

Monica Roque

From: elise [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 8:53 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: public comment 1/21/21

Categories: Green category

Dear Board of Education and Community,

I am frustrated that the reopen community is claiming that Science is on their side, and the people who hesitate during a surge with new strains that are more infectious are illogical. Even the articles on the reopen website in fact claim that reopening makes sense with a whole slew of requirements and only for younger students, not those in middle and high school, and do not support what they are asking for.

I truly appreciate that you considered actual studies on Covid19 in making your parameters for reopening. I am also frustrated that this community is urgently concerned about the inequities in education, but don't seem to care about these inequities in normal times. As a teacher, I can tell you that my heart is broken every single day by the inequities in our town, state, and country. I see these up close in my classroom, and hope that all of the people who are writing impassioned letters about this will continue to work for equity when it no longer affects them personally.

Thank you for potentially erring on the side of caution, and for actually basing decisions on science, despite people claiming you are not. This situation is very hard, but would be much harder if our community members begin to die or suffer from long term covid19, and our children feel they are to blame.

Sincerely,
Elise Brewin, teacher and parent

--
Elise

Sent from your iFriend

"Ring the bells that still can ring
forget your perfect offering
there is a crack in everything
that's how the light gets in."
Leonard Cohen

Use this free program to make your computer more friendly to your health:
<http://www.stereopsis.com/flux/>

Monica Roque

From: Ada Barros [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 8:20 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Green category

Thank you to the Board all your work. I urge you to follow the science as you navigate these tough decisions. As a parent of a child who receives additional services, you would think I would support the return to school. However, I feel strongly about the hybrid model and believe it would further reinforce the disparity among students, forcing parents to choose between risking illness for their children (and households) and teachers or keeping them at home. Furthermore, a physical return to school could be potentially more disruptive if COVID cases are found in certain classrooms, this would force entire classes to quarantine for 10 days.

Additionally, using vaccines as one of the conditions to return to school leaves out a large population of potential virus transmitters - the students.

As a member of the public health community, I urge you to wait for more guidance from both the Federal level and State level before making additional decisions on returning to school.

Thank you for your time.

Ada Barros

Monica Roque

From: Rihaf Elfarra [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 7:58 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Green category

Dear members of the board,

- Please think of the kids and teachers who already have established the routine and know how to deal with canvas and zoom, what is a benefit of disrupting this routine?
- Kids who have hard time distance learning can join small cohorts. It is unfair to disrupt the routine for the kids who are doing well at DL and make them suffer.
- We don't want to have to change teachers at the end of the year. We love our teachers and we trust them. We DO NOT want to be assigned to different teachers.
- Having the teachers vaccinated is crucial but is not enough to keep the community safe.

Rihaf Alfarra

Monica Roque

From: Crista Cannariato [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 7:58 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment: Elementary Hybrid Model Proposal

Categories: Green category

Dear DJUSD Board of Education members,

I have reviewed the DRAFT 6 Elementary AM/PM Hybrid Model plan that will be discussed at tonight's meeting and, while I commend you for the enormous task to trying to create a new model for schooling and support students, educators, and their families in the process, I am disappointed about what appears to be the lack of planning and concern regarding students who, for various reasons, may need to continue distance learning. Removing those children from the teacher and students who they have spent the past 6 months with would cause them additional emotional stress and academic hardship on top of the traumatic year all students have had to face so far.

I recognize that some families may need their students to return to in-person schooling, but the safest way by far for our students to finish out the year and to curtail the spread of the virus is by staying at home. **Students who opt for this option should not be punished by being removed from their classes and the teachers and classmates that they have spent 6 months building a rapport with.**

Rushing to reopen when we are in the red tier, which means that the caseload is significantly higher than what we were experiencing when the schools closed back in March, is, in my opinion, a reaction to pressure from parents who are pushing a return to school. We have seen schools throughout the state reopen and have to close again, which adds more trauma and stress to our students and teachers. There is no significant data to show that reopening is safe, especially when community members continue to ignore the public health guidance and gather in groups.

Assigning children who opt to continue distance learning to a new teacher and to a program outside of the mainstream classes in this new model is preferring the needs of one group over another. This plan seeks to support the social emotional and academic needs of one particular subset of the community, but at the expense of another. Public education is supposed to be concerned with equity for all students.

Thank you for your consideration.

Crista Cannariato

Monica Roque

From: Comment [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 7:39 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment Item VII(a)

Categories: Green category

Dear Trustees,

I read with disappointment that the Board voted not to open schools for in-person education until the County has been in the red tier for at least two weeks for both elementary and secondary schools. This equates to a case rate below 7 cases per 100,000. However, the State has determined that it is safe for elementary school children to return when the case rate is below 25 cases per 100,000, over three times as high as DJUSD's threshold. As both the California Department of Public Health and Dr. Sisson advise, it is particularly important that K-2 students return as soon as possible, as the harmful impact of school closures are particularly acute for younger students, who are also less likely to be infected or pass on infections.

Distance learning does not provide adequate educational opportunities for younger students. Private school students in town have in-person education (full days, no less), and they are able to make it work safely. I strongly encourage you to follow the guidance of both the California Department of Public Health and our local Health Officer that younger elementary school students return to school when the case rate has fallen below 25, and then allow older children to return as the cases continue to decline.

Thank you for considering my comment.

Monica Roque

From: Cecilia Greenwald [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 7:01 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Green category

Dear Davis School Board Members:

I write this public comment to you this evening and ask that you please pause and think of the safety of our teachers, staff and students before opening up our schools.

It is no secret that vaccines are still being rolled out. Since teachers and aides are frontline workers we must ask ourselves; for what reason would we risk putting our teachers, school employees and children at risk if safety is truly our top priority?

As a parent of three children who desperately want to see their friends and teachers and get back to their sports and extra curricular activities I understand parents who want to get back to "some sense of normalcy."

However, there is so much at risk: the lives of our children, teachers and staff as well as the community. I lost a brother to COVID-19 and have two nephews and another brother who caught it and recovered from it. COVID is not like recovering from a cold. We must take it very seriously, be patient, and do all we can to protect our community.

If we return in the fall chances are that a majority of our community will be vaccinated.

I understand these times are challenging and you have pressure from certain groups to return to school; however, as the governing body over the schools our children attend it is imperative to put safety and lives first.

Respectfully,
Cecilia Escamilla-Greenwald

Monica Roque

From: John Whitehead [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 6:08 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Green category

Hi,

My name is John Whitehead, a recent former DJUSD parent. Thanks to my son's excellent education at DHS, including Steve Harvey's robotics program and several advance placement classes, he finished his B.S. degree in electrical engineering in less than four years at UCLA, in March 2020. He was lucky to avoid remote learning last spring, but you can laugh with me that starting in the fall he had to do both remote learning and remote teaching in graduate school.

My comment this evening is that I noticed the mention of Medify MA-40 Air Purifiers on the agenda. I just wanted to say I hope that the school system is teaching students and families that we would all have cleaner indoor air and cleaner neighborhood air if people did less burning in fireplaces and wood stoves. This information is especially important for health right now, because lung damage from smoke particles makes people more susceptible to catching Covid-19.

Thank you, and best wishes to all regarding the difficult planning and decision-making for returning students to classrooms.

Monica Roque

From: Robert V.O. [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 5:59 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT

Categories: Green category

Dear DJUSD School Board,

I am a parent of two daughters, in fourth and fifth grade in Davis. I teach and conduct research to earn my pay, and I am struggling to do the job of two full time teachers to teach my kids plus my own job. My younger child is increasingly growing resistant to learning at home. Everyday is a struggle because of school closure.

As our top medical experts, the CDC, the European version of the CDC, the World Health Organization all recommend getting kids back in school as soon as possible, it is clear the board is not fulfilling its mission. You are not prioritizing children's education. It is clear at least 4 of 5 members do not want to listen to our experts. I wonder how on earth such educated people 1.) stopped listening to our experts, and 2.) that children's education is no longer a top priority to the DJUSD school board, and 3.) show a general rejection to science.

The public is going to have to find another way to do what's right for our kids and reopen schools as experts recommend - whether through switching to private school or using legal avenues to require we reopen.

