

Monica Roque

From: Heather Jones [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 9:29 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Purple category

Tonight Woodland Joint Unified School District approved an April 12 reopening for hybrid for elementary schools. Will DJUSD do the same? I hope so.

Heather Jones

Sent from my iPhone

Monica Roque

From: Maureen Richardson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 9:20 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear Superintendent Bowes and DJUSD Board Members,

I write today because I think we are getting tired of the circular conversations of schools re-opening.

What saddens me most is the very people whom this discussion impacts are absent from your meetings? Where are the student voices, opinions, raw stories of their struggles and achievements during distance learning? Other counties have selected outstanding students to join the zoom board meetings to offer insight and suggestions. These students do not have voting power but their voice carries weight. Has the board considered having a representative from DHS leadership to participate in the problem solving? Perhaps with fresh perspective and evidence of the direct impact of your choices, we may be able to come to a compromise of how to get kids back to in person learning safely.

Teachers have unions to represent them as well as the benefit of being a professional who can contribute their voice and opinion.

Furthermore, I challenge you to ask yourself, when you reflect on your role in Covid and supporting the community, will you be proud of how you represented our children? Is 2 hours of afternoon hybrid one year after shutting schools the best solution our board could present? Will you feel as though you thought of every option available (outdoor classrooms utilizing the public space, doors open while kids learn, maintaining cohorts so kids don't change classrooms etc)? You are elected officials selected to do what is best for our children and the educational aspect of our community! Finding solutions is tough exhausting work, but it is necessary to move forward.

There is no return to normal, so please don't wait - let's create a new normal for our children that will bring the spark back to their lives!

Thank you-
Maureen

Sent from my iPhone

Monica Roque

From: USMC Patriot [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 9:06 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment: DJUSD parents vote

Categories: Purple category

Dear DJUSD Board,

You've only assessed 50% of your special ed students? This is a huge failure and it seems you've simply brushed over it.

You already know the public wants to be back in school. You already know the students will benefit from it.

Others may ask why, but I know: you're being overly cautious so you can avoid a mistake that will cause you to lose your position on DJUSD board. Plain and simple. This is more of a quest to retain power than help students.

I'm not going to do what everyone else did and tell you the numerous reasons, backed by facts, as to why you should push to reopen. Instead: I'll be brief and leave you on this note—the time will come for us to vote again. I might be new in town but I'm quick to gain traction and get people on board for a common cause.

What I promise every single one of you is this: I will work tirelessly to help get re-elected those of you who show us you are working to get schools open ASAP. Not when convenient, not when you want to. I mean open now.

And to the board members who stand in the way of reopening, I wish you the best of luck in your next election. I will single handed my do what is needed to make sure we never again re-elect board members who refuse to put students first.

Any of you not willing to open now is not putting students first. And to any of you not willing to put students first: I hope you're ok with this being your last term. If you don't listen to students and parents you will lose the next election. A small group of us will make sure of it.

Jeremy Taylor
Mace Ranch
DJUSD crossing guard 2004-2007
Future DJUSD parent

--

Best,

Jeremy Taylor
[REDACTED]

Monica Roque

From: Michael Schaps [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 7:57 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment submission

Categories: Purple category

Healthy Davis Together is indeed impressive, and we are uniquely lucky to have it. But how can it be that the one city in the country with such an effective testing program has not managed to open its schools? More than half the country has opened without such a testing program, but we, despite Healthy Davis Together, have not.

I urge the Board to reopen our schools immediately.

Mike Schaps

Monica Roque

From: John Coburn [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 7:54 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comments to Return to School 2/18/21

Categories: Purple category

Thank you to the Board and guests for your hard work on this issue. Now that we have CDC recommendations for returning to school for K-12 and the data-driven acknowledgement that vaccination of all staff and teachers as a prerequisite to return to school for our children is not necessary, combined with the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation that children return to school as soon as possible, are there any plans for the Board of Directors to re-address their plan for a return to schools? If we are close on HVAC installations and social distancing in the classroom, asymptomatic testing and symptom screening, as well as the other measures that have been addressed, can we not return to school this Spring even as we prioritize educator and staff vaccinations locally and in the county? If there is no plan to review after this new data has come to light, why not? What if some teachers decide not to get vaccinated? Will those teachers then not go back? How will that choice affect the ability of our children to return to school?

I know that an incredible amount of fear surrounds returning to closer environments before getting a vaccination, and I respect the reluctance to do so. I have been working in a COVID-inundated Emergency Department for a year without a vaccination and understand the personal risks.

As we close in on a full year out of school, how do we rationalize in light of this new information, the mental health and academic toll on children, and the financial and emotional strain on parents who do not have the opportunity to work from home? I respect the hard work that our teachers have put in by providing the best possible online academic environment for our children but it is, quite simply, not as effective as in-person instruction in my family's view.

Respectfully,
John D Coburn, MD
Fellow, American College of Emergency Physicians

Monica Roque

From: LJ C [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 5:59 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear Superintendent and Board Members,

I am writing because I am a fifth grader who was attending Korematsu until this week. I have transferred to a private school that has in-person learning because my parents were worried I wasn't getting a good enough education through distance learning and because of the lack of social interaction.

I speak to you because I am hearing the distressed voices of my old classmates asking for you to open the school. You may not think I care about this matter because I'm no longer attending Korematsu, but I do. For those are my friends speaking and I care about them. So I ask you to please open the schools or try harder. You must convince the teachers to go back. I understand the teachers' concerns but kids need to be going to in-person school.

My cousin in southern California has been in in-person public school since the Fall. If they can figure out a way to go back safely to a public school why can't we? We live in Davis, a town with many Doctors and College Professors. Can't we figure out a way to go back to school safely and quickly?

Sincerely,
Liam Cahill

Monica Roque

From: Heather Martin [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 5:43 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education; DJUSD Communications
Subject: Public Comment: Set the date for return to campus instruction

Categories: Purple category

Board members and Superintendent Bowles,

Increasing evidence continues to show that schools open for in-person instruction (both hybrid and full in-person) are safe for teachers, students, and the surrounding communities using CDC recommended mitigation measures and WITHOUT the need for teacher vaccination.

This district adopted the criteria for teacher vaccination requirements and red tier requirements and FALSELY claim them to be outside of your control. This is very much within your control- you set this criteria. The criteria you set does not align with public health science or recommendations.

It is not a mystery how to open schools safely. It is not a guess at what needs to be done to do it safely. It is documented and endorsed by the CDC and our very own local public health officer that we act with haste and urgency to re-open schools now.

Let's have some real talk here. Re-opening schools during a COVID pandemic is no longer a public health issue as it was a year ago in March 2020. Be honest with yourselves- schools are closed because of labor issues and leadership issues.

