



**WOODLAND JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

February 18, 2021

Consistent with the Shelter in Place orders from the Governor and Yolo County, this meeting was compliant with the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20, which allowed for a deviation of teleconference rules required by the Brown Act. In-person attendance was not permitted. The meeting was available for live stream viewing, and recordings are available at <https://livestream.com/wjUSD> (click on the Board Meeting date).

Attendance Taken at 5:00 PM:

Present:

Deborah Bautista Zavala
Morgan Childers
Bibiana Garcia
Kandice Richardson Fowler
Noel Rodriguez
Rogelio Villagrana
Jake Whitaker

A. CALL TO ORDER IN OPEN SESSION - 5:00 P.M.

Minutes:

The Board President called the meeting to order in Open Session at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom and the meeting was live streamed and recorded via Vimeo Livestream.

A.1. Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes:

The Board President led the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. APPROVAL OF BOARD AGENDA - ACTION

Minutes:

The Board President pulled item *G.2. Reports from Board Members* from the agenda.

Motion Passed: Motion was made to approve the agenda as modified at the meeting. Passed with a motion by Jake Whitaker and a second by Rogelio Villagrana.

Yes Deborah Bautista Zavala

Yes Morgan Childers

Abstain Bibiana Garcia

Yes Kandice Richardson Fowler

Yes Noel Rodriguez

Yes Rogelio Villagrana

Yes Jake Whitaker

C. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON CLOSED SESSION AGENDA - In-person attendance at the Board Meeting will not be permitted. Please email public comments by 4:00 pm on the Board Meeting date to public.comment@wjusd.org. Per Board Bylaw 9323, comments (emails) received shall be limited to three minutes per person, and the Board shall limit the total time for public comment on each item to 20 minutes. Public comments may also be submitted by voicemail by 4:00 pm on the Board Meeting date, at 530-406-3202, or by mail postmarked on or before the Board Meeting date, at Attn: Public Comment, 435 6th Street, Woodland, CA 95695. The meeting will be available for live stream viewing at <https://livestream.com/wjused> (click on the Board Meeting date).

Minutes:

No public comments were submitted for Closed Session agenda items.

D. CLOSED SESSION AGENDA

D.1. Conference With Labor Negotiator, Leanee Medina Estrada: WEA and/or CSEA, Pursuant to Govt. Code 54957.6

Minutes:

The Board recessed at 5:01 p.m. and reconvened in Closed Session at 5:01 p.m. Closed Session recessed at 6:39 p.m.

E. RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

Minutes:

The Board President reconvened the meeting in Open Session at 6:45 p.m.

E.1. Announcement of any action taken in Closed Session or items to be approved in Open Session that were reviewed in Closed Session

Minutes:

The Board President announced that no action was taken in Closed Session.

F. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON SPECIAL BOARD MEETING AGENDA- In-person attendance at the Board Meeting will not be permitted. Please email public comments by 4:00 pm on the Board Meeting date to public.comment@wjusd.org. Per Board Bylaw 9323, comments (emails) received shall be limited to three minutes per person, and the Board shall limit the total time for public comment on each item to 20 minutes. Public comments may also be submitted by voicemail by 4:00 pm on the Board Meeting date, at 530-406-3202, or by mail postmarked on or before the Board Meeting date, at Attn: Public Comment, 435 6th Street, Woodland, CA 95695. The meeting will be available for live stream viewing at <https://livestream.com/wjUSD> (click on the Board Meeting date).

Minutes:

Please see the attached public comments.

G. REPORTS

G.1. Superintendent's Report

Minutes:

Superintendent Pritchard provided brief updates to the Board of Trustees on actions taken since the last Regular Board Meeting.

G.2. Report from Board Members

Minutes:

This item was pulled from the agenda.

H. TEACHING AND LEARNING

H.1. Information/Action: Update on WJUSD's Reopening Plan and COVID-19 Impacts

Motion Passed: Motion was made to extend public comments to 30 minutes for this agenda item. Passed with a motion by Deborah Bautista Zavala and a second by Kandice Richardson Fowler.

Yes Deborah Bautista Zavala
No Morgan Childers
Yes Bibiana Garcia
Yes Kandice Richardson Fowler
Yes Noel Rodriguez
No Rogelio Villagrana
Yes Jake Whitaker

Minutes:

The Information/Action item "Update on WJUSD's Reopening Plan and COVID-19 Impacts" was presented in a PowerPoint presentation by Superintendent Pritchard.

Motion Passed: Motion was made to direct staff to bring a resolution before the Board at the next Regular Board Meeting that would include a Phase 3 return date of April 12, 2021 for students Preschool through 12th grade. Passed with a motion by Morgan Childers and a second by Rogelio Villagrana.

Yes Deborah Bautista Zavala
Yes Morgan Childers
Yes Bibiana Garcia
Yes Kandice Richardson Fowler
Yes Noel Rodriguez
Yes Rogelio Villagrana
Yes Jake Whitaker

The Board recessed the meeting at 8:56 p.m. and resumed the meeting at 9:01 p.m.

I. FACILITIES AND FINANCE

I.1. Information: Governor's Budget Proposal for 2021-22

Minutes:

The Information item "Governor's Budget Proposal for 2021-22" was presented in a PowerPoint presentation by Associate Superintendent of Business Services Lewis Wiley.

J. GOVERNANCE SUPPORT

J.1. Information: Board Agreement Check-in

Minutes:

The Information item "Board Agreement Check-in" was presented by the Board President.

J.2. Information: Updated Board Governance Handbook

Minutes:

The Information item "Updated Board Governance Handbook" was presented by Superintendent Pritchard.

K. ADJOURNMENT

Minutes:

The Board President adjourned the meeting at 9:45 p.m.

BOARD CLERK

BOARD PRESIDENT

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
February 18, 2021
Public Comments

Good Evening President Whitaker, Trustees, Superintendent Pritchard and Community; We were surprised and dismayed by the District response reported in the 2.18.2021 WEA-WJUSD Negotiations Update. WEA's Phase 3, Initial Proposal #1 reflects the concerns and input from members regarding a safe return for students and their families. Both the Association and the District were presented with initial proposals that were shared with the intention of engaging in productive dialogue around what it will take for schools to open safely. WEA continues to hold the health and safety of our students and members as its top priority. Based on the feedback we received, concerns that have surfaced from our members include:

- Access to vaccination and time to be fully inoculated
- Proper air ventilation in classrooms
- Adequate time to prepare for rigorous and engaging student instruction to be delivered both in person and virtual, as well as constructive feedback
- On campus lunch requiring the removal of masks and potential for student and staff exposure
- Logistics with health and safety protocol implementation on school sites

WEA's goal remains to return to in-person instruction as this is what is best for students. The topic of school reopening is held deeply within our community and the work that is being done to accomplish this goal is not taken lightly. As established in our ground rules between WJUSD and WEA on Sept 29, 2020:

- The parties wish to participate in a constructive, collaborative discussion focusing on resolving negotiation issues
- Assume positive intent, be mindful of impact

We hope that in the future the District will consider the tone and implications of its updates. Thank you for your time and patience while we continue to bargain for a safe return.

Respectfully;
WEA Bargaining Team

My name is Kirsten and I am a parent of 3 at Tafoya Elementary and I am writing to demand the safe re-opening of schools for in person instruction NOW!

School is essential: remote school leads to learning loss and serious mental health consequences for kids—and these impacts are magnified for low-income children, children of color, and children with learning differences.

School is safe: The CDC continues to make this clear, and we know from the many open schools in the US and here in California, when precautions are taken, school is not a driver of community virus spread.

Teachers can return before they are vaccinated. Thousands have been teaching across the US and right here in California since **September**. The CDC Director stated last week it is not necessary for teachers to be vaccinated before they return, that mitigation measures already in places work!

California is the outlier. The majority of school districts around the county and the world have figured out how to open safely. We have one of the smallest percentages of students attending in-person of any state in the US.

Parents are tremendously upset, and refuse to let this continue.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO REOPEN SCHOOLS?

My name is Brigit Huxsoll. I have 5 children, 4 of which are school age. As a former member of a teachers' union I find it troubling that you seem to be letting them decide when schools can reopen rather than following the guidance of the multiple health agencies that have advised that it is safe and important to open schools now. I appreciate the opinion of union members but they are neither trained nor qualified to make the decision regarding the opening of our schools. The CDC and our county health department are the specialists that you should listen to. Anxiety and fear are understandable but science is what should dictate this decision.

The mental health of our children is rapidly deteriorating as well as the loss of learning despite how hard our teachers are working and I know that they are doing their best to teach via zoom. I recently had to make the heartbreaking decision to pull my 6 year old out of her public school kindergarten class. I could tell she was behind where she needed to be academically and she had physical manifestations of stress. I enrolled her at Woodland Christain School and the change in her demeanor was remarkable. She is so much happier and is thriving after just 2 weeks. This has set me on a mission to get schools opened because I know she is not the only child that zoom learning doesn't work for. I feel guilty that I am able pay to get the education she needs when all kids deserve in person learning. It's also heartbreaking because we cannot afford to send her siblings to private school as well so that they can have in person learning.

The last time I asked the board why our schools could not open safely but WCS was able to I was told it was because they are so much smaller. However my daughter left a public school class of 13 students and went to a class at WCS with 23 students. They have put in place practical and affordable practices to keep students safe and it is working well. We should be talking to their administration and teachers to learn how they have been so successful in keeping open and keeping healthy. This is a time to collaborate together for the sake our kids.

We all love our teachers and want them safe. We are only imploring you to open immediately

because we have experts saying it is safe to do so. Our children simply cannot wait any longer. You have 6th graders that want to enjoy the last precious months they have in elementary school. You have seniors in high school that are missing out on one of the most memorable years of their life. The children are not ok anymore. Computer learning is not sustainable. Do the right thing, follow the science, listen to the experts and reopen our schools now.

Thank you

My name is Jackie Gness and I am a parent to Andrew a 3rd grader, & Jacob a 1st grader at Plainfield Elementary and I am writing to demand the safe re-opening of schools for in person instruction immediately.

Both of my children have had significant academic regression. They also have gained weight, due to lack of movement because they are placed in front of screens for 5-7 hours a day 5 days a week. They often suffer from headaches & go through bouts of depression and anger at times as they miss their friends, teachers & life in general before covid.