Best,

Robert Van Ostrand

--

Robert Van Ostrand
Ph.D. Candidate, David Laboratory, UC Davis
Designated Emphasis in Biotechnology Intern; Pheronym, Inc.
Commander, VFW Post 6949 Davis

Monica Roque

From: Tristan Leong [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 5:23 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment 1/21/2021

Categories: Green category

Dear Davis Joint Unified School Board:

I'm asking you to set aside your implicit biases and your privilege tonight so that you can objectively understand the ramifications of the motion you approved two days ago. As approved, the motion eliminates any possibility of a return to campus for the remainder of this school year. This is because DJUSD will not be able to meet the criteria you established: full teacher vaccination; return to the red tier plus two weeks; school testing; and development of a hybrid model with associated curriculum before the end of the current school year (and possibly not for next year either). The teacher vaccination requirements you established to initiate hybrid model instruction are not measurable or enforceable: how can the District track when a teacher has been given "the opportunity" to receive two doses of a vaccine? In addition, the testing component is too vague and does not specify a measurable standard.

Either Tuesday's motion was presented from an outside party and not reviewed and vetted before being presented at a public meeting, or you simply overlooked significant and glaring flaws in your own document. For example, the language in the motion requires that the vaccines be "FDA approved." There is no existing FDA approved vaccine: the two currently available have been distributed under an emergency use authorization which is not the equivalent of FDA approval. Your criteria for re-opening Davis schools is legally indefensible and will stymie opportunities to leverage critical funding through the State. In addition, they will likely be at odds with soon-to-be-released directives from the federal government.

The Board, at a minimum, must bring the language of this motion back to the table and fix these fundamental flaws that are embarrassing to see in a public document. Instead of working on the minutiae of an overly-complicated hybrid model that no interest group wants, you need to fix the underpinnings of the framework that you are setting forth.

Further, if the Board revises this motion and keeps the teacher vaccination requirement and the "red tier" requirement to bring children back into the classroom, then there is no longer any objective, rational reason to have a hybrid model. As the teachers would now be vaccinated, the air filtration systems would be fixed and upgraded, everyone would be wearing a mask, and all individuals would be getting frequent testing to screen asymptomatic individuals, then all theoretical chains of transmission within a school setting are feasibly broken. In light of Tuesday's language, the Board must now clearly explain the rationale for continuing to advance a hybrid model with a distanced learning component. We urge the Board to immediately revise Tuesday's motion to fix its flawed criteria and to direct your staff to replace the hybrid approach under consideration with fully reopening schools when the revised motion criteria have been met.

Tristan Leong and Alexandra Borack-Leong

Monica Roque

From: Jeremy Taylor [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 4:54 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment: Steps to Return to Campus Update

Categories: Green category

Hi BOE,

I'm encouraged to see you're working to get back into school ASAP.

Please excuse me if I've missed something, but I don't see anywhere the option for students to simply stay home. While I'd like to see every student in class tomorrow, I know there are many families who do not feel comfortable with their students going back in yet.

Is there a reason an option for all remote cannot be offered?

Respectfully sent,
Jeremy Taylor
Mace Ranch
Future DJUSD Parent

Monica Roque

From: Robert Oldham [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 4:32 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Green category

Members of the Board,

With nearly 6 months left in the school year, there are many reasons to be optimistic that a full return to campus will be possible and successful. Why hasn't there been a more optimistic tone and more of a "can-do attitude" during meetings given the body of information we have now?

We have vaccines, diminishing transmission rates, rapid testing capability, and data from safely opened schools. As of yesterday, positivity and case rates in California have dropped and this is expected to continue with additional immunity and improved weather. (see link 1) With that in mind, let's have a growth mindset and have a plan for a best-case scenario.

Open schools around the world, in the U.S., and locally provide more reasons to be optimistic. Neighboring school districts such as Roseville, Rocklin, Folsom Cordova, Eureka, Napa, Marin among others successfully opened in the Fall. Both within the county and in Davis, private schools are thriving with basic practices such as masking, distancing, and ventilation. District buildings, without significant modifications, are currently being utilized by Davis Kids Klub and Catalyst Kids to administer distance learning.

I'll repeat that: district buildings without modifications are being safely used by lower wage, minimally trained staff and children of parents that are able to pay even though school is somehow deemed unsafe. This situation is the definition of inequity and privilege.

No, a return to campus won't be easy or normal but fear isn't a sufficient reason to keep schools closed or an acceptable message to send to children and families. Action is the antidote to fear and with rapidly improving conditions it is time to take action. Given the quality of teachers, quantity of resources, and Davis' low transmission rates, the goal of the District should be to fully open schools as opposed to putting up arbitrary barriers to keep them closed.

This would involve opting in to the State's Safe Schools for all program. In the next few weeks, Yolo county will fall below the 25 cases per 100k metric set by the program. Opting in would permit elementary schools to open and secure more than \$3.8 million in additional funding for the district. (see link 2) We know younger children are at lower risk and benefit the least from distance learning, a fact noticeably missing from reopening plans and recent meetings. Safe, open elementary schools will pave the way for our older students, who also need to return this academic year.

Bob Oldham (parent of two DJUSD students)

- (1) <https://covidtracking.com/data/state/california>
- (2) <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Safe-Schools-for-All-Plan-Summary.aspx>

Monica Roque

From: Heather Jones [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 4:27 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Green category

Dear Board,

We request that you open DJUSD schools once Yolo County has been in the Red Tier for 2 weeks as proposed by Betsy Hyder on Tuesday night. Here are real stories of our DJUSD children and how they are handling Distance Learning:

-Child 1 just put a hamper over their head because they cannot deal with the emotional stress of being on another Zoom call

-Child 2 is crying because they have a fear of being on camera

-Child 3 is holding it together just long enough to get through their Zoom calls but becomes an emotional mess once the calls are over

-Child 4 is begging their parent to go back to school where learning was fun

-Child 5 went from a Straight A student to being depressed much of the time and has fallen behind on her homework.

-Child 6 went to her mother with tears in her eyes last week asking for a math tutor. She attends the extra office hours but still doesn't understand. She asks to be back at school where she can ask more questions and see the board better.

-Child 7 has dyslexia and has absolutely no services. He was reading at grade level prior to the pandemic but in just 7 months he is now reading up to 2 grades behind level. This will impact his preparation for middle school.

-Child 8 is 13 years old and has gained 60 pounds since the pandemic. A real PE class 5 days a week would of kept that off of her.

-Child 9 is 16 years old. She breaks down and gets angry so easily now. Prior to school closing, she had all A's, loved school and her friends.

Our children need to be back in school as soon as possible. Their futures depend on it.

Thank you

Monica Roque

From: Molly Eleen [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 4:27 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: For Public Comment TODAY- Thursday January 21, 2021 Meeting

Categories: Green category

* PLEASE read my comment out loud*

To all those concerned-

Why? Why on earth does Davis make everything so difficult? Why? This hybrid learning calendar that is going around with half days and modules - it's absolutely crazy. How? How on earth is any working parent supposed to deal with this? We are already struggling. Everyone is struggling. Teachers my heart breaks even more for you.

Why Davis- Why can't the hybrid model follow what every school district is doing or proposing? Why can't it be half the class goes to school learning Monday and Thursday, the other half on Tuesday and Friday and Wednesday is zooming for all. On the days kids are home distance learning they have work to complete. Why isn't this an option? This works for so many schools. This is better for working parents, it gives us a small chance of actually getting some form of normal.

Now the reality is we are suffering with distance learning. We battle, we are stressed out, we cry- weekly, over school. This isn't a way to learn. We all know this though. We are all suffering to a point. Today I overheard my second grader and her class talking with the school counselor... I sat on the floor and cried. The kids are scared. The kids are scared their friends won't remember them. They are scared their families are going to die. They are scared covid-19 will never go away. These are the words I heard the seven year olds say. My heart aches.

Why- why would we make the children go back when it isn't safe yet? Do we really want to add more anxiety to their lives? School should not be open in any form until every teacher and staff is vaccinated. I want nothing more than to get back to some form of normalcy, my children need it. But if it isn't safe then it should not even be addressed.