The severe negative risks to children are too great to ignore this issue any longer.

Please make a motion to either:

- a) Change the criteria for re-opening to align with CDC and local public health guidance
- or
- b) Firmly establish a re-opening date for in-person instruction of no later than 3/29/21 (allowing for 6 weeks of ample teacher access to vaccinations currently being offered through Dignity health)

Additionally- please make a motion now:

Establishing DJUSDs commitment to full in-person education for the entire 2021-2022 school year (state law allowing) and ensure that any collective bargaining for that year includes this requirement.

You have a professional responsibility to act in the best interest of the education and safety of the children in this district- especially when we know clearly that you aren't putting teachers or staff at increased risk based on public health science.

Failure to act now and ensure full in-person learning is ensured this fall will force our family with no other option but to disenroll from this district. Sadly, this decision to leave DJUSD has been shared with me by numerous other families in our town.

I want DJUSD to succeed and survive this pandemic. Viruses don't keep schools closed. People do.

Heather Martin, PharmD, CDE, CHWC
Clinical Pharmacist

Monica Roque

From: Erin M O'Donnell [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 5:33 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear DJUSD,

I am a parent of two elementary school students, currently enrolled at Korematsu.

I am deeply concerned that DJUSD has not put appropriate emphasis on returning to in person learning as quickly as possible. Many other districts in our state have been opened safely for in person learning for months.

Our kids are suffering from isolation and even hopelessness because DJUSD has not done enough to support them and get them back into the classroom.

I have always been a strong supporter public education, as an important aspect of a democratic society. However, if DJUSD does not open schools for in person learning soon, our family will be forced to consider private education for our children.

I am concerned that many families who are heavily involved in DJUSD supporting kids through fundraising and other activities, will be making the same decision to move to private education. If this happens, DJUSD will lose critical family and community support.

Please work towards opening schools for in person learning as soon as possible.

Thank you,

Erin O'Donnell
[REDACTED]

Monica Roque

From: McElhern, Scott [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 5:30 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education; Superintendent
Cc: mcelhern@sbcglobal.net
Subject: Public comment - Steps to Return to Campus

Categories: Purple category

Superintendent Bowes and the Trustees of the Board of Education:

We are the parents of elementary and high school students. We request that the school board reconsider its universal vaccine requirement to open the schools. Dr. Fauci said yesterday that it is “not workable” to base school reopening on this criteria. It is also contrary to science. This issue deserves renewed dialogue at the board meeting given the significant groundswell of national and local attention that is spotlighting those school districts that are not reopening. Yolo County will be in the red category next week and possibly the orange soon thereafter. Yet the Davis schools will still be closed due to the vaccination requirement. That is not furthering the interests of our students.

Also, many other boards allow for live public comment, yet the DJUSD Board requires written comments. For issues as important as reopening schools, live public comment should be implemented. It would give parents to opportunity to talk directly to the elected officials who are keeping the schools closed.

The children of our community deserve to be in school. We have supported public education throughout our lives. We are both products of the California public school system. We have voted for every DJUSD bond measure in the last 25+ years. Our two older children went through the Davis public school system and are now at public universities. However, because of the unreasonable delays in opening the Davis public schools, we transferred our 5th grade child to a private school this week. He now has full time in-person class five days a week. That is the way we should educate our children. Many other families have also left the Davis school system because of the delays in reopening the schools.

Please reconsider the roadblocks you have created to reopening our schools. The children of Davis deserve it.

Thank you,
Scott and Diane McElhern

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This communication and any accompanying document(s) are confidential and privileged. They are intended for the sole use of the addressee. If you receive this transmission in error, you are advised that any disclosure, copying, distribution, or the taking of any action in reliance upon the communication is strictly prohibited. Moreover, any such inadvertent disclosure shall not compromise or waive the attorney-client privilege as to this communication or otherwise. If you have received this communication in error, please contact our IS Department at its Internet address (is@downeybrand.com), or by telephone at (916)444-1000x5325. Thank you.

Monica Roque

From: Krista Wilcox [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 5:26 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Re-Opening Schools

Categories: Purple category

Davis School Board,

I am a parent to two children in the Davis Joint Unified School District, one a Junior at Davis Senior High School and one a sixth grader at Patwin. I also have an older child that is a graduate of Davis Senior High School and is a Honors College student in her second year. Both my husband and myself are graduates of Davis Senior High School and chose to live in Davis as we believed that this school district was one that could give our children the best public education and well-rounded student experience. Given the challenges of the past year and the deterioration in the education our children are receiving through virtual learning, we need to consider the best options for our children's well being and education and will be withdrawing our children if there is not a return to full in person.

It is in a challenging position we are in. Despite our teachers' heroic efforts, distance learning does NOT meet our children's educational social, emotional and psychological needs. This is not the fault of the teachers, it's just the nature of virtual learning. It is very challenging for children to engage day after day in a virtual environment. It's very challenging for the teachers to be engaged with their students and ensure that students are understanding and learning.

There is also a mental aspect to this as we are seeing. It's difficult to get our children up in the morning and wanting to be in their virtual classes, it's even more difficult to get them to do the work. Emotional outbreaks are now common. Our children once liked school and now dread it. Our child in high school has always been strong academically especially in science and math. He's in several Advanced Placement courses and is barely passing with D's. Few of the teachers have worked with my husband and myself to try to get his grades up, and a few others have written him off as lazy as they believe kids should be performing the same as if they were in-person. College is no longer an option with these grades. My child does not feel there is any point in trying, and essentially has given up.

Decisions of feelings of perceived risk alone cannot be the only guiding source for determining if/when there is a return to the classroom, especially when it is in violation of a student's constitutional right to an equitable education.

With the appropriate safety measures in place, schools can in fact safely provide in-person instruction. Many schools across the nation, within California as well as schools within Yolo County and Davis have safely returned students to the classroom. The district has the opportunity to learn from their experiences. Schools that have reopened have successfully implemented universal masking, basic hand hygiene and messaging for kids and staff to stay home if sick. What is not required for a safe school environment is for vaccinations for all teachers, keeping children six feet apart at all times or extensive infrastructure changes. Our school already meets the precautions to safely open once community prevalence decreases. Our Yolo County Health Director has stated that kids in K-6 can return to the classroom.

In addition, Davis is unique as it has a partnership with Heatly Davis to test our community on a weekly basis.

I would ask the School Board to commit to fully reopening schools for in person instruction. This is critical for shifting the conversation into the phase of how to effectively and safely offer in person education. Promote equity and good science in communications and take a strong stand for our students in our community.