School is & always has been essential. Remote school has been shown to lead to learning loss and serious mental health consequences for kids—and these impacts are magnified for low-income children, children of color, and children with learning differences. If WJUSD truly believes all students deserve equal opportunities to learn and grow it is absolutely essential it opens school doors to all students immediately. Many parents can not afford to send their kids to private schools which are open, operating safely & successfully, & have been for many months.

It is safe for students & teachers to be back at school. The CDC and local health officials continue to make this clear, and we know from the many open schools in the US and here in California, when precautions are taken, school is not a driver of community virus spread. Yet WJUSD has given absolutely no start date for the large majority of its population & we are closing in on one entire year of distance learning, & the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

Health officials have also stated that Teachers can safely return before they are vaccinated. Thousands have been teaching across the US and right here in California since September. The CDC Director stated last week it is not necessary for teachers to be vaccinated before they return, that mitigation measures already in places work!

California is the outlier. The majority of school districts around the country, and the world have figured out how to open safely. Recently many in our neighboring counties as well. We have one of the smallest percentages of students attending in-person of any state in the US. This is unacceptable.

Parents are tremendously upset. Please return our student to in person learning. It is what is best for all of us as they are OUR future.

Sincerely,

Jackie Gness

To whom it may concern:

Our schools need to open. The mental and physical health of our children depend on it. Since our school have shut down we have had an increased rate of children suicide. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7500342/> As well as an increased rate of depression in children. It is also well documented there has been a marked increase of childhood obesity since schools have closed. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7644278/> For the sake of our children and our community. Work harder to open our schools! Or we will vote in a new board who will work harder for our children!

Passionately,
Amanda Misener

Good Morning,

I no longer have children in the school district, but I do have grandchildren who SHOULD BE in WJUSD, but have had to drop out to attend private school. They have been in school since August, thankfully. They are very fortunate, unlike most children who have had to suffer through this distance learning. With recent statements from the CDC and Dr. Fauci regarding getting kids back in school, there is no longer a VALID reason to keep WJUSD closed. Schools can resume safely with precautions and without having all teachers vaccinated. Let's actually follow the SCIENCE and get these kids back in school. No more politics please. Let's do what's best for our children. Thank you.

Your Friend in the Real Estate Business,
Sheri Cunningham

Dear WJUSD board,

My name is Dr. Crystal Ripplinger and my son Theodore is in 1st grade at Sci-Tech Elementary, and I am writing to request the safe reopening of our schools for in-person instruction **as soon as possible**.

Quite simply, remote learning is not a suitable long-term solution for young children. The CDC and our own Yolo County Health Officer have said in no uncertain terms that remote learning has led to instructional deficits and severe mental health consequences, and that **ALL elementary children should have access in-person instruction, regardless of community transmission rates**. As indicated by the CDC in their updated guidance issued on Feb. 12, the overwhelming majority of scientific evidence from schools and districts throughout the country is that, when appropriate precautions are taken, school virus rates are not reflective of – nor a driver of - community transmission.

WJUSD has had **11 months** to plan for a safe and effective reopening, but parents and children have NOT been effectively informed on schools' readiness and specific timelines for return. Districts all over Northern California are currently open – thus, we are not asking you to be a

driver of change or to develop new guidelines – we are simply asking you to do the SAME things that other districts have ALREADY done to get our kids back in school.

Unfortunately, coronavirus is not going to disappear anytime soon. Waves of transmission will continue to ebb and flow. More viral variants will continue to emerge. Safe and effective vaccines will continue to be developed and rolled out as needed, but we simply cannot wait for this to ‘end’ before we reopen, because there may be no real ‘end’ in sight. We cannot keep moving the goalposts for our kids. Instead, we need PROACTIVE and TRANSPARENT leadership to safely end this educational crisis for our children.

Respectfully,

Dr. Crystal Ripplinger

Hello, my name is Vina Plascencia. My children are, Noelani Plascencia- 4th grade, and Abner Plascencia- TK.

Distance learning in my home was handled the way, I suppose many handled it, with no idea how to do it at all. It was my 5 year olds first real year in school and he was so excited!

My daughter, was accepted into the GATE program and was really looking forward to that. With all the uncertainty that 2020 brought, starting school distance learning wasn’t something we wanted at all, but made the best of it. We got up every morning, ready to start the day on our computers. Many glitches, and 1 replaced chromebook later, we logged in and sat listening attentively. This became difficult very quickly. My 4th grade daughter had issues focusing in a normal classroom setting, and now in her new setting, with all her toys and belongings around her, her focus was way worse.

I constantly came into her room to remind her to put down her toys and pay attention. She learned quickly how to position the camera of her chromebook, so that it looked like she was participating, yet playing with her toys at the same time.

I mentioned I have a 5 year old. For his TK class, I had to sit right next to him as his teacher spoke. His class was very difficult to focus in. My son, does not have problems with focus and was so excited to meet his teacher. He was very confused when “meeting his teacher “ actually meant through a computer. Not only was it difficult for the teacher to see all the kids on the screen at once, but it quickly became frustrating to my son when he raised his hand and followed the rules, but wasn’t praised nor called on. Constantly hearing kids yelling into the computers microphone, speaking out of turn and not following the rules, quickly got made it all too difficult for my 5 year old son. His days ended at 11am and the rest of the day was up to, me, the parent to continue to teach the rest of the lessons for the day, by reviewing and working on what wasn’t finished.

Trying to sit with my 5 year old for 3 hours, and then for 2 more after was exhausting. My son ended his days crying, asking why his teacher didn’t like him. Which obviously wasn’t true, but was the way he perceived it. Trying to do this along with checking in on my 4th grader was even more exhausting, because it is a constant with her. After 2 months of distance learning with my 5 year old, and ending each day frustrated and upset, I dropped him and began homeschooling myself. It was the best choice for my son.

Though I am homeschooling my 5 year old, and only one child is distance learning, they both want to go to school now. They are more than ready. It has been long enough. My daughter

needs the interaction with other students. She needs to be in a classroom setting so that she can be motivated to focus during class. She needs the GATE classes that were promised to her, in person!

My son needs to be in a classroom with other kids. He needs to practice his good listening skills and how to follow the rules in the classroom. How to grow and learn in person!!

In our household we are ready to go back. Please open our schools!

To the WJUSD School Board,

I urge you to prioritize opening our schools fully as soon as possible (within the next month). I can see no reason why other districts are already opening and it seems like we are moving at a snail's pace. The CDC guidelines indicate that we should be able to return to in-person learning now.

I am a mother of two elementary aged students (K and 3rd). I am a public children's librarian and unlike many other working parents I cannot work from home. What this means for my family is an outrageous expense of childcare during school closures with zero assistance. If my kids can be in a small room with other students doing distance learning during a pandemic than why can they not be in a classroom with all the benefits that in-person learning affords? It makes no sense to me.

I think it would also be beneficial to consider moving to a year-round school model. We have had such learning loss that I would love to see school run through the summer months. Not all students are able to focus in the distance learning environment, my son included. He will be moving up into fourth grade next year when expectations are higher and I really don't feel he has gained the skills this year to be successful next year. My daughter is in kindergarten where so much of what they learn is about social skills and learning how to function in a school setting. I want her to have the experience to interact with her teacher and peers in-person. I want more visible communication with the community. I want to hear about what you are doing now to open up the schools. I don't want to see any more plans; I am ready for movement and action. What do we need to do as citizens to push this forward?

Thank you,
Corinne McCoy

Hello WJUSD district Superintendent and School Board members,

Thank you for taking the time to read this public comment. We were the parents of two high school age students at Woodland High, a senior and a sophomore. We wanted to voice our strong opinions about getting our kids back on campus ASAP.

Our students have now been out of school and following COVID protocols since March 2020. Our once bubbly, spirited, cheerleader daughter who everyone loved to watch tumble across the football field on Friday nights has changed. She struggled to get out of bed in the morning. She struggled to find anything to look forward to or any light at the end of the tunnel. Our student who used to pride herself on working hard and pleasing teachers had absolutely no desire to complete work nor did she have any motivation to see that it is done right. She had teachers she never met, and had no connection with, and while those teachers

are working hard, it seems a nearly impossible task for them to connect with students they have never met while staring into a black screen with nobody looking back at them. Distance learning placed such a hardship on her that we were forced to search for other options. In December we enrolled her in the independent learning center, hoping that being off the zoom meetings 6 hours a day would help. It did not. She continued to feel isolated, alone and helpless. Finally, in January, with no hope of getting her back in the classroom, we moved her out of the district to a public school nearby that is fully open and has been since the beginning of November. She was heartbroken to leave her friends, teachers she cared about, and her position as a trainer with the WHS baseball team. She fully plans to return in the fall, but only if WHS is open full time.

Our son is a senior this year. He has worked most of his life, since he was 5 years old, at playing baseball with the hope of playing in college one day. His junior year baseball season, arguably the most important one for college sports recruiting, was taken from him and he had to work 10 times as hard as kids in previous years to get colleges to look at him. Our son was one of those kids who went to school and worked hard to get grades to keep him eligible for baseball and that is pretty much the only reason, other than to hang out with his friends. Not allowing them back in school AND keeping sports out of reach was a double whammy for him that he was unable to sustain. Finally, in December, he begged us to look for other options and he ended up moving to a different district, (different than the one his sister is in) nearby, public school that has been open since November. He was devastated to be unable to graduate with the Wolfpack, but he knew he needed to get back into the classroom before he went off to college in order to practice the necessary skills he was not getting during distance learning.

We are parents who are present, involved, and in tune with our children. We are lucky enough to be here with them during the day, and so we see the full picture of what is going on with them, and many of their friends. We are fortunate enough to have the option to move our kids, a luxury we fully understand few people have. We are not sure if you realize the extent that these kids, all of our kids, have a case of "who cares, it doesn't matter anyway" at best, and thoughts of suicide at the worst. Its rampant among our young people these days. More needs to be done. The data that we have seen and the science professionals don't support keeping these kids at home any longer. We are begging you to think outside the box and be open to new ways of doing things so we can get our kids back to some sort of normalcy before we lose any more of them. We just can't believe that this is the best we can do. Districts all around us are doing it successfully. And please please don't buy into the idea that high schoolers don't need to be back in person, or that they can be last priority; if you are an engaged parent of a high schooler, you know that is not true.