I hope the district rethinks this impossible hybrid model and timing for return. Don't make it hard. Don't overthink it. Don't have committee after committee think about this. Make it simple for the fall, when, hopefully, all teachers and staff will have been vaccinated.


[REDACTED]

Monica Roque

From: Renee Neal
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 4:21 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education; John Bowes
Cc: Laura Juanitas
Subject: Public Comment Letter Regarding Hybrid

Categories: Green category

Thank you for reading my letter. I appreciate your time again.

Renee Neal


Dr. John Bowes and DJUSD Board Members
DJUSD
526 B Street
Davis, CA 95616

Dear Dr. Bowes and DJUSD Board Members,

Thank you for all of the time and energy you continue to put into this discussion, and for listening to the educators. I understand how difficult these decisions are and I do not envy your position. There are a few reasons that reopening, including with a hybrid model, would pose serious health risks that outweigh the benefits.

The health risks to the children, in a hybrid system, are two-fold. First, children develop a dangerous complication from COVID called multisystem inflammatory syndrome. Children also show high viral loads, while remaining asymptomatic. Screening for COVID symptoms would not necessarily mean that kids did not possess the infection, therefore being able to spread the infection. Secondly, children infected at school could bring COVID home to their parents who may have significant health challenges themselves or are taking care of older relatives at a higher risk. If something happened to a parent or older relative, the horror of losing a family member is less than the life altering guilt of a child feeling he or she brought the disease home.

The benefit of hybrid education, on the other hand, is misunderstood. These stated benefits include the social interaction of children, the educational impact, less screen time and for some students, a safer environment during the day. The first benefit, social interaction, fails to address students' limited social interaction. Students must stay 6 feet away from each other in the classroom (something not feasible in our current classrooms), masked, without having any recess time. These requirements negate all social interaction benefits. In contrast, kids engaged in distance learning can see other's faces (including their teacher). Online children often laugh together, act in silly ways, and make funny faces (not only in the younger grades!). A masked, distanced, fearful environment is not advantageous. Secondly, students currently receive more instructional time in distance learning than they would in the classroom. My fifth-grade team, my sixth-grade daughter and my second-grade daughter are all in class, synchronously, between the hours of 8:30 and 12:00, most days. In addition, teachers offer afternoon assistance from 30 minutes to an hour or more during office hours or other forms of instruction. This is significantly more time than the kids would receive in the hybrid model of 3 hours. I acknowledge that students would have less screen time if on campus, but this is secondary to the other concerns. Finally, students who are unsafe or unsuccessful at home have the option of joining the cohorts (for parents who feel comfortable with in person learning). Despite the school offering this service, to the neediest of students, most of the families declined the offer, due to health risks.

We teachers are doing well- we have risen to this challenge and, while exhausted, are meeting the needs of our students better than if we were in a hybrid situation. Please let us stay safely online until our entire community of learners and educators receive the vaccine.

Renee Neal
5th Grade
North Davis Elementary

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Monica Roque

From: Rachel Kitazono [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 4:06 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Green category

Dear Board Members,

I'm writing again in the hopes that you will take into consideration the seriousness of extended school closures. You cannot deny the inequity this imposes on our community. Those with means go elsewhere and generally do better than those without means. Research shows the long term consequences of school closure is vast, including lower lifespans, economic status and physical and mental wellbeing, and real consequences are being experienced now. Some of our most needy and vulnerable students are still not receiving any in-person services. Yes, you have provided some assistance to the few, but you need to do more.

There has been mention of favoring the status quo because it allows for maintaining current schedules and routine. This argument holds no merit for keeping schools closed. Families have had endless upheaval to manage this new "norm" of learning by a screen. The schedules of distance learning have not been easy to accommodate for parents from the start, yet we had no other choice. Keeping students out of school because it's a scheduling inconvenience is unconscionable and harmful. To say students cannot change teachers is also a lousy excuse to keep schools shuttered. The disruption students have had to their lives is immeasurable and to attend school with an in-person teacher would be a blessing and a positive light for them. Many are already changing out already, or jumping to private schools anyway.

There is mention of simply adding some school sanctioned extracurricular activities, but this does not address the tremendous **academic** issues and struggles our children face, which should be of paramount importance. In-person interaction of any kind would be helpful, but does not come close to substituting for in-person school which can often better assist with children's social, emotional and behavioral needs. As the superintendent, Alberto Carvalho, of the Miami-Dade school district noted, "schools are indispensable safe harbors for children - academically, physically and emotionally,...especially in the middle of a pandemic." Recognizing how important this is, this school district of more than 350,000 students has kept their schools open.

In-person school can be done safely. Our own county public health officer, Dr. Sisson, noted this at the last board meeting while also saying that "education is fundamental," indicating there's no reason to not open school once in red tier. However, now the discussion has shifted to vaccinations. This is great endeavor and I support any and all efforts to continue to vaccinate teachers and staff; however, you must continue to rely on public health experts about when schools should start opening or already be open. It is a great public health risk to continue to keep schools closed, which is why top leaders and officials are urging safe reopenings, including President Biden (first 100 days of office), Dr. Fauci, the CDC, and many governors. The science is clear.

School is essential and to deny this to children and keep schools closed when health experts say it is safe is a dereliction of duty directly causing damages.

I would hope that the mission is to maintain a strong public school system, but what will be left of it at the end of this if we continue to wait? We cannot afford to wait until everyone "feels comfortable," and the goal posts for return seem to keep moving. Not all kids can afford to "limp along" for a few more months..till the

Fall? Please be brave enough to do the right thing to go with science-based decisions, not fears and opinions. That is what real leadership is, and we need your action and leadership now more than ever.

Sincerely,
Rachel Kitazono

Sent from my iPad

Monica Roque

From: Sally Palow
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 4:03 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Hybri- Please read a public comments

Categories: Green category

Dear DJUSD Board of Trustees:

As you consider Hybrid models this evening, I respectfully ask you to consider that student-teacher familiarity plays a huge role in educating our children. As an elementary teacher in this district, I personally am most concerned about the proposal to assign elementary students to another cohort/teacher. The foundation of any classroom is always relationships.

This pandemic has rewritten the syllabus for the 2020-2021 school year. Life has hit my 4th, 5th and 6th grade Montessori students from all directions: health, relationships, school obligations, family issues and even the death of a loved one. These are external stressful situations that they and I have no control over. However, my consistency, structure, problem solving, and care are a calming and safe haven, during these times of stress. Children, especially younger ones or anxious kids benefit from knowing what's going to happen and, when and that their teacher is always there for them.

My modeling of a healthy internal response to what life deals us is one of the best ways I know how to build resilience, which is one of DJUSD's Graduate Profile goals. The upfront investment into relationships is helping each of the 50 kiddos I work with daily feel safe, heard, loved and understood. Every situation is unique and establishes relationships, helps children take risks, make mistakes and feel safe. The development of inner strength does not happen overnight. I urge you to consider that aspect of the proposed elementary cohorts/DL Academy and how the possibility at this late stage in the school year would dramatically affect our youngest learners.

I want to thank my DJUSD colleagues who diligently worked on trying to come up with realistic proposals for your consideration. I thank you too. This is not an easy path. However, I and many elementary teachers sincerely feel, starting elementary students in a new cohort or DL Academy with a new teacher would emotionally harm our elementary students.

Regards,
Sally Palow
Birch Lane Montessori

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Monica Roque

From: Karen Luke
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 4:02 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Letter regarding opening hybrid....Public Comment

Categories: Green category

Dear Board Members,

I request that we wait a little longer to reopen schools when our community is fully vaccinated, ensuring my safety, and that we do not attempt the hybrid model. The benefits of the hybrid model do not outweigh the adverse effects detailed below.

One of the perceived benefits of the hybrid model is the efficacy of teaching. Currently, teaching is more effective under distance learning. First, returning would be disruptive on multiple levels. We invested a lot of time and effort into Canvas and Distance teaching. We spent months creating an academic culture of inclusiveness in our virtual classrooms. If we return, the students and teachers will be shuffled. These new classrooms will feel like the beginning of the school year...again, but this time in April. What are the social-emotional benefits of a classroom where everyone is masked, students cannot have recess, move around the room or even go to the bathroom on demand? What are the academic benefits when students cannot participate in small group learning, teachers cannot walk over to a desk to watch students, and students are in "class" fewer hours each day? In my virtual classroom, I currently have more direct instructional time than if we go hybrid. Online, my class meets and works from 8:30 – noon, then 12:30 – 1:15. Students also have small groups and office hours. If you change the schedule for hybrid, students will be getting less direct instructional time resulting in more independent time. Also resource time, currently scheduled after my AM direct instruction, will interfere with the instructional time, handicapping those students who need the teacher the most.