Thank you
Krista

--

Krista Wilcox

Monica Roque

From: Ava Brusca [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 5:21 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear Superintendent and Board of Education,

I am an Eighth grader at Harper Junior High School. The past year hasn't been ideal to say the least. Students don't care that they are slowly falling further and further behind. Each day, doing their assignments becomes harder. My younger brother went from a star student to hating school and refusing to do his work or zooms. My sister is begging to go to private school, the thought of sitting at a desk in a classroom puts a smile on her face. Everyday I log into my zoom knowing the lots of kids in my class are playing videogames and are not actually there. We have persevered for so long but it is hard to keep on persevering when there is no end in sight.

I don't understand how we have not found a creative way to go back to school safely . We have free testing. We have UCDavis. We have a great school district. Experts such as Dr. Sisson and Dr. Fauci say that it is safe to go back to school. They know that it will be much better for students mental health to be in the classroom.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and your care for our physical and mental health.

Sincerely,
Ava Brusca

Monica Roque

From: Alexandra Borack-Leong [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 5:17 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear DJUSD Trustees,

We have hit the 11-month mark since DJUSD schools closed their classrooms to in-person learning. DJUSD families now know that the District has an agreement with Dignity Health to provide vaccinations to teachers and school staff. I do want to congratulate you and your staff on getting together the first part of the Re-opening Plan: there are now DJUSD dedicated clinics that are providing vaccines. Please provide information at this Board meeting telling the public how this information has been disseminated to your employees. DJUSD families also know that these vaccination clinics are NOT full.

With dedicated Dignity Health vaccination clinics now offered to teachers, student teachers, and staff, the Board Trustees must set a return-to-school date if there is going to be any in-person instruction before the Fall. This is because you have no clear way for DJUSD to track teacher and staff vaccinations without potentially violating the protections under HIPAA's privacy requirements. As such, the Board and DJUSD staff have now created an impossible return-to-class metric: teacher vaccinations cannot be tracked by their employer to know when teachers have been offered and received the vaccine. In addition, DJUSD has not disclosed how they can track those teachers that choose not to be vaccinated at this time. If there is to be any in-person education for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year, you need to direct your staff to take two swift actions:

1. There must be a DJUSD Family Return to Campus form sent out no later than next Friday, February 26th to plan for the number of students that will be back in the classroom for the remainder of this school year. Getting this information now is necessary to plan for classroom set-ups for the respective CA Department of Public Health colored tiers as well as the CDC guidance tiers. There must also be a swift deadline to get this information back from families so that the beginning of March can be spent getting the pieces in place. This will take a little time, so there can be no delay in getting the student numbers now.
2. I urge you to set the return-to-school-campus date to March 29th, 2021, which is the first day after Spring Break. Board would then be providing teachers and staff with approximately 40 days from today, February 18th, to obtain their vaccinations if desired. This is more than the 28-day time period between first and second doses and will accommodate clinic dates. If the DJUSD Board does not set a date then in-person education will not happen this school year. It's that simple.

Thank you for your time,

Alexandra Borack

Monica Roque

From: Luciana Brusca [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 5:14 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education; cpbrusca@gmail.com
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear Superintendent and Board

I am a fifth grader Koramatsu and am not writing this email to tell you how I'm doing or how upset I am about distance learning. I am writing this to tell you how all kids are feeling. I am the middle child with an eighth grader sister and a second grade brother. People in my sister's class all have their videos off and are not responding to anything she or her teachers are saying. My brother used to love doing school and everything involving it. Now, he will do the bare minimum in his work and hates writing. I want you to know that we are all feeling this way, and it's even harder to sit on the zoom screen knowing that your friends are in other schools learning and thriving safely. I know you are trying to get us back in school, but please try as hard as you can for all the kids who are at the breaking point and past it. I am writing this email to give you the perspective of a fifth grade girl, vice president of her school, and of all the other kids.

Sincerely,
[Luciana Brusca](#)

Monica Roque

From: Corina Matiesanu [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 4:56 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear BOE,

I'm a parent of three kids in DJUSD elementary schools. I'm working to ask for more urgency in your actions to get kids back together to in person interactions with their teachers and peers. All three of my kids show rapidly worsening signs of depression and anxiety related to distance learning. They are struggling and crying and asking why they can't be in school like their good friends in Marin county. We've all been patient up until now to help our community stay safe in the have of the virus. However, we've reached a point where every public health official from the CDC to Dr Sisson locally have agreed that a return to school is urgent and paramount, yet Davis public schools remain close and our decision makers see no urgency to the matter of return or to the pressing need for socializing our children. My kids who used to love school now say they hate school, every day, and it's a disheartening struggle. It's been almost a year since they've seen a school building. Please get them back on campus even if staying outdoors the whole time. Please make our kids' needs a priority in addition to teacher safety. You can keep teachers and kids safe outdoors. Make it happen please! Now. We cannot wait until August for this.

Thank you for your consideration,
Corina Matiesanu

Monica Roque

From: O'Keefe, Suzanne [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 4:46 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Purple category

Board members:

I am pleased teachers are being vaccinated in Yolo County, and that our county is transitioning from Purple to Red. This should mean the Board can move forward establishing a timeline for reopening elementary, junior high, and high schools. Please plan a timeline now, so that everyone can prepare for reopening. Please reopen all schools as soon as possible. Every day of learning matters to us. Even with the strict rules DJUSD has currently established, it should be possible to reopen all schools April 5th.

Teacher vaccines first dose February
Second dose March
Reopen April 5th!!!!

The CDC and Aimee Sisson recommend reopening elementary schools now, rather than waiting for teachers' vaccines, and I believe that is safe with the level of testing possible now in Davis. If you want to make that happen, maybe tell families that if they want their children to attend in person next week, have them tested at their school this week. Would teachers fear teaching masked children if they had all tested negative the week prior? We have amazing testing resources here. Let them help our students return to school now.

You all know how you feel after a Zoom meeting. You probably don't spend 3.5 hours on Zoom every weekday. Our children do! And they have done this for a year! My children (ages 11, 14, & 17) have been much more isolated than my parents (ages 75 & 76) and that is WRONG. Children around the world have attended school this year, because other countries see EDUCATION as ESSENTIAL. It is essential, and Zoom learning is not the same. My 17 year old, and his friends, spend almost all their time online alone in their rooms. I see 'Davis High School Class of 2021' signs all around our neighborhood, but it has been weeks since I've seen one of these graduating seniors outside their homes. My 14 year old is the opposite. He gets outside every day, but misses Junior High sports, and the school hasn't announced any plans for junior high spring sports. My 6th grader is just wondering if this will ever end, since she has spent about a tenth of her life in quarantine, and about a 5th of the life she remembers. Even with the support we can offer her, she is upset by online school at least once a week.