Thank you,
Shanna and Chris O'Sullivan

Trustees,
You have been elected by the public, not our superintendent or the unions. You have been elected to represent my children. I understand the complexity of navigating the union

environment and I understand the stress associated with trying to partner with a leader (our superintendent) that constantly tells you we need to move slow or something won't work. But please, we beg you, as the public servant that was elected to represent the people, please fight hard to get our children back in school immediately. This must stop, our children must go back to school.

Clinical experts have proved that the social and emotional trauma our children are facing far exceeds the negative implications of this virus. These traumas are leading to deaths too - suicides, abuse, drug overdoses etc.

Please allow me to paint you a picture. My child lives in a loving home with two working parents. We are your stereotypical happy family. We have food on our table and coverage to guide our son through this process. Prior to online school my son had never used a laptop and never used an ipad or phone. How's he doing with online school? He's doing okay. With Mrs. Richter at Zamora, he's learning every day. She has amazed me at how she cares for the children and does everything in her power to engage the children and make learning fun. We are at an advantage because, as a kindergartener, my son does not have a point of reference of what schools should be. We have never spoken negatively at home about his schooling and everything is "rainbows and butterflies" as far as what has been discussed around him. Here's the problem. Here's where I need you – my elected official – my son who was thriving has withdrawn from this process. He frequently does not have the ability to focus. Does he know his ABC's – yes. His social skills are faulting. He needs in-classroom education to lay the foundation, at this pivotal age, on how to be a good working member of our society. There are lessons I simply can't teach him at home. He needs hands on (not computer) learning of how to work with a team of children. How to engage with folks he does not know. How to make friends. How to be respectful and confident in an uncomfortable environment. Simple experiences of how to navigate a school campus while his parents aren't around.

Why did I paint this picture for you? Because I see the irreversible damage being done to my child that has a stereotypical "good" family. I want you to think of the children that do not have this support. The ones who don't have parents that will write to and advocate for change. The children that are in a home alone all day. Think of the children who are scared, alone, and do not have someone to love them because their school environment was the only stability they had. Think of the children that have learning disabilities. Think of the children who have parents so frustrated and upset that school will forever be associated as a negative.

Please, we beg you, be solution finders and do everything in your power to get every child back to school. We need a date now. The future of our community is in your hands as the long term effects from children not being in school will be with our community for years and years to come.

Is this a moment in time – yes. But I know the damage being done to my child’s mental wellbeing will have lasting effects that cannot be reversed.

Do as all parent poll winnings have directed and as the overwhelming number of teachers have requested. Please provide us with some type of in-person learning immediately.

With respect,
Seth & Katie Curran
Parents of Parker Curran, Kindergarten, Zamora Elementary

To whom it may concern:

I'm writing today to advocate for reopening IN-PERSON school. For the mental health of our children, we must have a plan and we must know as parents how to support that plan. I continue to hear about updates for our elementary schools but nothing for the **middle schools and high schools**. Neighboring districts have implemented effective plans and have been on campus - some for months, some for weeks. My children are feeling the mental impact of the isolation, and as a parent, I've yet to receive any information about plans for reopening. No goals for future dates....and absolutely nothing to lift the kids spirits or have something to look forward to. It's so disheartening.

In looking at the state dashboard it appears all neighboring districts have checked have a plan. WJUSD has received the most Covid relief funds compared to neighboring districts and yet, have not checked the "plan" requirements. I understand the need to be safe. To protect our children and our educators, but **we need to be informed. Weekly emails from the district** regarding progress would be great! Please, if emails are sent referencing a post on the website - **include a direct link** to make everything easy to access and transparent.

I hope our students will be on campus soon, even if it's a hybrid plan. We should be looking at our neighboring districts for best practices and implementing them locally. I love our town. I love our schools and most importantly, I care about the well-being of our students. They should be our priority and the only way to do that is to be proactive and be transparent with all information to stifle any rumors or misinformation.

Michelle Tafoya

Please see the email I sent yesterday. My apologies Noel for misspelling your name. I also neglected to include Elodia and Thomas. I have an 8th grader and an 11th grader. My 8th grader is suffering from the isolation and is now in counseling. I'm absolutely worried about her mental health and she's a straight A student. Grades don't equate to mental stability. Not sure what it's going to take to make our secondary aged students a priority but I didn't see them mentioned at all in today's announcement. We've already had one secondary-aged student suicide in Woodland. What more could it possibly take?? We need to overturn the teacher's union's decision. We need to put our kids first. We can do this safely.

Michelle Tafoya

I am the grandmother of 2 Plainfield Elementary students and I am also a retired teacher. While my grandson's teachers have done a phenomenal job with the distance learning and both boys' academic skills are improving, I am extremely concerned with their emotional and mental health. The older boy, being a stronger personality, is toughing it through but at the age of 9 this is not something he should be having to do. These formative years should not be spent isolated from peers, sitting in front of a computer for hours and hours everyday. The 6 year old, a 1st grader, is struggling. As a kindergartener he was developing a lot of confidence and enthusiasm being around others of his own skill level. He could see that his physical and mental skills were on a level with his peers--he was no longer having to compare himself to a brother 3 years older and thinking himself lacking. This year however, he lacks that interaction with his peers and has regressed back to the level he was at in TK. It is frustrating and discouraging for him. These children need to be back in school, interacting with others and learning the social skills necessary to fit in to society--and they need to be back full time. The proposed plan of 2 days in person, one day online and 2 days on their own would be even more disastrous than what is happening now--it would place a burden on parents to provide education in areas they are not qualified in. It would even further place parents in the position of "being the bad guy" on the 2 days of on-your-own learning leading to increased family tensions and be emotionally detrimental to all concerned.

A number of northern California districts have had in person classes for most, if not all, of this school year with few problems --it can be done. I encourage your district to open schools full time --or offer an option of all in school or all online and let the parents and teachers choose which they are comfortable with.

Patti Taylor

Trustees,

You have been elected by the public, not our superintendent or the unions. You have been elected to represent my children. I understand the complexity of navigating the union environment and I understand the stress associated with trying to partner with a leader (our superintendent) that constantly tells you we need to move slow or something won't work. But please, we beg you, as the public servant that was elected to represent the people, please fight hard to get our children back in school immediately. This must stop, our children must go back to school.

Clinical experts have proved that the social and emotional trauma our children are facing far exceeds the negative implications of this virus. These traumas are leading to deaths too - suicides, abuse, drug overdoses etc.

My children live in a loving home with two working parents. We are your stereotypical happy family. We have food on our table and coverage to guide our son and daughter through this process. How are they doing with online school? They are doing okay. With the teachers at

Zamora and Lee my kids are learning every day. Here's the problem. Here's where I need you – my elected official – Their social skills are faulting. They need in-classroom education. There are lessons I simply can't teach them at home. They need hands on (not computer) learning of how to work with a team of children. How to engage with folks they do not know. How to make friends. How to be respectful and confident in an uncomfortable environment. Simple experiences of how to navigate a school campus for my daughter's first year at Lee while their parents aren't around.

Why did I paint this picture for you? Because I see the irreversible damage being done to my children that has a stereotypical "good" family. I want you to think of the children that do not have this support. The ones who don't have parents that will write to and advocate for change. The children that are in a home alone all day. Think of the children who are scared, alone, and do not have someone to love them because their school environment was the only stability they had. Think of the children that have learning disabilities. Think of the children who have parents so frustrated and upset that school will forever be associated as a negative.

Please, we beg you, be solution finders and do everything in your power to get every child back to school. We need a date now. The future of our community is in your hands as the long term effects from children not being in school will be with our community for years and years to come.

There are numerous schools in surrounding counties and even in our own county that have safely opened up their schools for in person learning so we know it can be done and done safely. We must open all of our schools.

Is this a moment in time – yes. But I know the damage being done to my children's mental wellbeing will have lasting effects that cannot be reversed. Do as all parent poll winnings have directed and as the overwhelming number of teachers have requested. Please provide us with some type of in-person learning immediately.

With respect,
Angela Anchondo Craig

Trustees,

You have been elected by the public, not our superintendent or the unions. You have been elected to represent my children. I understand the complexity of navigating the union environment and I understand the stress associated with trying to partner with a leader (our superintendent) that constantly tells you we need to move slow or something won't work. But please, we beg you, as the public servant that was elected to represent the people, please fight hard to get our children back in school immediately. This must stop, our children must go back to school.

Clinical experts have proved that the social and emotional trauma our children are facing far

exceeds the negative implications of this virus. These traumas are leading to deaths too - suicides, abuse, drug overdoses, etc.

Please allow me to paint you a picture. My child (1st grader) lives in a loving home with one working parent and one stay at home parent. We are your stereotypical happy family. We have food on our table and coverage to guide our daughter through this process. Prior to online school my daughter had never used a laptop and on rare occasions used an iPad. How's she doing with online school? She's doing okay. With Mrs. Densmore at Plainfield, she's learning every day. Mrs. Densmore has amazed me at how she cares for the children and does everything in her power to engage the children and make learning fun. She goes above and beyond trying to create a "classroom" for her students. We have never spoken negatively at home about our daughter's schooling and everything is "rainbows and butterflies" as far as what has been discussed around her. Here's the problem. Here's where I need you – my elected official – my daughter who was thriving in Kindergarten (last year) has withdrawn from this process. She frequently does not have the ability to focus and she forgets which direction letters and numbers need to be written (spending her time pecking away at a keyboard), she cries most days, and she tells me she hates school. Her social skills are faulting. She needs in-classroom education to lay the foundation, at this pivotal age, on how to be a good working member of our society. There are lessons I simply can't teach her at home. She needs hands on (not computer) learning of how to work with a team of children. How to engage with folks she does not know. How to make friends. How to be respectful and confident in an uncomfortable environment. Simple experiences of how to navigate a school campus while her parents aren't around.

Why did I paint this picture for you? Because I see the irreversible damage being done to my child that has a stereotypical "good" (even privileged) family. I want you to think of the children that do not have this support. The ones who don't have parents that will write to and advocate for change. The children that are in a home alone all day. Think of the children who are scared, alone, and do not have someone to love them because their school environment was the only stability they had. Think of the children that have learning disabilities. Think of the children who have parents so frustrated and upset that school will forever be associated as a negative.

Please, we beg you, be solution finders and do everything in your power to get every child back to school. We need a date now. The future of our community is in your hands as the long term effects from children not being in school will be with our community for years and years to come.

