

Subject Line: Supporting Students during the Pandemic

Body of Text:

Members of the APHEN Committee:

To best support our student stakeholders during the COVID-19 pandemic, we are writing to express our strong support of the two below items.

1) the LAUSD prioritizes the needs of students by reopening schools as soon as possible

Given the long lasting and growing concerns with the negative impacts of remote teaching on learning, social-emotional wellbeing, and mental health of students, especially those that are most vulnerable, we request that you prioritize the needs of students by reopening schools as soon as possible.

We believe now is the reasonable time to do this since 1) on Feb. 16, the Department of Public Health announced that L.A. County's case rate had met California's requirement for reopening TK-6 schools for in-person instruction and 2) since March 1, teachers and school staff have been receiving the vaccines.

Also, we request more transparency of the polling of parents in LAUSD as we want to make sure their voices are fully represented and weighed in in your decision making. We would like to see LAUSD be creative and proactive in the reopening plan, such as by 1) implementing a hybrid model, 2) prioritizing vaccine doses to target the grade level that would benefit the most from reopening sooner such as teachers for younger children or students with special needs, and 3) by treating teachers like other "essential" workers during the pandemic with extra pay and safety measures to be able to work in person.

2) the LAUSD encourages stakeholder participation by reinstating the Parent Engagement and Special Education Committees.

When the LAUSD closed campuses due to the pandemic, it also suspended all School Board Committees. With these closures almost a year old, we requested that the Parent Engagement and Special Education be allowed to resume work. The pandemic has caused unprecedented disruptions to our children's education. The effects have been especially brutal for children with special education needs. Parent and community input is important as the district maneuvers through the continued physical closure of our schools and plans are made for the eventual return to school sites. These two committees are essential for providing a means for this feedback to be given to the people elected to represent the community's interests.

I look forward to hearing from you. Please let me know if you have any questions about this information or about our request.

Sincerely,
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Cc:
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