For the youngest learners, online learning is nearly impossible, but for older kids, the emotional toll is horrible. Older kids and teens need interaction with peers. They need a reason to get up and get out each day, and school should be that reason. Please reopen schools at all levels as soon as possible.

Suzanne O'Keefe
Professor of Economics
California State University, Sacramento
[REDACTED]

Monica Roque

From: Angela Schouten [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 4:29 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear Superintendent Bowes and Board of Education,

Your focus has become singular. The only concern regarding in person education ever brought forward is COVID-19. There are many other issues facing children that you are failing to recognize. These include children with significant weight gain, depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and children experiencing abuse and neglect. Children that used to be model students are failing classes, refusing to participate in yet another day of Zoom education, feeling hopeless, feeling like they are stupid. Special education students have stopped receiving services and are losing the progress they struggled so hard to make at an exponential rate. It has been ONE YEAR of remote learning. That is far too long.

The NY Times recently published an article in which 175 pediatric disease experts concluded that vaccines are not necessary to reopen schools safely. The California Department of Public Health, the Yolo County Health Officer, the Center for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics and Dr. Fauci agree, and yet you have not managed to move this boulder forward.

Private schools are open and making this work. Their teachers are not vaccinated, they have not received government funding, and yet it is working. ABC just summarized this disparity in a news release:

California school reopening map shows private schools opening in-person where public schools aren't. These private schools are in the same areas serving the same community. Private schools have made the commitment to education where the public system has not. And more and more families are leaving the district for this very reason.

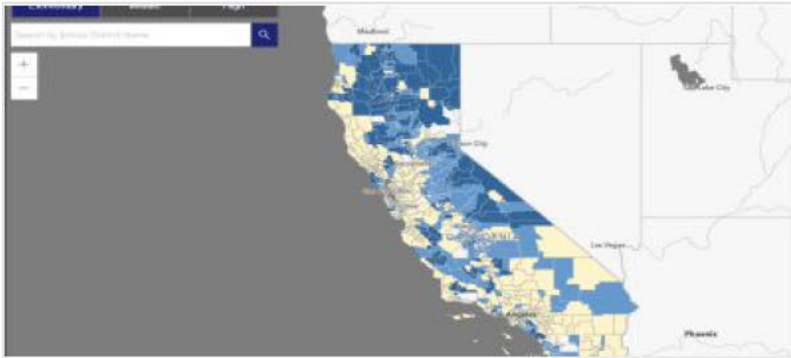
If you, the BOE and Superintendent Bowes, insist that teachers must have the opportunity for vaccination prior to returning to the class rooms, then you need to unequivocally state the date that class rooms will open. As a group, you have failed to aggressively plan to date. These endless surveys and models that keep getting put forward have begun to feel like delay tactics. So, now is the time. If you are prioritizing teacher vaccines, then you **MUST** pay it back with a solid and firm time line for reopening in person education. That is not only fair, but ethical.

Now that you are aware that schools can be opened safely without a vaccine and that vaccines became available to teachers and staff as of February 15th, you **MUST** set a date for in person instruction. I would propose you move to ensure schools are open by the first day after spring break, March 29th, a full six weeks after vaccines became available to teachers. This allows sufficient time for both access and preparations, which should start

immediately. Please show the community the urgency and commitment you have to the wellbeing of the children by setting a firm date to reopen schools.

Sincerely,
Angela Schouten

[California school reopening map shows private schools opening in-person where public schools aren't](#)



California school reopening map shows private schools opening in-person ...

It's a complaint many public school parents have had for months. New maps make the discrepancy clear.

Monica Roque

From: Lauren Crownshaw [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 4:18 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: public comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear Board of Education,

Why does the Board of Education go against county health official's advice that 1) schools can be opened safely and 2) schools should be open now for our elementary students? Dr. Sisson could not be clearer in her message. It is time for you to be clear with the public as well. Why do you go against the county health officer? No one on the board is a health official, so why do you make decisions that contradict local health officials? How do you justify your position?

What is the plan for school for next fall? What are the specific benchmarks you will use to determine if and how often students will be on campus? When will labor negotiations take place and will you transparently keep the public informed? You dropped the ball last year when we could have reopened in October. You had no plan in place and were unprepared. As a result, our students suffered.

It is time to hold people accountable for their lack of leadership and lack of action. Now is the time for new district leadership and board representation.

Parent of 1st and 2nd grade students

Monica Roque

From: Clarissa Tuttle [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 3:55 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Purple category

DJUSD Board of Education,

I am writing as both a public-school employee of 17 years and a mother of two DJUSD students. I would like to voice that I am in full support of school reopening as soon as possible as I believe DJUSD has the capability to do so in a safe and efficient manner. I have followed the federal, state and CPHO guidance on safe reopening, all of which have indicated it is possible to reopen safely without vaccines. I have had the privilege of supporting plans and implementation of safe re-opening within the region I serve as an educator. As a public-school employee, I have been a strong believer in the strength and ability of our public-school communities to offer comprehensive, rigorous, and life-changing education to our children. My family moved to the Davis community for this very reason! However, my husband and I find ourselves, for the first time ever, applying to private schools for our two children because DJUSD leaders continue to cast doubt on plans to reopen fully in the fall. This prolonged closure has had a devastating effect on my 3rd grader who has developed anxiety as a result; my 8th grader has experienced a significant drop in grades and is completely disconnected from his teachers. I am aware of scores of families who have either left DJUSD or are considering leaving because district leadership has not offered real hope or decisiveness regarding the re-opening of our schools. I stand with other district parents in offering my gratitude to Trustee Betsy Hyder who has been the lone voice in a student-centered approach to reopening our schools. I also want to express my appreciation to the teachers who are working tirelessly to balance this impossible task of distance learning and to those who have voiced their desire to return to their classrooms with students in-person. There are many!

Sincerely,

Clarissa Tuttle

Monica Roque

From: Robert V.O. [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 3:50 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Purple category

Greetings DJUSD,

I am a parent of two daughters in the district, one is in fourth grade, and the other is in fifth. I am a PhD Candidate in Chemistry currently homeschooling both of my kids through DSIS due to the failures of distance learning. It's impossible to provide a high quality education to my kids while teaching university students and conducting research in lab, but homeschooling is better than struggling with distance learning for us.

With Yolo County's new cases numbers decreasing into the California Red Tier and new CDC Orange Tier, it is time to plan to open our schools for in person instruction, even if it's reduced. The default position by the district should involve getting kids into school as much as the guidelines allow for. This means we should have in person instruction for elementary schools in some form as soon as allowed by the new guidelines. The board and superintendent need to do what's necessary to have a plan in place that allows children in school when guidelines say we can. We should also be ready to move into the new CDC Yellow Tier, which allows for full in person instruction for K-12.