Another perceived benefit is kids being outside of the home. I don't feel I can safely teach in my current physical environment for a few reasons. First, my physical classroom is an old "temporary" building with poor ventilation; I have mold and mildew in my room. Secondly, all safety precautions state that people who are indoors need to stay 6 feet apart. Even only teaching half of my class, my room cannot accommodate 12 – 15 students six feet apart.

I understand group of parents who want the schools to reopen, are pushing hard, but is it safe? Will the majority of the students even come back with the vaccine so close and counties moving from red to purple tier? Do parents really understand that school will not be what it was like in March, before the lock down? I don't think they do.

I appreciate that the district is taking a slow approach to reopening while other districts have opened only to close again. Let's take a page from some of the colleges and just make this whole year distance learning/teaching. We are so close to getting the vaccine, we have systems and relationships established. Let's finish out this school year keeping kids, ourselves and our families safe and healthy.

Karen Luke
5th Grade
North Davis Elementary

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Monica Roque

From: Patti Sousa [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 3:51 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education; Superintendent
Subject: Comments for DJUSD Board Meeting 1/21/2021

Categories: Green category

Members of the Board,

We feel compelled to write this letter because we are confused, anxious and frustrated by your decisions regarding the re-opening of Davis schools. We have a unique perspective regarding this issue because we have an 8th grader at Harper Junior High and a 4th grader at St. James School. My 4th grader has been back on campus since October. We were concerned and nervous when the school announced they were re-opening but after reviewing their approved Return to Campus protocols, we decided to have him return to campus. The school continues to tweak the rules based on community spread. They send surveys after each holiday and provide distance learning for anyone who traveled or needs to quarantine. Drop off and pick up are staggered by grade and parents do not leave their car. And when a case of COVID was discovered, they followed their protocols and no other cases were discovered. And while the school day looks very different than it did pre-COVID-19, the safety measures they have in place work and our son is happy and excited to go to school every day. The school, the diocese and the county has ensured that this essential and fundamental need of educating students is done in a safe environment. They have proven that it CAN be done.

In stark contrast, our 8th grader continues to sit in his bedroom or at the kitchen table day after day, distance learning. While we applaud the teachers for their effort, what DJUSD is providing our children is NOT an education. It is dismal at best, the very minimal standards the district can get away with providing. Our 8th grader should be on campus, in a constructive, energetic learning environment that challenges his mind and makes him want to strive to do better. Sitting at home with no interaction with other students his age does not provide the dynamic, academic and social environment he needs, and quite honestly, what DJUSD should strive to provide for all its students.

With the exception of one board member, all of you have illogically supported passing possible school reopening plans that are more restrictive than those proposed by Governor Newsom for the State of CA, AB 10, the National Pediatrics Association, and President Biden. In particular, the requirement of mass vaccinations for all returning teachers will result in no in-person schooling this academic year. On Wednesday, January 20, 2021, State epidemiologist Dr. Erica Pan stated that it could take the State of CA four to five months to vaccinate the 1b tier which includes those 65 and older, as well as teachers.

You – Davis Joint Unified School District – has failed its most valuable and vulnerable population – our children. Are you really going to consider a plan that will delay the re-opening of in-person instruction in Fall 2021? And possibly keep our schools closed until some time in 2022? Shame on you if that is how you vote. Shame on you for not working towards an equitable solution for all involved. And shame on you for focusing on what you “can’t” do rather than what all of us, collectively, “can” do together. We sincerely hope you review the science and data, study current models that work and put the needs of the Davis students first as you move forward with a plan for getting students back where they belong...in the classroom.

Steve and Patti Sousa

Monica Roque

From: alyssa liska <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 2:18 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Green category

I am writing to again implore you to open our schools. The science continues to be clear. Our children are suffering. Schools should be open.

The blatant disregard for facts and science in this boards decision on if or when to reopen schools is so disheartening. You clearly have no intention of getting students back into the classroom this year. It reminds me of a certain recently departed administration that refused to acknowledge facts, refused to trust science. Shame on you.

You are surrounded by families struggling with distance learning, yet you refuse to acknowledge them. I am relatively new to Davis due to a job relocation and I was looking forward to being a part of such a well respected school district. Now I'm just embarrassed.

Alyssa, mother of a Kindergartner

Monica Roque

From: Brooke Burns [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 2:04 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Comment for Board Meeting

Categories: Green category

I am a parent of a sixth grade student at Patwin Elementary and an 8th grade student at Emerson Junior High School. I write to urge the Board to continue making decisions that prioritize student, teacher and community health and safety and that are based on sound science and data.

Rather than utilizing already strained resources to rush a return to school in the spring, I ask that that Board focus on ensuring that we have shored up the resources (e.g. proper PPE, air filters, teacher vaccinations, testing resources) to plan for a safe return to school in the fall.

Many families, including ours, will not be able to send their children back to in-person learning until, at the very least, the adults in their households are vaccinated.

I know that you are well aware that the decisions you make will inevitably make a difference between life and death for people living in our community. Please count me among the many parents who support your actions regarding distance learning thus far.

Thank you for your service to our community.

Brooke Burns

Monica Roque

From: Scott McElhern [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 12:47 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education; Superintendent
Subject: Comments for DJUSD Board Meeting 1/21/2021

Categories: Green category

We are the parents of a fifth grader at Pioneer and a sophomore at Davis Senior High School. We remain both perplexed, and quite worried, about the School Board's inability to make the right decisions for all of the children who attend the schools in our school district. With the exception of one forward thinking School Board member (thank you Betsy Hyder), all of you have illogically supported passing possible school re-opening plans that are more restrictive than those proposed by Governor Newsom for the State of CA, AB 10, the National Pediatrics Association, and President Biden. In particular, the requirement of mass vaccinations for all returning teachers will result in no in-person schooling this academic year. On Wednesday, January 20, 2021, State epidemiologist Dr. Erica Pan stated that it could take the State of CA four to five months to vaccinate the 1b tier which includes those 65 and older, as well as teachers.

Why is it that when we walk past one of the many private schools in Davis and the County of Yolo, we see school children happily playing on the play grounds at recess and safely attending in-person school, and, right across the street from one private school in Davis, the entire Davis Senior High and North Elementary Schools remain closed and locked up tight as drums? Public schools throughout the Sacramento region are also open to in-person learning. We have friends in El Dorado County whose children attend elementary school five days a week in a hybrid setting. How is it that private schools and other local public schools can safely reopen for in-person instruction and maintain a healthy environment, but the Davis Joint Unified School District can't even design a plausible re-opening plan that is based on science instead of illogical fear? The Davis Joint Unified School District, once the gem of Davis, has failed its most valuable and vulnerable population--our children. We do not want to have to pull our children from the District schools and place them in private school, but we may be left with no choice unless this School District can re-open sometime this Spring. In addition, we cannot even imagine that the School District would entertain a plan that could potentially delay the re-opening of our schools in the Fall of 2021. Are you really going to propose a plan that keeps our schools closed until sometime in 2022 or beyond? Please listen to science, our Governor, and our new President and adopt a reasonable plan for re-opening our schools in the Spring of 2020.

Thank you,

Diane and Scott McElhern

Monica Roque

From: Rachel McLemore
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 12:22 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Green category

Dear Esteemed Board Members,

I would like to thank you again for your tireless dedication to and careful consideration of the monumental task of figuring out exactly what being in school will look like once we go back in person. I would also like to thank you for making the decision to go back once teachers have been vaccinated and our county has been in the red zone for two weeks.

I do have some concerns about the model that is currently being proposed. First, my understanding is that a Distance Learning Academy will be implemented as the Distance Learning option. This will not work for Cesar Chavez students. We are a choice school with a unique Spanish immersion model, and it simply will not work for students who attend Chavez to be moved to learning from a teacher who is not teaching in Spanish. Teachers at CCE have specialized training, and are able to deliver lessons that are true to our model. This will be impossible to do if students are in the Distance Learning academy.