Is this a moment in time – yes. But I know the damage being done to my child's mental wellbeing will have lasting effects that cannot be reversed.

Do as all parent poll winnings have directed and as the overwhelming number of teachers have requested. Please provide us with some type of in-person learning immediately.

With Respect,
Shea Lillard

To Whom It May Concern:

I have 2 boys in grades 3 and 5. My 3rd grader is not learning but is doing ok mentally. My 5th grader is another story. He has always been top of his class, active, social and Happy. Now, he refuses to do any school work, cries for no reason and complains of being depressed and lonely. All he wants is to be back in school. As a mother it is breaking my heart to know that I cannot help him. I worry the longer he has to stay out of school the more depressed he will become. He is 10 years old. He deserves us to be fighting for his wellbeing. He is not alone, but he feels like he is. I cannot stand back and be quiet any longer, we need our schools to open. Our children need to be put first.

Sincerely,
Hayley Moreno

Good Afternoon,

My name is Amanda Linares and I have two daughters in the dual immersion program at Prairie Elementary. Plain and simple, I'm emailing today as a plea to open the schools as soon as possible, as encouraged by Yolo's public health officer and the CDC. Like many other parents with multiple children in the district, I have the vantage of seeing that distance learning is temporarily manageable for some, but far from it for others. My 3rd grader, despite being in a class of 35 (no, that's NOT a typo), is managing and making the best of it. I can't praise her teacher enough for managing 35 in this Zoom environment. My 1st grader, however, had her kindergarten year cut short, and now this. We are an English-only household, and in my opinion, the English and Spanish-only speakers in the early DI program rely heavily on being able to watch and follow the actions of their peers. Over a screen, all of that is lost. She often has no clue what is going on, gives up easily, and spends much of her day crying. It's heartbreaking to see a child who once loved school, now loathe everything about it. A kid who was excited to learn Spanish like her sister, now wants little to do with it. When I compare where my 3rd grader was at that age to where my 1st grader is now, all I see is how far behind she is and what an uphill battle this will be for years to come. I see so many little faces behind these screens enduring this and so much worse. While I understand battling the unions is part of the equation (and I'd also plead with them to start putting the kids first), I sincerely hope you have done all you can to use the 18+ million in COVID funds responsibly, and have done your due diligence readying school sites for a return ASAP.

Thank you,
Amanda Linares

Move to open our schools immediately as other districts are doing who are following science and guidance, as outlined in, I'm sure, numerous emails that you are receiving. I won't re-tread that ground here.

Don't move the goal posts and get distracted by vaccines. We want our teachers vaccinated, of course, but this should not be allowed to become a distraction to reopening. Don't let a potential excuse like vaccines become a means for you to avoid stepping up and pushing through what is best for our children. We elected you to do the best for our children, not for the teachers unions, or anyone else who might be pushing against the CDC's guidance. This recent post from WJUSD ([link](#)) was disappointing in that it seems to communicate an expectation that vaccines are required for reopening.

Our children are suffering. We now have the data which show that teacher vaccination need not be a prerequisite to safe school opening. Get the kids back in school.

Dominic Monley

- Parent of kindergartner and 2 other children soon to be a part of WJUSD

Good afternoon,

My son is a senior at Esparto High and started out at Zamora elementary and Lee middle school. I work for Yolo County HHSA and serve the most vulnerable population throughout the county. I have gone to work this entire time during COV. It was my job to provide the essentials like food and medical to our citizens. Meanwhile my sons mental health has declined because there are no classes for him. We have weeded out our county HHSA office to make sure only the bare minimum are in the same space and the rest work from home. Yet, no one has provided the same opportunity to my son (Esparto does allow 1 hour a week at this time which is great on their part but obviously that is nearly nothing). My son has lost a good 10-15 pounds of straight stress and depression. I have found that he has started using a vape pen of thc to sleep at night (MANY kids are doing this, MANY MANY). I parent and punish this... but with what? What do I do after the 3rd discussion about the right way to handle stress and falling asleep. Do I take away the bus rides with the sports teams, do I take away his car keys and make him ride the bus to school? No, because he has NOTHING to take away. Do I take away his video games which are his only way to have any social interaction with his friends he hasn't seen for nearly a year? I do. So it's come to that. The one last thing left of using a headset to talk to his peers is what I have to take. And I'll tell you, before school was shut down he was rarely on the video games. He was playing baseball and basketball with his buddies, having fun at school and participating in school activities. He is sad. He is lonely. His senior year is passing by without a lick of any normalcy. My son planned to attend Sierra college and play baseball, he bats a .476 average. He even had college coaches calling him personally. After 6 months, he has yet to find the motivation to go make his baseball video he needs for recruiting. Yolo county has the positivity rate to open schools, yet doesn't. Not only does Dr. Sisson fight that elementary can safely open even without vaccinated staff, but NOW teachers CAN vaccinate just for that extra protection. High school classes can be done outside now with the nicer weather. She even said YOLO county has been able to do this for a bit. Translation... YOLO county can, but they aren't. Meanwhile I'm calling councilors, taking time off work and keeping him as busy as I can and being as involved as I can while he looks like.... crap. My son looks like crap. My athletic, motivated, social and upbeat 17 year old son looks and feels like crap. What are we waiting for? If everyone else can go to work, so can the teachers. Let the ones who need to be at home get a

doctors note and teach from home. Let the ones who want to go back, go back. Private schools are open because the teachers want to be there and they signed a paper. There have been many cases of COVID at Woodland Christian, whole families, yet they are open. We are all the same here and a piece of paper should NOT be what saves or destroys our kids. Science says let them go back. Let them go back half the time and share the space with half the students. Let them learn outside. Give them SOMETHING!! This is it, my last child going through school and this is how it ends. He has lost the drive and love for life. Let's move forward. I will volunteer, I will clean schools on the weekend or after work, I will do whatever you need me to do. If I can be here working for people in Yolo county, Yolo county can be working for me and mine. My name is Alana Witten and I can be reached at 530-999-3733. I ask that this not be shared publicly because of the private information divulged but you may call me at any time. I really am willing to help as I said.

Alana Witten

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Kris Green and I am a parent to three children in the WJUSD and I am writing to demand the safe re-opening of schools for in person instruction THIS SEMESTER.

I have a child in grade school, one in junior high and another in high school and have watched all three of them suffer in some way due to the continued closure of schools and lack of in person education and socialization. I see them having trouble focusing and staying engaged in class while also continuing to witness their mental and emotional well being decline.

SCHOOL is ESSENTIAL. Remote school leads to learning loss and serious mental health consequences for kids.

SCHOOL is SAFE. The CDC continues to make this clear and we know from the many open schools in the US and here in California, when precautions are taken, school is not a driver of community virus spread.

Teachers can return before they are vaccinated. Thousands have been teaching across the US and right here in California since September. The CDC Director stated last week it is not necessary for teachers to be vaccinated before they return, that mitigation measures already in place work!!!!

California is the outlier. The majority of school districts around the country and the world have figured out how to open safely. We have one of the smallest percentages of students attending in-person of any state in the U.S.

Parents are tremendously upset, and refuse to let this continue. Its time to get our children back into the classroom! In fact it is past time. Please do not delay this any longer..... for the sake of the kids and the sake of our entire community, do what needs to be done to REOPEN SCHOOLS!!!

Good afternoon Superintendent Pritchard and WJUSD Trustees,

I am writing today to encourage an open and frank discussion regarding the reopening of WJUSD middle and high schools. We have been provided with much discussion and debate regarding elementary schools (TK-6) but very little regarding the reopening plans for grades 7-12. Every child in this district is affected in some way by the closure of our schools. And while learning in a remote setting may be difficult for the children in TK-6, it is also difficult on our middle and high schoolers.

It is my understanding that as of 2/16/2021, Yolo County will be poised to move into the Red Tier within the next one to two weeks. At that point, all schools would be eligible to reopen - including grades 7-12.

Will WJUSD be ready? Please be transparent and disclose the plans for reopening our middle and high schools.

* What is the time frame that WJUSD is prepared to offer to our/your middle and high school students?

* What are the hold-ups and with whom? Teachers unions? Maintenance and Operations? Transportation? We don't need the details, but should have an idea of what barriers are preventing middle and high schools from opening.

* What is a realistic expectation opening these schools in the remaining school year? Our children need to know if they will have an opportunity to be on campus in the remaining few months.

Thank you for your time and I hope that you will provide a realistic and transparent discussion on this topic.

Sincerely,
Michele Oatman - WHS parent/Class of 2023

Dear WJUSD Trustees and Stakeholders,

We are writing this letter to implore you to safely reopen our schools. We are going on a year of school closures, and this is not acceptable. Our teachers and schools are amazing and doing the best they can, but distance learning is not working. Three hours on Zoom is not enough. The learning loss is huge, and our kids mental health is suffering greatly. It's been a year since they've been in a classroom, with their friends, and learning in person, and I am heartbroken for our kids. This is taking its toll on them.

Listen to the science. Yes the CDC has declared it safe to reopen schools, and so has our public health director. Many neighboring districts are coming up with dates and reopening plans and despite receiving ample Covid relief funding, as of 2/16 there is no safe schools reopening plan filed with the state , while all of our neighboring districts have filed their reopening plans with the state. Does our district even plan on reopening? Please fight for our students.

My children are losing their love of school and their desire to succeed. They used to look forward to school, now they dread sitting in front of a screen all morning. What's even more concerning, is that there are no immediate plans to open the secondary schools, and these are probably the students who need it the most. My daughter will start middle school next year, and we don't even know if she will actually be able to go. Teenagers NEED to go to in person school for so many reasons., the suicide rates and depression among this age group from this pandemic are devastating

We talk a lot about equity. This is not an equal education as the students attending in person at public and private schools around the state. In person education should not be a privilege. It is essential for ALL students. So many students are getting left behind with distance learning for many reasons, and we owe it to the students to do better for them. This year will have negative effects on our kids for a long time, and our students do not deserve to go on like this any longer.

Please reopen our schools for ALL grades. Even if we reopen for the last couple of months of this school year, it would give our students hope and do wonders for their mental health. We can do it WJUSD, we have faith in you.

Sincerely,
Robert and Jennifer Garcia

Hello,
My name is Greta Eoff, parent to an 8th grader at Lee middle school, a seventh grader who has recently transferred to Woodland Christian, and wife to a teacher at Lee middle school.