Dr. Fauci and the new CDC director have recently stated teacher vaccination should not be a requirement to return to school. Do not add requirements on top of what our public health officials recommend. Public health officials are already generally quite conservative about their approaches to returning kids to school, and of course they have considered the safety of teachers when making their recommendations.

Teaching our kids is the primary function and obligation of our public schools, and this includes having students in school when allowed by public health officials. Please stop stalling and delaying, if other schools all across the country can make it happen, so can we. Public schools are open all across the country, and private schools returned months ago - including in Davis. The human biology of children, teachers, and staff in the DJUSD remains quite similar to the human biology of children, teachers, and staff in all of the open school districts in the country and world. We can use models from open schools and implement a safe return. Our city wide testing system provides one of the best of its kind in the world - how could we possibly allow ourselves to fall behind other districts that don't have this system in place?

It's time to provide leadership to the teachers and staff who are hesitant to return despite scientific evidence and our top health experts supporting a safe return is possible and has been done. Our superintendent and board members need to speak up and let the teachers know we can do this

safely, and reassure teachers and staff that the DJUSD will provide a safe environment. This should be done during your board meetings.

It's time to provide leadership for the parents and kids by announcing a return date. There has been a severe lack of leadership in this regard shown by the school board. Many parents feel they are not at all represented by the DJUSD board members. The board members need to also advocate for parents and kids. Parents have lost trust that the DJUSD will make it happen without external motivation.

Get our kiddos back in school. Provide leadership to teachers, staff, parents, and kids. It's time to step up and do what's right.

Sincerely,

Robert Van Ostrand

Monica Roque

From: Hiss, Amy/SAC [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 3:31 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Comment for 2/18/21 - BOE meeting - please read out loud at meeting

Categories: Purple category

Dear Board of Education,

It makes sense for teachers and staff to get vaccinated first before school opens up for in person learning. The disruption from stops and starts when teachers and staff get sick and are quarantined will be decreased and school will be safer and efficient. The plan DJUSD has already developed and approved makes sense. Vaccines for teachers and staff are already happening and it won't be long now before things get back to normal.

Amy Hiss

NOTICE - This communication may contain confidential and privileged information that is for the sole use of the intended recipient. Any viewing, copying or distribution of, or reliance on this message by unintended recipients is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify us immediately by replying to the message and deleting it from your computer.

Monica Roque

From: Choi Family [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 3:09 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear members of the board of education,

I am a parent of a kindergartener in DJUSD. I am writing to you today to implore you to follow science. Please remove the requirement that teachers receive both vaccines plus two weeks off prior to a return to campus, so that the hybrid model can be executed as soon as possible.

Multiple experts, including Dr. Fauci, the CDC, and Dr. Sisson have made clear that full teacher vaccinations are not a requirement for a safe return to school. Further, there is no scientific evidence to suggest that 2 weeks are needed to recover from the second vaccine. If a teacher has an extreme reaction to the 2nd vaccine requiring more than a few days off, that should be dealt with on a case by case basis because this is the minority reaction, not the majority.

In the fall there were many unknowns regarding covid. However, since then, there has been significant evidence to support the conclusion that transmission risk in schools is low. According to the CDC, in a Science Brief updated on February 12, 2021, "Based on the data available, in-person learning in schools has not been associated with substantial community transmission." (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/science-and-research/transmission_k_12_schools.html)

Anecdotally, my own children's experience with in-person learning and that of countless others in private schools throughout Davis and beyond demonstrate that in-person schooling can be done with proper measures in place. Since the summer, my children have attended in-person childcare at a large center in Davis. We made the decision to send our kids to childcare with concern for the possibility of contracting covid, but we had little choice. My husband, a pediatrician, and I, an attorney, who have no family in the area, found it untenable to give our children stimulating and fulfilling care while maintaining our workloads. Once kindergarten started, we have been blessed by the childcare provider's decision to help our daughter and others with distance learning.

At their childcare center, children wear masks indoors and out, they wash hands regularly, parents aren't allowed in the classroom, and children/staff are not allowed at school if they have any symptoms. The students range in age from infant to 6, so are probably not the best at maintaining a distance with classmates, and there are over 20 children in the preschool classrooms with 3 teachers. Nevertheless, despite having some positive covid cases acquired outside school, there has been NO in school transmission or outbreaks of covid that I am aware of. I've heard similar stories of children and staff attending/working safely in person school at private schools all over Davis. It is clear that schools can safely reopen with proper precautions in place without the need for staff to be fully vaccinated.

As published in the Davis Enterprise, "Health Officer Dr. Aimee Sisson weighed in on both a return to the classroom and resumption of high school sports. Her verdict: students from transitional kindergarten through sixth grade can safely return to school now; junior high and high school students must wait; and high school athletics that involve close contact continue to pose significant health risks."

Please listen to Dr. Sisson, Dr. Fauci, the CDC, the other experts, and the growing list of school districts in California who have started/plan to return children to school without full teacher vaccinations, starting with elementary students (Natomas, Folsom, Roseville, San Ramon Valley Unified, Los Gatos, Palo Alto, and Castro Valley, just to name a few). By imposing such stringent reopening guidelines that are not supported by scientific evidence, you are doing a disservice to all of the children in this community who need some form of in-person schooling. As noted above, I am fortunate that my daughter has an in-person experience, so at the end of the day we do not have to rely on DJUSD for some of the benefits that in-person school provides. Not everyone has that option. Also, is it fair that only people who can afford a private program get in-person instruction? Please do your part to not further propagate educational inequality in Davis. I ask you to remove the excessive vaccine requirements and not let the children of DJUSD suffer with full distance learning any longer than they have to.

For those proponents of keeping schools closed, please remember that distance learning is still an option under the hybrid model - nothing is lost by allowing others to return in person when all evidence shows it can be done safely.

Sincerely,
Dao Choi

Monica Roque

From: Cameron and Jennifer Jones [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 3:00 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear Trustees,

I hesitate to even write this, as I have begun to give up on our school district. I worry that the Board will not listen, that you all have closed yourselves off and made up your minds. But I know that none of you took your position on the Board for personal gain but only because you want to serve the children of Davis.

The CDC has released their guidelines for opening schools. We should follow them. Countless medical professionals and associations have backed the opening of schools. We are lucky in Davis to have a robust health system. Furthermore, we have extensive opportunities for testing. We should be leading the nation in showing what safe schools can look like. Let's be leaders in courage. Not controlled by fear.