The model being proposed currently states that one person from each grade level team will be teaching Distance Learning and the others will be in person. There are three teachers on the CCE Kindergarten team, and we have been splitting the work of teaching DL three ways. Doing this model would mean that the person who is teaching DL would have the workload of three teachers. Three teachers could still plan together, but the workload would be tremendous.

Also, it is extremely detrimental to Kindergarten students to change teachers mid year. Kindergarten students are still learning how to be in school and what that means in terms of behavior expectations, social expectations, schedules and routines. It takes a very long time to get 5 year olds used to these routines. If Kindergarten students were to have to change their teacher, they would have to spend more time learning new routines and expectations from a new teacher. This would take away significant amounts of learning time. Related to this is the fact that we will be spending so much time teaching expectations about COVID (6 feet apart, frequent handwashing, mask requirements, temperature checks, etc) that there will not be much time for learning. This problem is compounded by the fact that Kindergarten students only attend school half day.

These reasons lead me to advocate for the following model: Students who are attending school in person would come in the morning, and students attending online would "attend" in the afternoon. If this were implemented for the entire grade level (for example, Kindergarten at CCE) then the three teachers could still share the workload. This would mean that students who continue attending school online would continue to receive the amount and quality of instruction that they are currently receiving. The students who attend in person would also receive the same high quality instruction. If one person is responsible for all of the DL instruction, these students will not receive the same instruction.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Again, I truly appreciate the work you are doing to ensure that when school goes back in person, we will all have a safe, reasonable working environment.

Sincerely,
Rachel McLemore
Kindergarten Teacher at CCE

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Monica Roque

From: Kristen Uliasz
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 11:59 AM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: public comment (proposed hybrid schedules)

Categories: Green category

First, let me express my gratitude for your time, care, and consideration in developing a safe reopening plan. Your decisions earlier this week demonstrate that the health and safety of teachers, staff, students and families is a priority.

I have been a secondary special education teacher in DJUSD for 12 years. I am also a DJUSD parent to a preschool student and a young elementary school student attending DJUSD schools.

I first want to say that attempting to process all three of these hybrid schedules in about a day has been a hustle. I hope that you will take the time to process them further and gather more feedback on these schedules, and not rush to approve them today.

In looking at all three schedules, my biggest concerns are with the elementary schedule. That's not to say I don't have concerns with the preschool or secondary schedules, but I only have 3 minutes.

My first big concern with the elementary model is having both cohorts attend on the same day. I'd like to know how this does ***not*** result in elementary teachers doubling their current workload. From where I am sitting, elementary teachers are already moving mountains with the caliber of teaching they are providing. Doubling their workload – which also drastically cuts down their prep time - while reducing overall instructional minutes with students is, simply put, not good enough. We have to be able to do better than that, or it's not worth reopening.

My even larger concern is that elementary school students will be made to shuffle teachers if they stay in distance learning, or perhaps even if they don't – depending on the numbers. My daughter is in first grade at MME. Her teacher has worked SO hard to build classroom community and make incredible progress with them in their academic skills and language development. Not to mention, at a time in my daughter's life when she is isolated from her friends and family – her teacher has become a beloved and trusted role model in her life, who she looks forward to seeing every day. She was the first person my daughter told that her uncle passed away. Think about that for a moment. Now you're telling me, for the sake of simply being on campus – there's a good chance she will have to switch teachers over halfway through the school year? This goes against everything we know about social emotional best practices for kids – especially young kids. This will ABSOLUTELY further disrupt student learning, and cause additional unnecessary trauma to kids, who are already living through a pandemic! I cannot belabor my disappointment in this piece of the proposal enough. It is the ***last*** thing we should be doing to our young students right now. More time and work is needed to figure out a manageable way to address the many concerns of hybrid, without the potential upheaval of student learning and relationships.

My biggest plea to you today, is that you absolutely should not vote to approve these schedules today, the same day they are being presented to you, less than 48 hours after they were made available to the public. Teachers and parents need more time – YOU need more time – to process the huge implications of these schedules before you move forward with any version of them.

Thanks to you and your solid decision making, we are not reopening right away. We *have* the time to get this right. I sincerely hope you will *take* the time to do so.

Thank you all. Be safe, and take good care.

Kristen Uliasz

Ms. Kristen Uliasz
pronouns: she/her/hers

Resource & Inclusion Specialist
PBL Instructional Coach
Da Vinci Charter Academy High School
<http://davincicharteracademy.net/>



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Monica Roque

From: Lauren Crownshaw [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 11:05 AM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: public comment

Categories: Green category

Dear Board of Education,

Comments regarding the conditions to return to campus:

I'd like to thank Trustee Hyder for her comments and perspective voiced during the meeting on Tuesday January 19th. It was striking that she alone supported the advice from experts and public health officials, including Dr. Sisson, regarding the criteria required for a safe return to school. I appreciate Trustee Hyders' acknowledgment that the public health officials are the true experts and their opinions should be respected.

Why do the remaining Trustees ignore scientific research, opinions from experts, and public health officials? The four Trustees who voted "aye" to the return criteria have set the standard to return higher than necessary when compared to recommendations by public health officials and experts. This does a grave disservice to our students and our community by needlessly delaying when our students can return to campus.

Your job as a Trustee is not to determine what is safe and what is not safe. That is the job of public health officials and experts. It is your job is to take that information and help our district get students back in school as soon as possible. The public health officials do not say that vaccines for teachers is a requirement for a safe return to school. Are you saying that you know better than them?

Comments regarding extra-curricular, co-curricular, and outdoor curricular activities:

The board needs to focus on solutions rather than putting up road blocks. If there are concerns about equity among extra-curricular, co-curricular, and curricular outdoor opportunities on campus, the focus should be on how to creatively make things equitable. Trustee Darrah I heard you talk about your concerns and what you viewed as problems, but I did not hear you once be a creative leader and propose solutions.

In closing, we need leaders who will put in the effort and bring the community together. We do not need Trustees who will sit back and wait for their unnecessarily high return standards to be met.

I know that going back hybrid will not be easy, but that does not mean it is not worth fighting for. Be the Board that we need!

Respectfully,
Parent of First and Second grade students

Monica Roque

From: Hiss, Amy/SAC [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 10:33 AM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment for 1/21/21 and *Please read out loud*

Categories: Green category

Please read out loud at meeting

Dear Board of Education,

There is no perfect option for reopening our schools until students and staff are vaccinated. We all want school to be “back to normal”, but realistically, normal is months out. Forcing students and teachers back now won’t get us “back to normal” for several reasons. First, it isn’t just about keeping kids safe. How are we supposed to keep teachers and staff safe? We are already short experienced teachers. Teachers would opt out (many would have to for safety) and the reality is we would end up with classrooms being taught by a rotating mix of subs (who we couldn’t get even before the pandemic), paraeducators or volunteers (and I’m grateful for them all) but that would be a logistical and staffing nightmare, a huge energy-suck, confusing for the kids, and I don’t see how that’s all that helpful with regard to social and emotional support and academic learning.

Routine and structure are important to kids. Please don’t make kids get all new classroom teachers now. We’ve invested substantial time and resources to make online education as good as it can be – with some limited supports for students that need them most - let’s not break that model. **Let’s expand on that model** – by 1) increasing support to our neediest students and 2) engaging and supporting students socially and emotionally by holding PE and/or sports practices outdoors after online school in small cohorts.

All of our kids are suffering now (I see it in my own kid every day) but the degree of suffering is truly great in some children. These groups include homeless children, foster youth, those lacking internet, kids that don’t have parents that can work at home to help, and those experiencing emotional or mental health crises. These children urgently need our help and resources. My kid is suffering too – and he’s in a special needs group - but honestly, he can limp along for a few more months and be mostly OK. You know who else is suffering? Our teachers. They are not OK. Please support them.

Older children (jr. high and high school) may transmit the virus much like adults. School reopening for this cohort may be more dangerous. There are new virus variants in play now that may be more transmissible and we just don’t know enough about them.

