

Esteemed Colleagues,

We fully recognize the importance of respecting each other's well-deserved summer rest. However, as your representatives, we feel that it is incumbent upon us to keep you updated on fast-moving recent developments having to do with plans for 2020-2021. These are some of the most urgent items about which we feel you must be made aware:

1. On Friday, 7-10-20, a statement was published on the Board's [agenda for the July 14 regular meeting](#), stating:

Through study, discussion, and deliberation, the Instructional Workgroup team (comprised of educators and administrators) developed three proposed plans. These plans were then vetted with additional administrators serving on other Workgroups, the Superintendent's Leadership Team, and WEA Leadership. Following this discussion and input from these groups, the Instructional Model AA/BB was selected.

This statement implies that WEA had “vetted,” or approved of, the instructional model that was selected. Let there be no misunderstanding: WEA Leadership did not endorse *any* of these plans and does not believe that the plans presented by the district sufficiently address the need to fully safeguard the health and safety of staff or students.

We want to make it abundantly clear: We recognize and value the hard work of the educators who were tasked with creating the best possible proposal, under very narrow constraints. However, educators only became involved in the work groups **after** District Administration had already eliminated, with zero member input, the option of 100% distance learning, deciding instead to implement some sort of a

hybrid model. These educators were placed in an impossible situation and did an amazing job under these constraints.

WEA Leadership concludes that the hybrid instructional model developed and chosen by WSD:

- has not been informed by the work of the Health and Safety work group.
- does not reflect accurate numbers of people safely permissible in an instructional area.
- does not take into account actual numbers of staff who would be available to teach on-site.
- does not reflect input from families and students.
- does not take into account continuity of learning with multiple repeated exposure scenarios.
- will be impossible to safely implement, given the current levels of custodial and nursing staff.

2. During the last two weeks, we have watched as the incidence rate for the Woodburn area has increased substantially. Please see [Marion County COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#). At the same time, WSD has tried to push hybrid instructional models in order to meet ODE deadlines.

You may not be aware that Woodburn's entire Summer School Camp CARE program was closed down for two weeks due to one employee exposure. This is an indicator of the vulnerability (at current infection rates) of on-site programs within the district. "Hybrid" learning simply cannot operate with enough consistency to support the kind of student learning that is promised.

For these reasons, **we will be consulting with you shortly on whether you feel that schools would be safe for in-person learning in the fall, or if you believe**

that we should advocate for the continuation of full-time online learning, should local covid conditions not improve. This ballot question, which contains an option to comment, will be sent to your home email, from an email address that contains vote@simplyvoting.com We will incorporate your voice in our advocacy before the WSD School Board on Tuesday, July 14 at 5:45 PM (zoom link [here](#)).

3. Regarding **the high-risk employee survey** that was sent out on Friday: Although WEA had insisted that a current and accurate count of high risk staff be conducted to inform any instructional plan, this survey was not submitted to WEA for review. These are some of the concerns we have:

- Its current format encompasses specific conditions of leave, which are a subject of ongoing interim bargaining.
- It incorporates language which some members view as intimidating.
- It states that building principals will be contacting us if we list ourselves as “high-risk;” however, we do not know who in administration will have access to the specifics of our private health information.

In view of the above, **we are requesting that if you haven’t filled it out already, to refrain at this time from completing it.** We have requested that the survey be withdrawn, until one can be produced collaboratively.

Upcoming events/useful information:

Please take a look at this **NEA website, which curates the latest facts and research about educators’ health/safety, along with (implications for leave during the pandemic....”[Know your Rights.](#)”** A national NEA webinar covering many of these issues will be held on Friday July 17 at 12:00PM. [Sign up here.](#)
(Note: there were 20,000 educators on the previous webinar!)

Interim bargaining will resume the week of July 20-24, exact dates and times to be determined. We will update you as soon as we have this information.

Thank you for bearing with us as we attend to multiple urgent issues at the same time. We will do our very best to keep you updated. As always, please feel free to reply with questions, comments, or suggestions.

We urge you to rest while staying alert to developments.

Kathy Kuftin, WEA President

Tony Salm, WEA Vice President