Please, I am asking you to do whatever it takes to open our public schools. If private schools are open, and other schools across California and the nation can figure this out, I know you can too. I have confidence in this board.

The mental and physical health of our children depend on it. The future of our community is at stake.

Thank you for all that you do during this difficult time.

Warm regards,
Greta Eoff

Good evening,

I have been in the classroom since august with 22 3rd graders who live in yolo county. Several of them are former wjuds students. My own first grader started at my school this fall because of the wjuds lack of action towards reopening. That is about a half dozen students this district has lost just in my immediate reach. And now my 6th grader is willing to do whatever it takes to get back in school- including being held back. Wow! A 6th grader came up with this idea so she could get a coveted spot in a private BUT OPEN school. It is sad.

The health and safety of our kids and teachers is at the forefront of my mind- is it also at the forefront of yours? Politics and unions aside- this is now becoming life or death. Students are depressed and suicidal. And it does not have to be this way! Many districts have opened full time and our parents are just asking for at least hybrid at this point!

Do not fail us now. Take action today. Demand the teachers back. You have that authority. Forgo union requests. Stand up for these kids. It's beyond past the right time.

Ps- I saw picture evidence that 4 of your teachers were vaccinated today. (Social media) and from what I hear tons more beyond the 4 that I know of were also vaccinated! We were waiting on vaccines- so I think that argument is a mute point now. Yay for that!

God Bless.
You are in my prayers,
Amanda Young

Dear Trustees,

Thank you for this special meeting and the opportunity to take action to address the reopening of our schools.

Our children are at Sci-Tech, in grades K and 3rd.

With the recent opening of vaccination appointments to educators, we hope that you will discuss and put into place a solid action plan to move into a reopening phase for the majority of our students, with dates identified now for such re-opening so that families and teachers can begin to make the arrangements they need in order to get children on site.

In light of new data and new recommendations by county public health officials and the CDC that indicate that the risk/benefit favors children returning to school, and even that hybrid learning is not necessary, we encourage the district to revisit the initial plan (developed at least 6 months ago under very different circumstances) where students would return 1-2 half days

per week. Based on the information heard at the recent board meeting (that we are meeting the guidelines and protocols set out to reopen, i.e. sufficient PPE and updated filtration systems) as well as what we have seen from our local private schools (that children can be in school full time, under protocols of mask-wearing, distancing and cohort-keeping), there seems to be little evidence to support the need for such limitations of a hybrid return that would arguably reduce the benefit of in-person instruction and place increased burden on everyone - school staff and administration, children and parents.

Our family's experience is not unique and admittedly, we have been extremely fortunate over the past year. We have been able to alter our full-time work schedules to be home with our children while they school from home. The teachers at Sci-Tech have been phenomenal, working long hours, communicating often and supporting our Robot community in creative and engaging ways. I fully commend them for all that they do (our kindergartener learned to read via remote instruction!). But it's also a struggle. We are dealing with a lack of motivation and focus, there is less initiative and more detachment. We are missing opportunities for the kids to engage with each other and their teachers in ways more typical for our school, and we are afraid that these extended issues will have long term negative effects.

When given the opportunity to return in person, we have full faith in our district, teachers and staff to create an environment that is safe for staff and children, and we have the benefit of modeling from schools that already have a plan in place and are operating in person. As parents, we commit to doing our part to keeping all safe as well, by not sending our children if anyone in our household or within contact is or has been ill, preparing our children for the return to school protocols and doing whatever is necessary to assist in reopening schools. We are here to partner, and we hope to hear a plan for kids to be back in school very soon.

Thank you,
Gina and Matt Reed

Good evening,

I'm writing this email on behalf of all children in the WJUSD. I'm terribly frustrated and beyond upset for the lack of effort and care that has been put into re-opening our schools. We've seen many schools around us go back to school safely.

It's my understanding that it's not the lack of a safety plan or the PPE but the teachers union that is holding everything back. This disappoints me so much. Many people including myself do not have the ability to choose to return to work. Our jobs are too important. Essential functions in our communities would not continue if many of us don't return to work. Imagine if the unions of frontline workers gave them the options to not return to work? Where would we be then? They face exposure every day but their job is essential just like these teachers! Why are

teachers so special?

As teachers you know the situations of many students in our district, mental, physical, and even sexual abuse, lack of food or supervision and so much more. Many children are facing depression, anxiety, and learning loss. Many students in this district already suffer from these conditions pre-covid and keeping them from school and any type of normalcy will only make matters worse. When they worsen it can turn to the ultimate tragedy, suicide. This has happened too many times in our community and those around us. When this happens, don't think your thoughts and prayers will help because it won't bring back those children!

Our children need you all to stop the delay and take action today! As trustees you need to demand that these children return to school. Stop sitting back and allowing the teacher's union to dictate what happens. Our children are too important. You were all elected to be the voices of our children, stop sitting in the backseat and take control!

Thank you,
A.C.
Parent of a WJUSD 5th grader

Hello,

My name is Jesus Cosio and a 5th grader at Tafoya. I want to go back to school because I learn more and better in person. I don't want to do distance learning because I don't understand things the same way as if I was in class. Being on the chromebook all day hurts my eyes and gives me a headache. Being inside all day sometimes makes me sad because I think of how I used to go to school, play with friends at recess and have fun in the classroom. Both my parents have to work and can't be there to help me when I need it. I'm also home alone with my sister or sometimes by myself. I don't like being home alone. I really want to go back to school. Please do whatever you can to help us all go back to school.

Thank you,
Jesus Cosio

Dear Board of Trustees:

I now find myself writing my third email this school year to the board pleading for students to get back in class. Decision after decision has shown the inability and inefficiency in moving forward with getting our children back in the classroom, even though we have had months to prepare, to purchase needed safety supplies, and to learn from the examples of districts all around us already doing it in some form, at all levels.

Unfortunately, over the last year, I have lost all faith in the Executive Administration of WJUSD. During the board meetings I've watched, I have witnessed them present problem after

problem, obstacle after obstacle, excuse after excuse for why we can't open. FOR MONTHS. When the board has asked them to see how other districts are doing it, the reply is "I'll look into it." – as recently as this last board meeting!! It's absolutely inexcusable. I expect our Administrators to present solutions, ideas, and examples of how it can be done, especially when many other districts have achieved it – even in the absolute toughest stages of this pandemic. They would be proactive and prepared. They would come to the board meetings advocating and arguing for how we can safely open schools for our students, while protecting our teachers. They would learn from those that are doing it with success. They would put our students FIRST.

So now I'm asking the board to do that. Put our students first. Task the WJUSD Executive Administration with opening the schools as soon as safely possible. There is no room for further delay. Our kids are paying a price with their mental and emotional health each day. I see that in my own three, elementary-aged kids who have a parent with them every day, a safe home, and enough food to eat. My heart breaks for the kids where that isn't the case. We owe them better.

From the national level of the CDC and Dr. Anthony Fauci, to the local level with Dr. Amy Sisson, there is tremendous support and urgency for getting schools open. We've been listening to them and following their recommendations all along, so why would we discount what they advise now?

So I'm writing to you to advocate opening the schools now. For my kids. For the kids where school was their safe space. For the kids who counted on schools for a meal. But it must be you, the Board of Trustees that turns it into action. Please do so now.

Respectfully,
Michelle Johnson

Trustees,

I have two children attending school in the district. It has been exactly 11 months since they were pulled out of school. This absolutely unacceptable.

You are greatly affecting an entire generation of future adults by not allowing them the benefits of in-person school.

My daughter has been devastated by this and we have spent many evenings comforting her tears.

We both work full time and have no child care for either one of our children- this is also affecting our livelihoods which in turn will affect our town's economy. There is a complete domino effect to what you have done to this community and it's a disgrace.

BRING CHILDREN BACK TO IN PERSON LEARNING AND DO IT NOW!

Regards,
Lindsay

WJUSD School Board Members and Superintendent Pritchard,

Good evening and thank you for hearing our comments. There are few things in this world (actually nothing) more important than fighting for our children's best interests...we say this as parents and also community members in support of all of WJUSD student's. We have a 8th grader at Douglass Middle School and a 6th grader at Sci-Tech Elementary. While they are extremely different students they have both suffered from the effects of social isolation and challenges of learning from a computer and not a teacher. As an educator and a parent it is extremely difficult to watch the inequity that continues to occur across our students. We believe there are very few children who have benefited from or not struggled in some way with distance learning. This is not what is best for our district's students. We have attended many school board meetings this past year addressing the re-opening plan and expressed many concerns, but it is with great hope tonight you as a school board hear what motivated you to sit on on this school board when you were elected which is putting students first and serving the best interest of the WJUSD students.

We have a grave concern for the loss our youth continue to endure because of schools being closed for in person learning. While it may not be true it has felt very much that our district prioritizes educators and school staff over our students. With recent changes these past couple weeks including CDC's urgent recommendation to return all students TK-6 to in person learning, reaching our 10 day period in purple tier required per CDC guidelines for further progression in re-opening schools within a district, and Yolo County now re-classifying all educators and staff to tier 1B status to have accessibility to the COVID vaccine we are looking to our school district to change the speed and trajectory of it's phase in model.

Last July when Superintendent Pritchard first presented the re-opening plan for WJUSD he was clear that there was no time period attached to phases that would be tied to a tier or positivity rates, the plan was fluid and phases did not have to move sequentially (meaning the district did not have to progress through EACH of the 5 phases), and the district would be able to regress through phases if necessary. When asked what would criteria be for progressing in phases Superintendent Pritchard stated it really could not be defined as it will depend on so many variables including positivity rates at individual campuses, available PPE, labor unions, etc. That was July of last year and here we are in February of 2021 not that much further along. WJUSD has just begun serving cohorts within Phase II when many surrounding districts in the greater Sacramento area have been open at a Hybrid model (our phase III) since November. It is difficult to understand how this can possibly be considered serving our student's best interests or putting students first. If it took this long to plan for Phase II what can we expect from the district in moving forward? The current rate of trajectory and approach within this plans needs to change and our school board has the power to request that of the school district.