If we hang on until fall for vaccine roll out – we can efficiently return without inefficient and distressing stops and starts (like other districts are having to do), closures with new outbreaks (and impacts on ICU capacity), and driving away already scarce teachers and staff. Lawsuits on this matter do not help the district – paying for lawyers just takes away funds that could be going to our kids. Please be brave enough to stay the course until fall, increase supports and in-person-school for small cohorts for the students that are suffering the most, help all kids get outdoors for PE or sports workouts to help their social emotional health, and put efforts one thousand percent behind vaccinations.

Regards,

Amy Hiss
Davis, CA

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Monica Roque

From: Jessica Jacobson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 10:32 AM
To: DJUSD Board of Education; Superintendent
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Green category

Dear Board of Education members and Superintendent Bowes,

In the last board meeting, I heard mention of equity in regard to a rather trivial matter, the possibility of providing some in-person extracurricular activities, staffed by non-teachers. I'm wondering if you think about the following inequities.

- The inequity of special needs children who have not had their needs effectively met for close to a year, who have been floundering without support.
- The inequity of low-income families who are forced to choose between their livelihoods and their children's educations
- The inequity of families unable to provide full support to young learners unable to navigate online systems alone, and in many cases, unable to read.
- The inequity of families who speak a different language at home than the language of instruction and are unable to support their children.
- The inequity of women taking on the substantial share of the burden of closed schools, and the negative impact on their careers, employment, earnings and independence.
- The inequity of school schedules and material pickup times that are in the middle of the standard workday, making it challenging for working parents to arrange transportation
- The inequity of students who are left home alone or in poor supervision because their parents need to work
- The inequity of students who are in abusive environments and have no one to look out for them or report suspected abuse
- The inequity of students who can manage their own zoom experiences being brought back to campus before students who need assistance
- The inequity of students who are failing
- The inequity of students whose lifetime earnings and lifetime health prospects have been negatively affected by dropping out, disengagement or underperformance due to services not meeting their needs
- The inequity of students who are depressed and anxious and suicidal
- The inequity of students living in a state ranked 37th for K-12 public education pre-pandemic, receiving far fewer live instructional minutes than other states using remote learning, putting these students on a fast track toward the bottom of national rankings
- The inequity that when the district fails to serve students, those who are able will find other solutions, be it educational or extracurricular, while those who are unable are left without.
- The inequity that closed schools have disproportionate negative impacts on racial minorities and low-income families.
- The inequity that student lifespan decreases with each week that school is closed, with the most disadvantaged losing the most expected lifespan.

So when you talk about equity in extracurriculars, it rings hollow. Because you are not focusing on equity

where it counts – with people’s lives, lifespans, economic status and mental wellbeing. You are not acknowledging that extended school closure is likely the greatest blow to equity our children will experience in our lifetime.

If you really care about equity, and I believe you do, then show our community your proactiveness in getting the children what they need, to limit the huge gap in equity that is caused by closed schools and that grows with every day they remain closed.

Sincerely,

Jessica Jacobson
Parent of 3

Monica Roque

From: Monique Garcia Gunther [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 9:22 AM
To: DJUSD Board of Education; Joe DiNunzio
Subject: Public Comment : Transparency on vaccination plan

Categories: Green category

Dear Board and staff,

Can we please get specifics and updates on djUSD expected timeline and process for administering two doses of vaccines to teachers? I imagine and would hope the district is lobbying to secure those doses for teachers ASAP so we can reopen and move to Hybrid in spring.

Below is the response I received from the PIO at Yolo County, as I am requesting transparency regarding this, since the board has identified this as a condition for reopening. (although this requirement - when we are in Red Tier - is unique to Davis and not one the experts are recommending once allowed to open in Red Tier using mitigation measures) . I am concerned this condition will keep schools shut for the remainder of the year. I hope this is not a hidden agenda.

Response From Yolo County PIO when I requested transparency of djUSD / county plan :

Yes, the County is working with DJUSD on the vaccination process however, the specific requirements for students or staff from DJUSD is theirs. The timeline is still up in the air and we are not yet in Phase 1B and still need many, many more vaccine doses from the State.

Monique Garcia Gunther

Monica Roque

From: Stefan H. Uhlig [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 9:21 AM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment on hybrid teaching model

Categories: Green category

Two comments on the proposed DJUSD hybrid teaching model which, I understand, will be voted on tomorrow. Our son is a first-grader at Montgomery:

- 1) We are very keen to see him return to in-person instruction.
- 2) Your priority surely must be to obtain and, if possible, require vaccinations for teachers. After that, return to regular in-person instruction. I don't understand the upside of this hybrid model. Either teachers are vaccinated, in which case proceed to business as usual, or they're not, in which case this model looks precarious. The hybrid approach looks enormously complex and resource-intensive.

Monica Roque

From: Shanaz K Hazel [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 6:49 AM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment
Attachments: BOE letter - Jan21.docx

Categories: Green category

As my earlier letter was too long and not fully read I have submitted another to capture the points that were not able to be read. Thanks.

Shanaz

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Dear Members of the Davis Board of Education,

I am writing today to express my concern after listening to multiple Board of Education meetings.

After each meeting I find myself thinking, if other high quality public school districts can do it, what is preventing the DJUSD from presenting a return to school plan based on public health metrics and recommendations? What is so different about Davis? And why is the school board making these decisions without a public health expert at the meeting?

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

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

No, I don't want to compromise anyone's safety. I am not advocating to force any teacher or staff member who is high risk back onto campus. I am a physician working in healthcare and highly aware of how to mitigate risks. We are 11 months into this pandemic and there are tested and available ways to reduce risk and viral spread. And as the vaccine becomes available to teachers, there will be an additional layer of protection.

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

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

Sincerely,

Shanaz Hazel

Monica Roque

From: Laurie San Martin [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 1:11 AM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: public comment

Categories: Green category

Dear School Board,

Thank you for your extra efforts and careful consideration of the practical and safe return to hybrid and/or in-person instruction for the Davis K-12 aged students. This letter is to express my support for returning small cohorts to school as soon as possible. With covid testing widely available, and new financial support from the governor's office, I see no reason to delay this return. Our children are the ones who are paying for each minute that we don't come up with and implement a plan to return to the school campus.

I have read that the school board has concerns in how in-person instruction would exacerbate inequities and equal access to education. Currently, many families in Davis are coping with remote education by hiring tutors, therapists, extra-curricular activities (sports, music). Some families are paying a lot to supplement all that is missing from their child's education. Clearly, this is not true for all families. What is happening for families who can't afford a tutor, therapist, babysitter and the rest? How is our current model any more equitable than one where they can return to campus?

Public health experts (including Dr. Fauci) have laid out an evidence-based guide to reopening that we have heard many in the district oppose again and again, even though the district has safely and effectively begun providing in person services to some children.

I am in support of returning to school and doing so in a way that is safe, creative and re-imagined. Hybrid, yes. Required of everyone? no. Allow the students and teachers who want to return to come back. Allow teachers to zoom to their classroom from off-site (the MPR? the school yard?). Or, recruit Davis families to build a plexiglass box for each teacher to feel safe. This town is full of innovation and investment from committed parents, teachers and the greater community. Please plan now so that when we move to the red tier and begin to count down the days, that we can look forward to a return to the classroom. I think it would give so much hope to Davis families, and it would align with the recommendations and guidelines that are being successfully implemented in neighboring communities.

Monica Roque

From: Ryan Ong [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 12:19 AM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment - Forgo Hybrid Learning Model

Categories: Green category

Dear DJUSD School Board,

I would like to commend DJUSD for making the health and safety of students, faculty, and the community a priority, while navigating distant learning. I truly appreciate the amount of effort that has gone into helping students and their families navigate these unprecedented, uncertain, and unsafe times. The DJUSD faculty and staff have gone above and beyond to learn new technology and engage the students. This year has been challenging for everyone. This is not how anyone wants school to look like, but I am gravely concerned for students, faculty, families, and the community if DJUSD implements a hybrid in-person program.