Every day that the schools are closed our children struggle. Children are safest and healthiest when they are in school. Davis prides itself in being exceptional. Let's be exceptional in prioritizing the safety of our students by getting them back in the classroom.

I understand that some teachers and families are afraid. They can choose to stay home. My husband is an ER doctor and has continued reporting to work. I run a small business and have continued reporting to work. We must all assume some small risk for our community. If we are unwilling to do so, that is our choice.

The lack of transparency about the process of reopening has been especially disappointing. I have submitted applications for my children at private schools as I have lost confidence that our students will be back in full time instruction in the Fall. DJUSD should release information regarding benchmarks required for full time opening. I am an active school supporter and parent. I have served on PTA, Site Council, been Room Parent, and driven on numerous field trips. The thought of leaving DJUSD pains me, but you all have failed us.

Our students are counting on you. Make the right call. Get kids back in school.

Jennifer Jones

Monica Roque

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 2:10 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: public comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear DJSD board

As a Parent of a 13 year old Special Education Student at Harper and a public school teacher (26 years- currently working full time and in-person instruction following Covid policies) myself, I would like to tell you our story for our son, he currently needs a one-to one ASL signing para and receives speech, OT, deaf and hard of hearing services, as well as instructional services. All of his assessments and services have been virtual. This is extremely hard for him and has greatly affected his learning, not to mention his social and emotional state of mind.

No in-person instruction has been provided, no in-person services have been provided, and no in-person assessments have been provided (this affected his IEP because we were not able to get a true picture of his skills). As a teacher myself, I do differentiate and modify the virtual work, as well as help him on and off the computer, but even with my support at home I am unable to provide for him the services or education he needs. I see a young man regressing academically and socially, which is unnecessary.

Andrea Studer

Monica Roque

From: Jessica Jacobson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 2:08 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education; Superintendent
Subject: public comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear Superintendent Bowes and Board of Education,

Every day, every week, every month that schools are closed, children are being harmed.

The district regularly monitors covid numbers and hospitalizations. Your responsibility for community wellbeing extends beyond a single malady. At a recent meeting, a local pediatrician spoke about children with massive weight gain, children with depression, children with anxiety, children with suicidal ideation, children experiencing tremendous abuse. Children who are not safe are increasingly unsafe every day that school is closed. Children left home alone, children taking other jobs, children caring for their siblings, children disconnecting from their studies, children pursuing GEDs instead of college educations, children dropping out. Have you looked at the nearly 50 percent increase in suicide related call volume by Yolo County youth to crisis line? Where does that fit into keeping our children and our community safe?

An acquaintance who leads a non-profit serving disadvantaged children shared the article by the New York Times, in which interviews with 175 pediatric disease experts concluded that vaccines are not necessary to reopen schools safely. "I am ringing the alarm bell that we cannot stop talking about this," she writes. "In Texas schools are actually mostly open, and our organization reopened in late summer, and yet more than 80 percent of our kids now aren't reading on grade level. And the trauma and now-hidden abuse? Real."

In Texas, they can now see the children and the harm that has been done. In Texas, the closure of schools and services was minimal compared to Davis. Like her, I will not stop talking about this. Because I can't look our children's generation in the eye unless I can say that I did what I could as an adult to protect them.

Any narrative that equates closed schools with safety is a false narrative. It is a narrative that goes against the overwhelming public health guidance and leadership. Guidance which takes into account the safety and wellbeing of the ENTIRE community – teachers, staff, students, families and community members. It is a narrative that accepts harm to children. Harm that you may ignore since it's not visible to you now, as the children are not visible as black boxes on a screen (if they are on the screen at all). But it is harm we all know is there.

Remember that this is happening under your watch and leadership. That harm to children is increasing with every day that schools are closed. That other schools and districts have both prevented any deaths among students, teachers and staff from covid while also serving children in person. You have the ability and the responsibility to act to minimize the harm. You can do that by heeding public health guidance and opening schools as soon as possible.

Now that you know both that schools can be opened safely without a vaccine and that vaccines became available to teachers and staff as of February 15th, you can set a date by which schools will be open. I would propose you move to ensure schools are open by the first day after spring break, March 29th. This is six weeks after vaccines became available to teachers, allowing sufficient time for both access and preparations. Please show the community the urgency and commitment you have to the wellbeing of the children by setting a firm date to reopen schools.

Sincerely,

Jessica Jacobson
Parent of 3

Monica Roque

From: Heather Mariano [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 2:05 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Purple category

I have been a public school educator for 25 years and a proud supporter of DJUSD for 17 years. I am writing to let the board know that I just filled out my first private school application. I need a school that values data and recommendations from the California Department of Public Health, the Yolo County Health Officer, the Center for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics and Dr. Fauci. I need a school district that looks to the needs of every student in our district and fights to accommodate all kids. My son deserves a full year of curriculum and classes. My son deserves a district that values and supports his mental health. I've been bullied online by district staff because I agree with the experts that it's time to go back to school. So, with no promise of a full time return in the fall, this public school educator has been forced to fill out a private school application for her son. I would like to thank Trustee Hyder for her steadfast commitment to the children of our district. I can only imagine that being the lone voice feels incredibly uncomfortable. While your work has just begun, your voice has been strong. Thank you Trustee Hyder, you are so very appreciated.

Heather Marshall

Monica Roque

From: Todd Pickles [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 2:00 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Fwd: Public Comment -- 2.18.21 Board Meeting
Attachments: Davis Joint Unified School Board of Education -- Public Comment.pdf

Categories: Purple category

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]
Date: February 18, 2021 at 1:59:16 PM PST
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Public Comment -- 2.18.21 Board Meeting

If you are not an intended recipient of confidential and privileged information in this email, please delete it, notify us immediately at [REDACTED], and do not use or disseminate the information.

February 18, 2021

Davis Joint Unified School Board of Education

boe@djUSD.net

Re: Public Comment for Board Meeting

Dear School Board Members:

I have written to you before to express my extreme concern about the absence of progress in returning children to the classroom. As established through much published research, each day that children are forced to continue remote learning negatively impacts their educational and social development and places them at a greater disadvantage with respect to their peers at other schools locally and within the nation who have safely resumed in-person learning despite facing similar public health conditions and without the substantial resources available by our terrific and supportive community to DJUSD. The harmful effects of remote learning are most acute on economically-distressed or single-parent families who need our support more than ever during the lingering impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Research has also established that remote learning exacerbates the achievement gap. Put plainly, our children have borne a terrible sacrifice from this pandemic and remote learning, and DJUSD's mission of providing superior education to our children is now at a crossroads.