The district did have the choice to move in to Phase II and begin opening cohorts prior to Thanksgiving when we were in the red tier which would have then enabled them to keep moving forward per CDE directive as once one cohort at one site is open progression can continue regardless of county positivity rates (it then becomes looking at positivity rates on that particular campus in determining if that campus remains open and can add additional cohorts). It would seem to us WJUSD needs to skip straight to Phase III and not allow the labor

union to extend this another 6-8 weeks due to vaccine accessibility across all teachers and staff. There are many essential workers who have continued to provide services to their patrons and people in need throughout this pandemic. It is beyond us as to why we must treat educators differently which has a direct negative effective on a huge population (our youth). Possibly our district needs to be looking to other districts as to how they made this happen and came to agreement with their labor unions before the vaccine was available to anyone. These districts are larger than ours so it isn't about numbers. Additionally, we are pretty sure teachers everywhere get into teaching for the same reason and have the same passion for their students so it seems if expected to return most teacher who want to be in the classroom teaching their students and putting their student's first is going to return with or without the vaccine.

We remember a school board that urged our district to be ready and make necessary plans for logistics and supplies to open for phase 3 as soon as we are able during fall board meetings. We remember a school board that discussed co horting students by block schedules, rotating courses by quarter, and subjects/departments at a secondary level when discussing re-opening last summer. We remember a school board that reminded our school district of the value in enrichment activities and courses as well as the rich history our city of Woodland has in areas such as music, theatre, and agriculture and the disservice we were doing to eliminate this from our youth's community and schools when discussing options for electives or small groups this fall. We remember a school board trustee that was adamant that all grade levels need to be viewed equally and he just couldn't understand how you could prioritize one grade over another. We as a community agree and cannot comprehend that either. All students at all ages have a high need to be back in school in person and not honoring that could not be more inequitable.

"CDC recommends that K-12 schools be the last settings to close after all other mitigation measures have been employed and the first to reopen when they can do so safely." CDC January 13, 2021.

During this new era in our life we have experienced many businesses and organizations close, open, and then close again but through all of this schools have remained closed in our district. We owe it to our youth to get schools open. Providing quality education to our community should not be dependent on educators receiving the vaccine.

Thank You,

Brian and Ann Christison

Hello WJUSD Board and Superintendent Pritchard,

My name is Trista Kennedy and I am a parent of 3 students in WJUSD (2nd, 4th, 11th). I am on the Gibson School Site Council, the Gibson safety/COVID committee and an active member of the PTA. I am in support of reopening our schools.

Our students need to be back in the classroom. They are struggling and need/ want in person learning. Many teachers do too. I understand that you are all in a difficult situation being the decision makers when there are many points of views and facts to consider. I appreciate that you all have and will continue to consider our children and your staff's safety, however, you have the ability to safely reopen now, almost a year since schools closed due to the pandemic. You have a solid phased plan for reopening- act on that plan. Set dates with the collective goal of moving forward to full reopening. At this point any action is better than no action at all. Our kids (primary and secondary) need to be back in the classroom. You can do this safely and with implemented precautions. I urge you to act and get our students back in the classroom safely. We have placed our trust in each of you as elected and appointed officials- we are counting on you. Be the voice for our students that you promised to be and let's all work together to actively implement the phased plan and reopen our schools.

Thank you,
Trista Kennedy

WJUSD School Board,

I am the parent of a 1st grader at SciTech Academy, and I am writing to **strongly** urge you to begin reopening elementary schools as soon as possible. I am very encouraged that Yolo County is treading in the right direction with COVID cases, and that we are very near the state's red tier. However, I am extremely discouraged that WJUSD does not seem to be recognizing this as an opportunity for opening schools. There has been a conspicuous lack of communication and a perceived lack of any action at all to get our schools ready for reopening.

The CDC and the Yolo County Health Officer have explicitly said that remote learning has led to instructional deficits and severe mental health consequences, and that ALL elementary children should have access in-person instruction, regardless of community transmission rates.

Remote learning is NOT an acceptable long-term solution for many children and families. Especially now that teachers are being offered the COVID vaccines, THIS is the time to push for opening schools ASAP.

Unfortunately, there are no "good" options in this situation, only options that are less bad than others. I strongly feel that continuing with remote learning for the rest of the school year is the WORST possible option for our children and for our schools. I suspect that many parents are already exploring options for their children outside of WJUSD, since nearly all other school systems in the region have already reopened or are opening soon.

Please make the bold decision to reopen schools as soon as possible. It will not be universally popular, but it is the best way forward, and it is strongly supported by the science.

Sincerely,
Dr. Blaine Christiansen

I sent an email in June expressing my concerns about my daughter's experience as a new kindergartener. I am sad to say that many of the concerns that fellow parents and I expressed at that time have come true. My daughter is not thriving in the online environment. She has a difficult time staying focused and engaged during her zoom meetings, and is often brought to tears by the end of the day. She and her classmates are not getting the one-on-one attention they need to be successful. An online learning environment is not meant for elementary aged children. The challenges she has faced are no fault of her teacher. She and her fellow teachers have worked long hours and it is clear to me that they made every effort to teach my child in this unfortunate situation. It breaks my heart to see my child struggling in this way, especially now that it has been made clear by the CDC and the Health Department that it is safe for our kids to return to school.

I have read that teachers can return before they are vaccinated, and have seen this in place at local private schools and in neighboring counties. Thousands have been teaching in person across the US and right here in California since August. The CDC Director stated last week it is not necessary for teachers to be vaccinated before they return, and that mitigation measures already in place work! The majority of school districts around the country and the world have figured out how to open safely. Why can't we? We have one of the smallest percentages of students attending in-person of any state in the US. This is a great disservice to our children and our community. Surely, we can find a balance between the teachers and families who are comfortable returning to an in person learning environment and those who are not.

We love our school, but feel that at some point we may have to make the decision to leave the district for the sake of our child. We want to stay, but you must give us some hope in the short term that in person learning will be available for our children in the coming weeks, not months.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

I would like to ask the following questions;

1. what the district has done with the \$18+ million that the WJUSD received from the COVID funds.
2. Has the district submitted a reopening plan and if not, why? I didn't see one on the state department of education site.
3. When will elementary kids return to school?

Sincerely,
Patti Larsen
Distance learning provider

Board Trustees,

I am writing to encourage you to make it your highest priority to get ALL kids in Woodland back to school immediately. I recognize that you are in a difficult position, with circumstances and factors that change regularly, but there is ample information, backed by science and even the extremely conservative County health officer suggesting that kids should be back in school right now. It seems that WJUSD administration is hesitant and has even become an unnecessary obstacle to allowing children to return to school. We have been out of school for 11 months, there has been more than enough time to have a plan to get everyone back in class, at LEAST part time.

My children are in high school. I have a freshman and a senior. My senior has already missed so many things that he has looked forward to for years, and he will never get this chance again. But there is no reason he couldn't have an opportunity be on campus, in person, for at least the last few months of the school year. My other child is a freshman who, at this point, feels that high school is a joke.

My boys are fortunate that they have supportive family, generally consistent access to internet, and resources to assist when they need help. Many, many others do not have this. And even with the support and resources, my kids are struggling. They are disconnected. They are lonely. Despite efforts by many good teachers, they are not learning. They don't understand (and nor do I) why other kids in neighboring districts, and even in Woodland, are able to attend in-person school, but WJUSD continues to believe they are "different" or "special" and chooses to allow no options to families. And worst of all, they have lost hope. It is absolutely the most heartbreaking thing to watch the decline in mental and emotional health of your children, to watch them be so miserable and to be unable to change or improve things for them. But you have the authority and ability to make some changes and improvements.

Much of the focus has been on the K-6 children getting back into school. And while I certainly agree that this should be done and is important for their learning and development, I urge you not to forget the older children. They are the most socially and emotionally impacted, and they have less time to make up for the lost learning and growth than others. Staying home, in isolation, parked in front of a computer screen for the whole day is damaging to them. If the District omits the middle and high school students from a plan to return very soon, it sends the message that they are somehow less important and it is unacceptable and devastating.

You are officials elected by the community. We expect you to do what is best for our children. If the parents of a child feel unsafe, they should have an option to continue distance learning but you should not take choices away from families. I feel it is unsafe for my children to continue under the current model....and I don't understand why I have no input or options about what is best for my own family. Other schools all over the state and the country have found successful and safe ways to return to school, many months ago and without a vaccine. There is no need to reinvent the wheel....there are plans that exist. You just need to

allow them to move forward. Please, please, show the kids and the community that you are prioritizing their education and mental well-being, and allow ALL kids to get back into the classroom immediately.

Thank you,
Kim McKinney
(916)320-6935

Trustees,

My name is Annie Preciado and I am a parent from Zamora Elementary. I am calling to request the safe re-opening of WJUSD schools for in person instruction immediately. The mental and physical health of our children depend on it. Our schools can't be closed forever. WJUSD found solutions to offer remote learning, so now is the time to find the solution to be back in person for all grades.

Here is a bit of my personal story and why it means so much to me. My son is a 3rd grader. In past years my son has been motivated, engaged and excited to be at school. It has become a daily struggle for him and he no longer thinks school is "fun." He is detached, he is missing being physically active and laughing on the playground, lunch with his friends and most importantly, he is not able to get the guidance from his teacher face-face. I can't speak highly enough of his teacher Mrs. Leary and all of his past teachers at Zamora. Mrs. Leary truly amazes me and I know she is doing everything in her power to do her best and keep the kids engaged. The fact of the matter is, remote learning has taken away many skills he has learned his past few years in school that I simply can't teach at home. "Zoom school" can't replace hands on learning with his classmates, immediate problem solving with his teacher when he has a question or interacting with students and educators that help ground his social skills. My son and all of his peers deserve a chance to be back in the classroom.

Many other counties/school districts in California and across the country have been open safely since August or shortly after. School is safe. The CDC continues to make this clear and we know from the many open schools in the US and here in California, when precautions are taken, school is not a driver of community virus spread. Just this week, Yolo County, as well as Dignity Health, have opened their vaccine clinics to educators in our county. Although this is a huge step forward, it doesn't mean we cannot open our schools safely before the educators in our district are fully vaccinated.

I would also like to add, what safety measures are in place for when we return to in person? What is the plan? Can this information be posted and submitted for all to see? These are important questions that we as parents and educators do not know. Again, many districts around us have opened successfully and this wheel does not need to be reinvented.

I know I can speak for many other parents and guardians out there, but we demand a re-open date for in person learning immediately. If a date for in person learning is not decided on at

Thursday's board meeting, I have zero faith that WJUSD will be in person any time soon and even in the fall of 2021. I will be one of the many that will take my child out of the district (including my incoming Kindergartener). The children, parents, educators and community deserve better. We all beg you to do everything in your power to get every child back to school now.