Due to the extremely contagious and deadly COVID-19 virus, DJUSD must listen to science and err on the side of caution. By opening schools, the community's risk of spreading COVID increases. The media has reported other school districts, that implemented a hybrid return to school model within the region, have documented COVID-19 cases amongst students and staff. The hybrid model should be postponed until mass distribution of the vaccine is available. The health and safety of students and our community should remain a priority.

I also question the academic improvement that the hybrid model will achieve over distant learning. I am aware of claims that there is a loss of social interaction and academic learning. I question how the social interaction amongst students, in other districts, have improved if safety measures are maintained. I would imagine the hours in school would be dramatically reduced and interaction would be limited. Moreover, how can a child or teacher focus on a class lesson if there is concern about maintaining safety in a class setting. What research supports that the hybrid model is an improvement, if at all, over the distant learning method?

From a personal standpoint, the disruption of implementing a hybrid model could make the learning experience even more dire. My son looks forward to seeing his teacher every school day. He continues to show up on Zoom and do his school work because of the caring relationship that his teacher has built with him. Now, in the middle of the school year, he may be assigned to a new teacher? He's lost his ability to play with his friends, participate in group projects, celebrate special school wide events. The loss of his teacher would be a devastating to him.

DJUSD must take a stance to not follow suit of other school districts that have implemented a hybrid model this academic year. The risk of jeopardizing the health and well-being of students, staff, and the community is far greater than the unproven belief that returning to school—upending the current routine for a limited in-person learning experience—will significantly improve a student's academic and social needs.

Sincerely,

Ryan Ong
DJUSD Parent

Monica Roque

From: Nelia Sperka [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 9:56 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Green category

Dear Board Members,

My name is Nelia Sperka, and my family and I live in Davis. My son is in 3rd grade and is homeschooled through the Davis School for Independent Study. Prior to this year, he attended Korematsu Elementary School. For several reasons including the pandemic and the uncertainty over the format of traditional education for the 2020-21 school year, my husband and I decided to homeschool him. Since both of us work from home, it was the best decision for us.

I understand and respect that every DJUSD family has a different set of circumstances and needs, and I understand that the District is doing what it can to address these needs within the limitations brought on by the pandemic. Moreover, I understand that in-person learning is the best option for students, especially for students with special needs and low-income students. However, I believe that in order for in-person school (including a hybrid option) to be successful, there should be broad access to the COVID-19 vaccine for all school employees and clear guidance as to when vaccinated employees can return to school. Before schools are re-opened for in-person learning, we urge you to work with local health officials to provide vaccines to all school employees and guidance to ensure that teachers and students can return to classrooms safely and successfully.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Nelia Sperka

Monica Roque

From: Robert Enzerink [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 9:17 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT: Most recent information about schools and COVID

Categories: Green category

Dear DJUSD Board,

If one considers first the safety and health of students, teachers, staff, and the community of Davis, then it is NOT a difficult decision to decide when to 'bring students back'. The SARS-CoV2 and its more transmissible variants are dangerous and are killing Davis citizens.

Please read this short article about the most recent information regarding schools and CV-19 transmission. In a nutshell, **"...children are a considerable factor in the spread of Covid-19. ... The problem is not that schools are unsafe for children. The problem is schools... act as vectors for transmission, causing the virus to spread between households."**

From The Wall Street Journal: <https://apple.news/ARTg2rVduRS-YU8h13rcJQA>

Multiple vaccines are being rolled out and administered right now. If you, the DJUSD board, will look beyond the emotional arguments and consider the data, then it is irresponsible and careless to bring students back for in-person schooling until the vaccines have done their job. Hold your course. It's the correct course of action. Protect the lives and future health of our families. It's an easy decision.

Sincerely,
Robert Enzerink

Robert Enzerink

Monica Roque

From: Daniela Almeida [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 8:01 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Return to school public comment

Categories: Green category

I was extremely disheartened to listen to the meeting last night - the 19th - and hear a strong tone that returning to in person is not a priority for our kids. The discussion appeared to ignore the science and testimony that education in person is not just an essential service but is a fundamental service. I saw the standards discussed to be impossible to achieve and puts education a lower priority than outdoor dining in terms of standards for opening.

Additionally I found the edits to the paragraph 2 about return to school standards non-logical to implement. How can you have a two week waiting period after vaccines are offered? How will you track that? Can a single teacher refuse to be vaccinated and therefore preclude the entire district from returning?

I appreciate how much time is being spent to find the right answer and as a child of a teacher myself I understand and appreciate all the efforts for safely for all. I also commend you all on your civil and kind discussions. However I feel the current approach tips the scale beyond what the science requires to the detriment of the children. I ask you to consider education as the essential service it is and treat it as such.

Daniela Almeida

Monica Roque

From: Jackie MacNear [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 5:39 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Green category

I have four children in the district, 2nd grade, 7th grade ,10th grade and 11th grade and I do not think this is a safe, effective or sustainable plan.

First, the timing of when this plan will be implemented just causes more confusion and concern: once Yolo County reaches Red Tier for 2 weeks? Once all staff are fully vaccinated?

Switching classes/teachers with only months/weeks left of school produces a lack of continuity for both students and staff who have worked hard to connect with students. This is traumatic, especially for elementary kids.

Even in keeping cohorts as limited as possible there is exponential increased exposure due to siblings, parents, childcare, etc.

Will there really be adequate time for custodial staff to sanitize all classrooms between morning and afternoon? One cohort Mon/Tues, cleaning and sanitizing Wednesday and the second cohort Thurs/Fri makes more sense for sanitizing AND childcare, transportation and families with multiple children. And this only makes sense if we still need a hybrid model for next year. Like I said previously, all of this change for a month or two is not fair to our kids or our teachers. Not a trauma informed approach at all.

How will you enforce proper mask wearing and social distancing at all times? What happens if someone declines a Covid test? How will you ensure students do not attend school when sick or if exposed to Covid? Enforcement if a parent knowingly sends their child to school while sick or if exposed? Parents send their sick kids to school pre-covid, they send kids they know have head lice or other contagious things, what makes you think COVID-19 will be different. Parents on the parent boards are arguing Covid status is their privacy

and they should be able to choose who knows and who doesn't. That doesn't sit well with me at all.

What is the plan for inevitable covid exposure -- class and teacher quarantine for 2 weeks? What if subs are teaching the other cohort in-person?

I urge you to remain in the Distance Learning format for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year and to focus your resources on opening schools up for in person learning for the 2021-22 school year. Teachers have worked extremely hard to transition to an online format and to foster individual relationships with their students and switching students/teachers with mere months/weeks left in the school year remaining would be traumatic.

Thank you for hearing our voices.

Jackie MacNear

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy Note10+, an AT&T 5G Evolution capable smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Monica Roque

From: Roxanne Deutsch [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 5:08 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Cc: roxdeu
Subject: For Hybrid proposal public comment- 1/21/21 BOE meeting

Categories: Green category

January 20, 2021

**For public comment,
but you won't get through all of it.**

Dear Board of Education Trustees,

Thank you for your dedicated service during these difficult Covid times. Thank you for your recent decision to have teachers fully vaccinated before the anticipated return to school. Reopening schools without widespread vaccines and more scientific data is a dangerous and risky move.

Tonight, I am writing about the proposed Hybrid Model Draft for Elementary, specifically the Distance Learning Academy and the reassignment of ALL students to new teachers.

Apparently, in the Elementary Action Teams, much time was spent trying to work out an in-person Hybrid model not involving teaching both online and in-person at the same time, as that model is unsustainable. However, this left little time to consider and discuss the DL Academy, and I learned from my colleagues that not everyone involved agreed on the final draft.

Most concerning about the Hybrid Draft, is that the families who choose to remain safely in DL until their families can become vaccinated, will have their children reassigned to a new teacher for the last few weeks of school. It is as if families that choose to remain safe, will be punished.

Primary grades focus on the development of the whole child. Please think about the social emotional health of these young students who will be torn apart from an important caregiver at the end of the school year. Will losing

their teacher unexpectedly cause abandonment issues, create a lack of trust or bring about more trauma and anxiety as their predictable routine is taken away?

Teachers will not be fully vaccinated or likely ready to return until the end of April or the beginning of May. Therefore, as proposed, in the last 6 weeks of school, students will be uprooted, placed with a different teacher, have different classmates, possibly go to a different school, have different routines, a different Canvas layout, different expectations and a changed curriculum not in sync with their previous teacher. It is chaos and madness. Do parents or does the board really want this upheaval for our children?