The most recent survey data as reported in the New York Times on Friday, February 12, 2021, finds that there is overwhelming consensus by public health professionals that students, teachers, and staff can safely be in schools now, and the nation's leading public health officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") agree that children and adults can safely resume in person learning, even prior to vaccination, provided steps are taken with respect to spacing, ventilation, and testing, all of which DJUSD has already accomplished. For the wellbeing of our children's mental and emotional health and the overall public good of our Davis community, it is vital that DJUSD join other area schools and publicly commit that, at minimum, elementary school students will be returning to in person class during the 2020-2021 school year and that all students will be able to attend class in person in the 2021-2022 school year.

As part of this process of safely returning children to school and following the science and experts, not to mention the Biden Administration's efforts to overcome the negative impact of the pandemic, I also ask the School Board to publicly comment on the following, particularly to the extent the Board is unwilling to commit to returning our children to schools this year or even next year:

- What specific scientific or public health information is DJUSD relying upon with respect to its decision to not return children to the classroom this school year, and specifically the condition of vaccinations of teachers and staff who want them prior to a return to school?
- On what scientific or other basis is DJUSD not following the guidance by the CDC issued on Friday, February 12, 2021 that children can safely turn to classrooms now provided certain mitigation is accomplished?
- Beyond letters to the Governor and other policy leaders, what practical steps is DJUSD taking right now to facilitate DJUSD teachers obtaining vaccines, such as (1) contacting area pharmacies or vaccination sites to help arrange for vaccinations of teachers and staff at the first possible moment; (2) coordinating with teachers to ensure they are able to obtain vaccines at the earliest possible date and providing whatever financial, transportation, or other support to them that is necessary to get them vaccinated; and (3) setting and enforcing a deadline by which all teachers and staff who want them must obtain a vaccine.

I very much appreciate the public service you perform in helping guide our school systems and your efforts to look out for the safety of students, children, and staff. The goal of vaccinating the teachers and staff who want a vaccine is a worthwhile pursuit that I and I expect many others in the community very much support. But it is time that DJUSD publicly commit to following the science and the experts and returning students to school now. Our children deserve it.

Respectfully,

Todd Pickles



Monica Roque

From: Rachel Kitazono [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 1:57 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear DJUSD Board Members,

I'm writing AGAIN in the hopes that you will take into consideration the seriousness of extended school closures.

By now, you surely know the harm you are allowing by keeping schools closed.

We all know it is safe to reopen. Dr. Sisson, the public health officer, urged you to at least open elementary schools, and you have ignored her. Why? Why are you okay with ignoring her advice? How can you let feelings dictate our children's education and well-being?

What has happened to our community when we no longer listen to good science and public health policy? This is how we got into this problem in the first place when leadership ignored the sounding alarms of following the science. When we look back at this time, are you going to be able to confidently say you did all you could to get our children back to school? You are responsible for how this goes.

Think of the children behind the zoom boxes, or the black screens. A teacher publicly admitted she really doesn't know what's going on with her students.

Can you look children in the eye and answer why they can't go to school when other districts are opening or have been open?

Please stop ignoring them!

I'll say this part again;

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 you care 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.

♥ Rachel

Monica Roque

From: Kristina Passerini [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 1:42 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear BOE,

I'm writing for several reasons. The biggest of which is that I would like to have definite answers to when schools will be reopening. Today was a banner day in my household as both kids ended up crying over issues with DL. It is not working in our house anymore. If teachers can go skiing, go to the beach, meet up with their extended families, teach in their car as they are driving around running errands, then this mantra of "it's not safe" to go back to school is null and void. It has been proven time and time again over this last year that community spread has been the cause of the infections, not from being in a classroom. (This data pulled from every other school in the U.S. that has come back to school without outbreaks happening from the schools) They are already putting themselves and their families at higher risk by these outings than they would get in classes with proper mitigation - meaning masking, distancing, and ventilation.

I wrote to you earlier and told you how I taught in person last Fall and was willing to discuss our mitigation methods which kept all students safe over the semester. I was summarily "dismissed" with the "we'll talk when we're ready to go back". Experience has shown that the poor planning of DJUSD often leads to confusing messages and headaches for all involved. The time to start putting these things in place is now. The time to start sending out information to families about expectations for when we go back to school is now. Not the week before everything is supposed to happen.

Secondly, many parents of children with special needs have reported that very few students who have IEPs are being helped in the way you are legally obligated to help them. These families have been forced to look for alternative ways for their children to get the support they need. Why is it on the parent's shoulders to find these alternatives? Why isn't/wasn't DJUSD already working to sort this out?

Please hear me loud and clear when I say I am done with DL. My family is done with DL. Figure it out and be transparent, with definitive answers, about when realistically you expect children back in the classroom. The students need to be there, without technology, as it has quickly become the enemy of learning.

Kristina Passerini

Monica Roque

From: Lindsay Berman [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 1:00 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Purple category

I am completely disheartened in the way the public school system has let us down. It is unacceptable for children to be out of school this long. For the board to give extended distance-learning as a solution is unacceptable. Next year I will have a fourth and seventh grader, and I am terrified of distance-learning another year. My two children have always thrived in a school environment and have excelled in all areas. I no longer see the light shining within them. They dread every morning logging on to the computer and feeling isolated from the lack of stimulation. They have never been left alone so much in their life, not all parents just get to stay home, and not all people can stop their job and just say let's wait for a vaccine, you make it work safely until you can make other choices. For the school district to say we will open next year if conditions allow is a cop out, you can set a safe environment in order to get this done, but it doesn't seem like that is the prerogative. The board needs to understand that hundreds of parents have set plans to leave the district, myself one of them if they do not get their act together and open full in person next school year. If other districts can do it, I don't want my kids in the district that cannot make comprehensive decisions for the safety of our children and teachers and the benefit of their mental health.

The hybrid plan that is set to open in May, is also unacceptable. How are working family supposed to pull off four trips in one day to school (for multiple children)? It makes no sense to have two cohorts in one classroom, one after another on the same day. If the district can not present a better alternative, they should consider the impact of less students in their district.

We are the advocates for our children, no one is speaking on behalf of their needs, and as a parent that is my job and I will do whatever it takes to provide them with a fair, equitable education.

An extremely concerned parent.

Monica Roque

From: Heather Jones [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 12:56 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: public comment

Categories: Purple category

DJUSD BOE,

Last week my 1st grader got to meet her teacher live during a material pick-up. Wow, the joy in my daughter's face!! Seeing her teacher live & in-person was a memory I will hold onto forever. While we were leaving my daughter said, 'Mom, thank you for picking such a FUN teacher for me!'

