my granddaughter who is a 1st grader has regressed tremendously on this online learning. So I would really like to see the school open all the time, not just hybrid. My name is Eva Navarro.

Anthony Chavez

First comment is about going back to a hybrid situation. My concern is obviously the health of myself as a teacher and our students as well. My vote on that situation for many obvious reasons, I mean, the universities have not gone back to school face to face. Our basketball teams around the state at the university level are going other places to have games and to practice because they cannot do it face to face. It doesn't make sense to me that we would be with students in a classroom confined, when most secondary places of education aren't doing it. It just doesn't make sense. This meeting virtually that is taking place today is virtual because it's a risk to have it face to face so the whole concept just doesn't make sense. That's my first point. Number one. Number two, from the standpoint of the parents and the students and the learning

deficiencies that they have had this year which is obvious, my thought is if LCPS can somehow come up with some funds and the environment is better at the start of the summer, possibly offer teachers at various schools, a stipend to teach summer school for four or five weeks. Maybe a half day or something like that and allow those students and those parents, however you decide to do that, the ones who have done the poorest, to go to school in the summer. It seems to me you would have lots of teachers who are willing to number one, teach because they care, number two, earn a little bit of extra money in the summer, and try to help the kids who have had a rough school year and are lacking academic information. Those are my two thoughts. Thank you very much, have a great evening and take care.

Steven Cadena

I just have a few comments. I think all teachers need the opportunity to receive vaccines. Not only the opportunity to receive them, but given enough wait time to take full effect. I also am wondering why we are still in the red, we can't eat in a restaurant, so I don't know if we should be returning to school. The concern I have is that some of these teachers like preschool teachers, there's no way they can maintain six feet away from their students because they have to change diapers, keep the students apart and all sorts of things, so I think there's a higher risk for preschool teachers. My last comment is, why is the School Board still meeting remote, but you want to send teachers back to school. If it's safe for teachers, it should be safe for School Board members to meet in person. Thank you.

Sherry Hulsey

Hello, my name is Sherry Hulsey and I wanted to comment on returning faculty and staff to schools for in person learning, which is a really great idea, if all the faculty and staff have had their vaccinations. Otherwise, it's not a good idea. I understand that parents are eager to have their kids back in school and I know that's a great idea, but since the kids are younger, they're probably not going to get as sick as the faculty and staff if they get sick. Also, the faculty and staff have to go home to their own families, and many of them taking care of their older parents or sick children and if parents want to make that decision for their kids, that's one thing, but the school district should not force faculty and staff to go back without the vaccinations. Thank you.