Elementary teachers daily address the mental health of our students. In DL, we incorporate 30 minutes of daily SEL into our plans, have predictable consistent routines, build a safe community, create trust, and are successful in preventing more trauma and emotional harm to children during this pandemic. We have a robust curriculum, cover all subjects, and are adhering to state standards. Students ARE learning and making academic growth as proven in the recent “iready diagnostic”.

Unlike the draft states, we offer up to 10.5 hours of live DL instruction, plus asynchronous lessons. If we have to move to hybrid, there would not be enough hours in the day to maintain these high standards or continue to provide this robust curriculum as the workload would be doubled. Therefore the hybrid model will have less instructional time.

It seems that expanding the cohorts and placing a vaccinated certificated teacher, who has volunteered, in the room, would be a good solution for our most vulnerable students that need support at school. Rather than at the end of the year, destroy the DL program that is working, expand the in-person small cohorts, for those that are demanding such a program.

With the end of this pandemic on the horizon, I thank you for your diligent and thoughtful work weighing all of the difficult issues, trying to make everyone happy.

Respectfully,
Roxanne Deutsch
she/her
2nd Grade Teacher

Monica Roque

From: Michael Creedon [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 4:32 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Green category

Trustees,

We have listened to your meetings, and heard your debate. We've heard our public health experts, and pled our case.

The vote taken on reopening conditions Tuesday night was deeply disappointing. While I and many others strongly disagree, we nevertheless recognize that you acted in your elected capacity.

We do hope you will remain open to revisiting this topic, and will stay abreast of the recommendations from public health experts as well as state and federal government.

While we respect that you have every right to vote as you wish - we hope you can appreciate that we have every right to continue to advocate for our children, and to now take appropriate actions of our own in response.

When the history of this pandemic is written, many will have much to explain. Many will claim they never wanted closed schools, or that they were too afraid to speak up. Some will claim they never heard about the science of safely opening schools. Many will deny children suffered any long-term harms, even when the evidence is put before them.

Parents advocating for open schools, however, will sleep soundly, having followed the guidance of the experts. We just wish that our school board had, as well.

Mike Creedon

Monica Roque

From: Andrew McDaniel [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 12:41 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Cc: Sarah Roseen
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Green category

Dear President DiNunzio,
Below please find my public comment for the 1/21 board meeting.

Dear Educators, supporting staff, administrators, and board members,

Privilege is defined as “a special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group.” DJUSD has equity as one of its six core principles for reopening, but has failed to address privilege. Privilege is waiting until every single one of your demands have been met, while expecting others to work in conditions you deem unsafe. Public health experts have laid out an evidence-based guide to reopening that we have heard many in the district oppose again and again, even though the district has safely and effectively begun providing in person services to some children. I would like to hear those opposed to opening describe to my child’s daycare staff why it’s ok for them to be around a cohort of masked, screened children every day, but it’s not ok for DJUSD employees. I would like to hear those opposed to recommendations from public health officials explain to nurses, environmental services staff, Amazon workers, Door Dash employees, and retail staff why it’s been ok for them to be working in the pandemic for a year, but many in the district are opposed to reopening in one of the most controlled and low risk environments that any employee could hope to work in.

The great irony is that those who have been serving the community are most greatly affected by the school shutdown. My family is privileged: we can afford private daycare so that we can do our in person, essential jobs. We have not had to make the impossible choice between caring for our children and working. But we cannot educate them while we are at work. And as hard as they have tried, their teachers cannot adequately educate a 5 and 7 year old if we expect these children to be independent learners in front of a computer screen. We support teachers and their efforts at distance learning. But distance learning is a poor substitute for in person education. This morning, we had our kindergartner start his “i-ready” assessment at 6:30 am so we could support him through it before it was time to go to work.

I take the pandemic seriously. I am involved in it daily. I have seen my parents fewer than a handful of times in the past year. My colleagues and I have expended significant resources helping those around us understand the severity of the pandemic and pleading with them to heed the guidance of public health experts. All we are asking of you is to heed the guidance of public health experts and reopen for in person learning when the public health targets have been reached. Harm is being caused.

Respectfully,

Andrew McDaniel, MD

Parent of DJUSD Kindergarten and 1st grade students.

Monica Roque

From: Simon Crownshaw [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 9:42 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Pathetic

Categories: Green category

To All Board Members:

Never have I witnessed the pathetic ineptitude of any group in recent memory as I have with the DJUSD school board. You are entirely paralyzed by this situation, you have failed to plan for months and are destroying the community you serve. You sound smug and pompous, you are ignoring science and ignoring facts. Your decisions are entirely based on fear when multiple examples exist of how to manage this situation. Your surveys look like they were written and designed by a 5th grader so nice job on wasting our time and money on that.

You will look back on this period and realize that you failed your community and the children you serve. We don't need perfect, we need an iterative plan that gets this process moving forward.

With the way you work it will be 2022 before we make progress. Get the schools open!!

Monica Roque

From: Jeremy Taylor [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 8:47 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment: DJUSD needs to stop making medical decisions

Categories: Green category

Why are medical decisions being made by board members? Have a public health official and/or doctor present.

The trustees who have offered making decisions based on their own research need to reconsider how they make DJUSD decisions in the future. It's important not to step out of your expertise, as was on display tonight.

Open as fast as the county guidelines allow. Period.

--

Best,

Jeremy Taylor
[REDACTED]

From: Loubna Tazi [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 18, 2021 10:28 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education <boe@djUSD.net>
Cc: Stefan Rothenburg [REDACTED]
Subject: Hybrid Model - Public Comment

Dear Trustees and members of the Board of Education,

We are parents of two young students at Pioneer Elementary. Our oldest son is in 1st grade and has autism spectrum disorder and our youngest son is in Kindergarten. We want to share our concerns about the plans for implementing the hybrid model for return to campus. We need to think about the well-beings of our children, teachers and staff. It is not safe to go back to school. There are new SARS-CoV-2 variants circulating and the vaccine is still not available for the teachers and the rest of the community.

Distance learning has been challenging for children, parents and teachers. We all want to go back to our normal lives but not to the expense of the health of our vulnerable kids and teachers. Children thrive in stable environments. The hybrid model is not a realistic model for kids to continue learning and for their social and emotional well-being. Now the kids know their teachers very well, and the teachers know and understand the needs for each of their students. Implementing a hybrid model will simply mean throwing away all these efforts. With a hybrid model, kids would be with different peers and would be seeing different teachers. Most parents and the majority of the teachers if not all of them do not want the hybrid model. So please take these concerns into consideration. The COVID-19 cases are still increasing and we will stay in the purple Tier for quite some time, which will get us closer to the end of the school year anyway.

Thanks for listening to our concerns,
Sincerely,
Dr. Loubna Rothenburg & Dr. Stefan Rothenburg

Loubna Rothenburg, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Associate Director, Host Microbe Systems Biology Core

University of California, Davis

School of Medicine

Medical Microbiology & Immunology

Genome and Biomedical Sciences Building

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Monica Roque

From: Megan Rabin [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 18, 2021 3:39 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Green category

Dear DJUSD Trustees:

I am writing as the parent of a DJUSD student to express my strong support for an in-person learning option as soon as local conditions permit.

It is increasingly clear that students and teachers can return to school safely using an evidence-based, layered approach to prevention consisting of masks, hygiene, screening, and testing. Many studies have indicated that COVID-19 is not being spread in the school setting, even in areas with high case rates, if these mitigation strategies are followed. We have a unique opportunity in Davis to use the testing and real-time data analysis offered by the Healthy Davis partnership to facilitate getting students back to school.

In our current efforts to keep kids and teachers safe, we must equally consider the harms caused by prolonged remote learning, which affect every child in our district. While academic concerns such as learning loss may be the most obvious of these harms, I'm concerned that the profound isolation brought on by the loss of our vibrant school communities will have long-lasting repercussions for many students in Davis. We can't in good conscience fail to take bold action now when the science shows that we have the ability and the means to mitigate the risk of disease to an acceptable degree.

Sincerely,

Megan Rabin