Our children need in-person instruction from their teachers so they can learn & grow from their FUN teachers. Now that teachers are approved to be vaccinated and being that Yolo County is getting close to the Red Tier, I ask that the DJUSD Board of Education lock down a date to re-open DJUSD schools for the 2020/2021 school year. Doing so will give our children hope during this pandemic. We all know that our children desperately need this hope. I can already imagine so many children putting up 'countdown to in-person school' calendars as the excitement to return to the classroom builds.

So today, during THIS board meeting, please pick a date to re-open DJUSD schools for the 2020/2021 school year.

Thank you,
Heather Jones

Monica Roque

From: Jessica [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 12:53 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public comment

Categories: Purple category

Hello,

I am writing to express my desire towards getting DJUSD back in-person as soon as possible. As a former special education teacher for the district and parent of two school-aged children, I was forced to unenroll my daughters in October of 2019 because virtual instruction wasn't an effective means of educating my daughters.

Every single day my daughter or myself would end up in tears. My first grader would hide under the desk, tell me "I hate learning" despite the teachers and my best efforts to help her succeed.

We ultimately made the painful decision to enroll in private school and in-person learning has been made all the difference for her education. Make no mistake we didn't move to Davis to pay for a private education, Korematsu is literally in our backyard, but we will continue to pay for private school as long as the district keeps our kids out of the classroom.

We know our actions take money out of the public school system, but enough is enough. We won't re-enroll in DJUSD until our daughters can be 100% IN-PERSON. A hybrid approach is a cop-out. Our kids deserve so much better than what our district has done.

We cannot live in this highly educated community and continue to ignore science, the CDC guidelines, and pediatrician's recommendations that all state it is safe to be back in the classroom. Stop allowing the board and vocal-fear mongering parents to dictate what's best for our kids. As someone who has seen both sides, virtual and in-person instruction this year, there is absolutely no doubt of the educational and social/emotional benefits of in-person instruction.

PRIORITIZE VACCINATING OUR TEACHERS NOW AND GETTING THE KIDS BACK IN THE CLASSROOM THIS YEAR!

Sincerely,
Jessica G
Mother of 3

Monica Roque

From: Linh thai [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:49 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: Public Comment for February 18 School Board meeting
Attachments: LT.School.Board.ltr.pdf

Categories: Purple category

Dear DJUSD board,

Attached is my public comment for the next DJUSD board meeting on February 18.

Thank you,
Linh Thai

Dear Davis Joint Unified School District Trustees:

Thank you for your hard work during this difficult time. In person-schools have been closed for almost a year. Time is running out on this academic year. With the growing evidence that schools can open safely during the pandemic, why are we still keeping our kids at home? Research shows that children are not major sources of coronavirus transmission. Many schools around the world and across the United States are open, and there have not been major outbreaks as a result. Most private schools in the state and our own community are open. By keeping public schools closed we are creating more social inequality.

The Davis school district is in far better shape than most districts to open. Our covid rates are much lower than surrounding areas. We have free Covid-testing available via Healthy Davis Together. They are willing to set up free testing at each school if schools would open.

We know teachers are doing their best to make Distance Learning work, but Distance Learning has been challenging for many students and parents. Parents who are working from home cannot get any work done when their kids are constantly interrupting. Parents without childcare must put their careers on hold to stay home with their kids. Many students are failing to learn the basic skills and knowledge they should be mastering at their age. My son is getting bored with school. He misses recess and playing with his friends. Schools teach not only academic knowledge but also responsibilities and social and emotional skills. Schools also provide physical activities and exercises. Kids cannot get this sitting in front of a screen.

Neither State nor Federal guidelines specify vaccines as essential for safe operation of schools. Why is the Davis school board putting such stringent conditions on reopening schools? We know vaccination is a major problem in California and Yolo County so schools should not stay closed until all teachers are vaccinated. (Of course, teachers should be given priority if enough vaccines are available).

The school year is running out. We need to act now for the health of our students. We are doing them a disservice by keeping them at home. Teachers should also be given a choice on whether they want to teach in person or online. Some teachers are ready to be back in the classroom with their students. Parents should have the right to choose whether to send their kids back to in-person school. Please open schools as soon as health guidance allows. The virus is going to be around for a while, so we cannot just sit back and wait for the "right time" to open. We may be waiting a very long time. The students are the one paying the price.

Sincerely,

Linh Thai (parent of DJUSD student)

Monica Roque

From: Erin Ross [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:30 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education
Subject: public comment

Categories: Purple category

Dear Board Members,

I know you will not actually do this aloud, but I wish you would indulge me in answering the following questions:

- 1) Do you believe you know more about the importance and safety of returning to school than Dr. Sisson or the CDC? Yes or no.
- 2) Do you still believe teacher vaccinations should be a prerequisite to school reopenings despite the fact that Dr. Sisson has explicitly stated schools have been safely open for in person learning throughout the pandemic? Yes or no.
- 3) Do you intend for a full time reopening of our schools in August? Yes or no.

At this time, the majority of schools across the country are open in hybrid or full time. DJUSD is failing.

I urge you to reconsider your past decisions regarding school reopening criteria, and instead follow the guidance from our local and national public health experts. It is never too late to admit your mistakes.

Erin Ross

Monica Roque

From: Sarah Williams [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 12, 2021 5:16 PM
To: DJUSD Board of Education; John Bowes
Subject: Public Comment Board meeting 2/18

Categories: Purple category

Superintendent, and Trustees of the Board,

Thank you for your hard work making sure our schools are the best they can be.

I know COVID 19 has made this job harder than ever.

I know it's been hard on our students, and hard on our families, and especially hard on our teachers.

I know many families are really struggling. It's hard to work and help our kids through school. It's hard to keep our kids home, not playing with their friends. It's hard to miss the birthdays, and holidays, and milestones that we expected.

I suspect the parents protesting to "open schools" are focusing on that, and they're not wrong. It's been a hard time for all of us. But "opening schools" without proper precautions won't make it better.

The board has listened to experts, and teachers, and many others, and come up with a plan that will allow schools to go back to in person learning in a safe way. This is one of those times when slow really is fast. If we rush to in person learning it's very likely that we will need to send students and staff home to quarantine, and when that happens it will mean that students take home the virus who wouldn't have in distance learning. That can mean horrible tragedy. That will also mean that all the students and staff who were in contact with the virus carriers have their next 2 weeks completely disrupted as they go into quarantine.

We can follow the plan that staff and the board have worked hard to shape and expect to return to in person learning once, and stay there, or we can rush ahead and watch our students go in and get sent home and go in and get sent home.

I look forward to sending my daughter back to in person learning. She loves her teacher this year, and I would love for her to be able to be in the classroom with her, but we need to make sure we do it in a safe way.

Please stick with your plan and continue to use science guided requirements.

Thank You,
Sarah