With respect,
Annie Preciado and Sergio Preciado

Dear WJUSD Board of Trustees,

My daughter is a 2nd grader at Beamer Park Elementary School. I won't go into the details of the negative impact that distance learning has had on my daughter's education because it has become very clear that quality of education and mental health of its students is not a top priority of the Board's mission and that catering to the Union is of the utmost importance.

Simply put - school is essential and teachers are essential workers. To say that schools will remain closed until the classrooms are safe for the teachers and staff to return is a slap in the face to all the frontline workers and other essential employees that have been going to work everyday since the pandemic started last Spring. The vaccine wasn't available a year ago to the frontline workers and other essential employees, and they still go to work every day. Essential businesses that have remained open since the pandemic didn't create a "hybrid" model of providing in-person service hours to General Public Group A and Group B, nor did they close mid-week for "additional disinfecting." (Do you see how ridiculous that sounds?)

The CDC said that teachers can come back to the classrooms without having been vaccinated. The County has given the green light to reopen. Private schools have reopened successfully and neighboring districts have reopened schools. Why won't WJUSD?

You have the power to do so much more for our kids. Enough with the politics and reopen our schools.

Sincerely,
Kiyomi Morales

Good Evening,

My name is Mohini Sharma and I am a sophomore at Pioneer High School. I am writing to you guys to tell you guys about my experience yesterday, 2/17 at PHS during the senior yard sign drive thru.

ASB organized a drive through for the seniors to pick up their yard signs. During this time, our whole class (more or less) got together around 8 am and finished everything up around 4pm. We were on campus for 8-9 hours. This experience left a number of things with us and our ASB

class and I just wanted to share some with you guys in hopes, these things are something you'd consider when making big decisions such as going back to in person schooling:

1. We are responsible. I know we are teenagers and that doesn't always seem to deem true; however, I believe that students who are committed to their learning and are eager to get back to school will follow the precautions. During yesterday's drive-in we had a lot of people but we were told no more than 6 people could be together at a time so whenever there were more than 6 in the classroom some of us would go stand outside in the freezing cold wind. I believe if we can stand hours on end in the cold, we will be able to follow the precautions.

2. Virtual Option: I believe if we provide the option to stay virtually if they please, it would not only decrease the number of people on campus significantly but it would also provide a peace of mind for students and parents who may still feel insecure about such things.

3. The exceptions. I know there will be students who choose to create problems and not follow the precautions, but again there is always a group of students who does that. Even before covid times, we had small rules, like no skateboards on campus, or like no hats in the classroom and there were still kids who chose to do it just because the rules said not to. The only solution to that will be consequences. For example students who chose to violate guidelines set by you guys and CDC should be forced to learn virtually.

4. Work Ethic: I speak for myself and many many peers as I've heard a lot of students talk about the same issue on repeat for the last year. We have spent all this time since elementary school slowly making our curriculum harder and harder by the year to slowly build up the work ethic to be able to take on AP classes in High School. Staying at home somehow has made us "lazy" as some adults call it but truthfully just unmotivated. We are passing with A's so it comes off as we are working hard but late work and procrastination is the new normal for us. Yes we are getting by now, but as a sophomore I know it is going to hurt us going into junior year with having to look forward to SATS/ACTS and AP exams. We are trying our best but schools are what kept us organized and motivated. We need that back as soon as possible.

5. Vaccines: Mrs. Marquez, our wonderful ASB teacher who organized our senior drive through, got her vaccine yesterday and she told us about how A LOT of teachers were there and ready to get vaccinated to be back in person. With the commitment a lot of our teachers are showing, I hope we can at least consider going back to in person.

Superintendent and Trustees, I hope you guys will think thoroughly of this and consider the experience I have tried to narrate for you guys. I strongly believe that we are a capable group of students, with vaccines out there and teachers getting vaccinated it only helps our case. I understand there is so much more to cover that our teenage brains cannot think that far out too which is why we students trust you guys to make the best decision possible but believe us when I say going back to school is very needed for all of us. Whether High School goes back or not, I know elementary school would be a lot easier to go back to before us. Even if it's them

before us, let's do our best to get onto it because truthfully us students are just desperate to see progress, not results.

Patriots are hopeful!

Thank you so much!

This email was written by a student of Woodland Joint Unified School District

Trustees,

I feel a profound sense of sadness for my child and the many others in our district.

My son, a third grader at Zamora had always loved school, but distance learning has turned him from an engaged, interested student into a listless and sad student. Academically he might be doing ok, but his mental health is struggling. Our home environment is a loving one and my husband and I are doing our absolute best to ensure his emotional/social needs are met - but this has been very hard. Classrooms are the best environment for learning. Imagine being just 9 years old and having a sick parent with cancer, terribly ill from treatments in the background while trying to focus on learning at home. Being able to attend school (even on a hybrid schedule) would give my child and many others much needed reprieve in an environment best suited for learning.

Educators are now eligible in Yolo County for vaccines. However, private schools - as well as public schools in other states and our neighboring countries have already reopened or have plans to open soon. It's time that our district follow their lead and adopt safety measures that have been successful in keeping teachers and students from contracting or transmitting COVID-19 and get our kids back into classrooms.

Please be a voice for our children and advocate for them.

Thank you

Melissa Velasco

WJUSD Board of Trustees,

It is imperative that Woodland HIGH schools are opened ASAP. My son is a sophomore at Woodland High School. Last year at this time he was enjoying his Freshman year of high school with new friends and new experiences. He waited all year for baseball season to finally start - he could not wait! It was something he'd been looking forward to for months. He was active, happy, social, and truly enjoying everything high school had to offer. Now he sits in his room all day looking at a computer screen. No baseball, no socializing, no "hands on" classroom experience (for example - Chemistry...he is currently taking Chemistry and I have no idea HOW a student can completely understand chemistry without lab time).

I have heard much talk about reopening the K-8 schools. WHY are high schools not made part of this discussion? I understand the importance of getting K-8 students back into the classroom BUT that importance also applies to high school age students. They are already way behind other high school age students nationwide due to the school closure, so continuing to keep them in distance learning exacerbates the problem. What happens when Woodland area high school students go onto college with other non-Woodland area students who returned to in-person learning months ago? They will be at a total disadvantage academically. My son works very hard to keep his grades up and his goal is receive an academic and athletic based scholarship to play college baseball. Now he is unable to play baseball at all, which also put him at a huge disadvantage compared to other high school students who ARE playing baseball right now. Ripping school and sports away from him has been very hard. He looks at old pictures of himself playing baseball and longs for those days to return. He talks nonstop about how much he enjoyed his classes and his friends at WHS. Every day I ask him how distance learning went and his response is always "awful" or "terrible" or "boring" or "stupid". That is how he's going to remember high school?!?!? He also talks about how "crazy" it is to him that he may not even go back until he's a junior and he'll only have 1 year of high school left. It's left him sad and unmotivated. I worry about him and the mental health of hundreds of other Woodland area high school students who are in the same position. I think it's time to think of the students and how school closures have affected them.

If 22,000 fans were allowed INTO the football stadium on Superbowl Sunday, then Woodland schools should reopen! If NBA players can play, bump into and sweat all over each other as they travel from city to city to play professional basketball, then Woodland schools should reopen. If Hollywood can continue filming movies, TV shows AND reality TV, then Woodland schools should reopen. If I can go into Target, or Raley's, or Costco WITH a mask on, then Woodland students can return to the classroom WITH a mask on as well. Teachers, especially high school level teachers, are quite able to wear a mask and keep him/herself socially distanced from students by staying in the front and/or back of a classroom while the students are seated. It's being done in Woodland (at Woodland Christian School), in counties surrounding Yolo, and it's being done in other states. The CDC has said multiple times that schools CAN reopen and SHOULD reopen (even without vaccinating teachers). Listen to the CDC...listen to the teachers who WANT to return to the classroom, listen to parents who want to see their children succeed, and finally listen to the students who so desperately want to return to school and a life of normalcy. Education is essential. Teachers are essential workers. Students deserve a quality education IN person.

It is time to open up Woodland schools - ALL of them for ALL students!

Kymerlee Stapleton

Hello Trustees,

The senior class of 2021 is running out of time. Bring the seniors back and work from there. Even on a modified schedule. They deserve better and to finish out their high school career in

person, like so many other high schools in CA and the country. The children of the City of Woodland deserve better. We as teachers are frontline workers and we need to be inside the classroom to be effective. Bottom line.

Thank you,
Kelly Timothy

We are now approaching the year mark since the closing of our schools. While much of the time was needed due to the recommendation of the CDC and other medical officials, we are now in a position where this is no longer the case.

In person learning is an essential need of our children. While much focus has been spent on K-6, this also includes 7-12th grade. Long term remote learning has led to learning loss, serious mental health issues, and other physical ailments such as weight gain which can no longer be accepted.

While only my immediate family is aware of the situation with my daughter, I thought I would share it with you. My daughter was in 8th grade when this began and was an honor roll student who excelled in several sports. By early fall she was failing all but 1 class and was in a deep depression. By November she had attempted suicide and has been in a treatment facility since that time. Not only has my daughter's mental health dramatically suffered, she will be required to repeat the 9th grade - which is also devastating for her mental health.

You might think the closing of schools only affects my daughter; however, the severity of her mental health has dramatic effects on the remainder of the family. I haven't slept more than 4 hours in a night since November and my work quality and productivity has dramatically suffered as I'm constantly living in fear that her desire to commit suicide will be successful. That is an emotionally and physically draining way to live.

The CDC continues to make it clear schools can open safely. Other districts and private schools in our area have opened safely. Teachers can now be vaccinated.

There are no more excuses! Get all grades back in school!

Sincerely,
Mindi B

Good evening Superintendent and Board Members,
Thank you for reading my email. Last week was my first time attending a board meeting, and it was very illuminating! I have 2 children that attend Sci Tech charter school in Knights Landing, one in 5th grade, and one in 2nd.
These past 11 months have been quite a challenge for us! My oldest became extremely depressed, and we had to put him in therapy to help with that. He also no longer enjoys school,

or reading. He went from testing at 3 grades above his level to well below grade level. My youngest has Down Syndrome, and remote learning has left him completely behind. As well as forcing me to become his behaviorist, his RSP, his speech therapist, and occupational therapist. He has regressed in many social and physical behaviors. And, because he doesn't go to a school with SDC, he wasn't able to return months ago, like many other kids in SDC. Thankfully, he has been able to start going 2 days/wk for a few hours. This is new, and has been immensely helpful, even if he still doesn't get to see any of his friends.

I have been keeping up with all of the updates from the CDC, as well as following the news regarding Covid. It seems universally agreed upon by anyone in "science" that a safe return to the classroom is not contingent upon every teacher being vaccinated. Private and parochial schools have been open the entire time, and have had few problems. Other schools in CA and across the country have been open since the fall, and have had few problems—and most of the problems occurred outside the classroom. Please put our children's well being at the forefront of your decision making! Don't waste another moment, and let the children return to the classroom for their final trimester of this school year!

Thank you for your time, and I hope you consider my (and many other parents) requests.

Melissa Armstrong

I write today to implore you to reopen the schools. During the beginning of the school year I felt strongly that we should support our teachers, I even supported their request to have the option to work from home. I now realize that many of these teachers have taken advantage of the goodwill and support that I and many other families have given them. I know that this is not true for all teachers but it must be the majority of them based off what I'm continue to read and hear. I am disappointed by their unwillingness to be reasonable, they seem to be putting up new hurdles to teach our children everyday. I see no reason for schools to not be fully open in 6 weeks from now due to vaccines now being available. If teachers are vaccinated there should be no need for hybrid schooling for any grade level, as they would be protected from the virus.

I think it is time for the board to demand the teachers return to school. I understand there may be consequences that have to be faced but honestly the children and their families having been facing consequences the teachers have created for some time now. It's time to take their power away and give it back to the people they serve. Our community pays for their jobs and I think it's time that they start providing us a better service.

A Concerned Parent

Dear WJUSD Board,

My name is Nicole Williams and my son attends Sci-Tech Elementary. I am writing to request the safe reopening of our schools for in-person instruction **as soon as possible**.

Remote learning is not a suitable long-term solution for young children. The CDC and our own Yolo County Health Officer have said in no uncertain terms that remote learning has led to instructional deficits and severe mental health consequences, and that ALL elementary children should have access in-person instruction, regardless of community transmission rates. The CDCs updated guidance issued on Feb. 12 is based on scientific evidence from schools and districts throughout the country. The CDC indicates when appropriate precautions are taken school virus rates are not reflective of – nor a driver of - community transmission.

WJUSD has had 11 months to plan for a safe and effective reopening. Parents have not been effectively informed on schools’ readiness and specific timelines for return. Districts all over Northern California are currently open. I am asking you to do the same things that other districts have already done to get our children back in school.

Unfortunately, coronavirus is not going to disappear. Waves of transmission will continue to ebb and flow. More viral variants will continue to emerge. Safe and effective vaccines will continue to be developed and rolled out as needed. We cannot wait for the ‘end’ of the virus before schools reopen. Furthermore, I believe it is unfair and irresponsible to our children and their educational needs to move the goalposts for reopening and continue to postpone safe reopening. We need proactive and transparent leadership to safely end this educational crisis for our children.

Respectfully,
Nicole Williams

Hello trusted School Board Members,
I am one of probably many parents who are writing you with their thoughts about reopening schools.

As a mother of a first grader at Zamora elementary school, I am asking you to allow elementary schools to reopen again for students can attend school in-person, at least part-time, for the remainder of this school year.

There are so many reasons why it would be beneficial to do so, and I'm sure you're familiar with the list.

The risks of staying completely remote are far greater than the risks of returning to school.

I am one of the lucky parents who has the means to send my son to YMCA to do remote school from there everyday, where he gets daily structure and socialization (and I can work!). However, I pay \$900/month for him to do this, which is cost prohibitive to many parents who are making hard choices about how to manage their work needs and child school/education needs. I am lucky that my child is not experiencing the disdain and depression that many kids are feeling because they are home alone or only with siblings and isolated.

Further, since the YMCA opened in March 2020 we have had ZERO reported cases of COVID among students/staff!!! It is possible for adults and children to co-mingle and stay safe. The YMCA utilizes distancing, hand washing, masking and other precautions to keep everyone safe and IT'S WORKING!!!

PLEASE DO NOT FURTHER DELAY OPENING THE SCHOOLS.

Countries like Taiwan, Germany, Denmark, France, Sweden, Vietnam, Iceland, Uruguay, Japan, and New Zealand are among the counties who have reopened schools. Please let's keep up with the developed/developing world and do what is right for our children.

Thank you for considering the voice of the parents and families on this critical matter,
Sincerely,
Rebecca Tryon, MS, CNC, RYT

I also completed a recording. Please use the recording if I did it right.
Kristina Vannucci

I stood before you almost a year ago asking you to keep the schools open, to allow our students to participate in the activities that are so important to them. Tonight I am's here admitting that I was wrong and that you decision to limit student activities and then ultimately to close schools was the right one. I'm also here asking you to stand by the decision you made a year ago. The discussions you had that night we're not just about the safety of our students but many of you expressed concern about the safety of our community as a whole. That is a responsibility I believe you still have. Trustee Zavala, you spoke about the fear of your children bringing the virus home to your grandparents. Many others on the board that night echoed your sentiments. And that is a fear I have come to fully understand over the last year.

This is not just about educating our students, this discussion is also about keeping our students and their families safe. It is about making sure but those communities that are hardest hit already by the virus or not put add an additional disadvantage. In a recent story on NPR researchers talked about how people within the black and brown communities are more likely to live in multi generational homes. They also are more likely to have jobs that do not allow for sick time. Their research found that this meant they were less likely to seek out testing when they were feeling ill, because they could not afford to take the time off of work. So what will happen to those families when their children have been exposed to 30 or 180 other students within a day. What will happen to your teachers families when your teachers are exposed to 30 to 180 students a day or every 2 days.

Even with screening there are no guarantees. We know that there are people with this virus that are asymptomatic so doing health checks at the door or before they come on campus will not catch those students. And then there's the dirty little secret that parents do in fact send

their kids to school sick. I have known parents who have given their children Tylenol when they've woken up with a fever so that by the time they got to school they were no longer symptomatic. This will continue. This will put other students at risk this will put your employees at risk and this will put everyone's family at risk.

As a parent with four kids in the district I want them to return to school. I want my senior to be able to experience his senior year and whatever capacity he wants to. I want other seniors to be able to have prom and the grand march and graduation, but I also know our families house and the communities health is not less important than those wants. I want my eighth grader to be able to go back and play sports, to be able to interact with her friends at this time when social development is so important. I want her to be able to experience promotion and the feeling of accomplishing a mile stone. But again that want is not greater than our community safety. I want my fourth grader and my first grader to be able to see their friends in a setting other than a zoom room. For them to be able to interact with their teacher and a more authentic setting. For them to be able to laugh and play on the playground with other children. But when I think long and hard about it again those ones are not more important than the health and safety of our community as a whole.

We need to think long and hard about how masks and social distancing will be enforced. Prepandemic, schools already struggle with lowering suspension rates. Is that what we will resort to when children do not follow the safety protocols? People say look to the private schools they have it figured out, they also have the luxury of being able to kick the children out who do not follow the rules. They have the luxury of having parents who are able to stagger pick up times, are able to take time off of work to pick up their children at a set time, who are even able to pick up their children. How many of our students at our schools have that luxury. How many of our students ride the bus or walk. How do we keep them safe and enforce safety protocols.

There are some parents listening tonight who will say that us not going back is because of the teachers, because they want to be able to phone it in. As the wife of an educator and someone who has lots of friends that are teachers, I have never seen them work so hard to teach. I have watched as they have helped one another navigate canvas for hours on end over the weekend. I have watched as they have created countless assignments to provide differentiation to their students so that they can be better engaged at the level they are at. None of them are phoning it in. And despite the background that they have posted in their zoom room none of them are broadcasting from the beach.

Many of them are parents of students who go to our schools. They are helping their own children navigate zoom, serve as tech-support for everyone in their house, not to mention serving as referee, short order cook, tutoring support all While also being a teacher. Many of them want nothing more than to be able to be safely face to face in a classroom interacting with their students, helping their students succeed. The key is they want to do so when it is

safe. Safe for their students, safe them, safe for their families, and safe for the community.

Give your staffs the time to get vaccinated and they will return to the classroom, they have said that. Please, stand I decision you made a year ago when you said the safety of our students and our staff and our community is of the utmost importance. Thank you

Hello,

I'll start with our facts. I have four kids. All four now have anxiety. They are being treated by mental health counselors. They were on a two-month waiting list... each. Three with IEPs. Two with social emotional IEPs.... unable to be practiced and addressed online. One with speech IEP... doing the best they can but the teacher can't see what is happening with her mouth, can't hear her offer to see if the word is being said correctly.

This district has been nothing but heartbreak for us as a family. From my losing my job last year from Woodland High School because I stood up for students who were underserved, to now where my kids are being underserved.

Sure, they are learning, there is progress, but they are not learning the lessons between the lines of the curriculum. Trained as a teacher, there is so much more going on in a classroom than cannot be done on Zoom. Sure, kids are resilient, but should we try their breaking point? People need people, a free, public education has been taken away for all of the reasons we chose that route. Hands on learning, recess, and diversity are the primary things that we love about our schools.

I am tired. Tired of the "us" vs. "them" climate in our country. Now it is happening in our schools. We are showing the students that if you throw a big enough fit as a person with privilege and power, you will get your way to the detriment of everyone else. We are not showing that their voice matters, the kids are not even being consulted, just decisions about their lives being made for them.

Hybrid... back in... how do we move forward?

Please, let the kids off timeout and out of their rooms.

Sincerely,
Amanda Sager

Hello Members of the School Board,

I'm a parent of 3 kids at Plainfield Elementary School. I would like to thank my children's teachers for their hard work. Distance learning is not ideal but these teachers are making the best of a horrible situation. With the administration of vaccines ongoing in our community, I

absolutely support keeping our kids in distance learning until all school staff can be fully vaccinated for Covid 19. When schools are able to be opened safely, I hope WJUSD will follow Covid prevention measures above and beyond what is required by the state and provide high quality distance learning for those who do not feel comfortable sending their kids back to in person classes.

Thank you for your time.

Brooke Lopez
