

PUBLIC COMMENTS
SEPTEMBER 16, 2020, BOARD MEETING

1. Thu, Sep 3, 2020 at 6:55 AM

Good evening and thank you for taking my questions virtually. If we as a school district have three learning models in place, let's use them. Currently we are attempting to navigate our way through the distance learning option, this isn't working for my family. Our internet can't keep up and my student can't see what the teachers are writing. We also have a hybrid option of two days on 3 days off. In this model students can get the face to face help they need from the previous days of distance learning. Easy way to keep kids semi connected and learning. The third option is totally distance. If you can't do face to face school anymore, yearlong distance learning is a great option. Please give the right to choose what option is best for us. Thank you.

Tony Carter Ann Carter and Maxwell Ryan Carter.

2. Thu, Sep 3, 2020 at 7:40 AM

Good evening and thank you for taking my questions. It appears that Truckee schools are being grouped into Placer county covid mandates because we have Truckee students that live in Placer County? By all accounts on line it looks like we might only have 100 or fewer students living in Placer county. If we have roughly 2500 students in our truckee schools, this seems like a disproportionate ratio to close down the schools? Lets access the other models we have in place and give the community a chance to choose. 1) distance learning all year. 2) hybrid partial face to face learning 3) Traditional school as we know it. Thank you for your time.

Tony, Ann and Maxwell Ryan Carter

3. Thu, Sep 3, 2020 at 9:41 AM

Hello my name is aaron harris, I own and operate Truckee Laundry. I took this photo outside of the laundromat yesterday, the first day of school. This lady had her three daughters out here using our Wi-Fi because they don't have the means at her house. She quit her job to teach her three kids. This is a sad sight I hope you guys are fighting like hell to get the kids back in the school! My daughter is a junior at Truckee high school. We need to get the kids back in school let's figure it out. Thank you.If you could kindly share this photo with the rest of the people on the board to kind of give them a realistic look of what society is dealing with right now I'd appreciate it thank you.

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Aaron Harris

4. Mon, Sep 14, 2020 at 9:12 AM

School Board Members and Superintendent Ghysels,

I wanted to write to you about the upcoming switch from virtual to hybrid learning that is being considered. First, I would like to say that I have been very impressed so far this year with how the distance learning is being implemented. My son is a 3rd grader at Glenshire Elementary and his experience with online learning has been great so far, I am very thankful for the staff at Glenshire and all of their hard work.

I know that the district feels pressure to return kids to class as soon as possible and that you are still using the survey from last spring to guide your decisions. I am very concerned that with everything that has changed since then, pushing for in person class so quickly is not a good idea and will have negative consequences for the students and teachers.

It doesn't seem clear that it will be safe to return to school in a few weeks and I cannot imagine how the teachers could possibly offer high quality online and in person instruction at the same time. I don't want my son who has an IEP to have to switch teachers or leave his class but I also don't think it is safe to send him back to school and I think expecting him to be able to distance and wear a mask all day isn't realistic.

It seems that all of the logistical problems along with the likelihood of students getting sent back to virtual learning as we head into winter and flu season that switching to in person class prematurely is not in the best interests of students (or teachers).

I hope that you will put off the return to in person class until the science is more clear that it is safe, appropriate, and sustainable.

Thanks so much,

Laura Mader

5. Mon, Sep 14, 2020 at 6:00 PM

I believe going back to in-person instruction, even in a hybrid model at this time is extremely disruptive, irresponsible and borderline dangerous. Even though the Placer County Board of Supervisors believes our County is "safe" this is a farce...the Chief medical officer for the county resigned in protest saying she did not agree with their assessment and that she could not do her job of keeping the county SAFE. Our ability to test suspected COVID cases is laughable at best, with the current technologies giving false negatives / positives and

taking weeks to return results. As winter closes in on our community, the cases of COVID are sure to rise as people are forced to spend more time indoors. This will ultimately lead to schools closing again and creating much of the same chaos that we experienced last spring. While distance learning taking place now is not ideal, at least teachers, admin and students know what is expected and have time to prepare. If schools were to close again, kids would be plunged into the unknown and weeks of learning would be lost. While I know the District and leadership has the best intent by sending kids back to school now, I feel it will end in disaster. Wait until after xmas when we know the extent of what the common flu season and COVID will bring upon our community...we are in an "ok" place with distance learning now, let's wait 90 more days and see what we have. Thank you for considering my opinion.

- Jonathan Moulton

6. Mon, Sep 14, 2020 at 10:09 PM

Dear TTUSD Board Members and Superintendent,

I am writing as a concerned parent and teacher.

I am VERY concerned for the health and safety of our community if we were to switch to a hybrid model.

Though I want my children and my students to be in physical school, experience normalcy and be around their peers, I do not think we (as a community) are ready to start physical school.

Below are reasons why TTUSD needs to maintain distance learning:

- We have seen other districts open with the results leading to the spread of COVID
- We do not know the full long-term effects for those that get COVID, especially children.
- There are no other buildings in town that house such large numbers of people, we should not be experimenting with our students and staff.
- We do not know the long-term effects of wearing masks all day, there is not enough data yet.
- We do not know the effects of our students being around strong cleaning supplies on a regular basis.
- We are just about to go into the cold and flu season, a time where COVID will spread.

Another large concern is that school is not going to be the type of school students are used to. With the new restrictions listed below school will no longer be the supportive, social/emotional, educational environment that we as a district strive for.

- Students will be required to wear masks all day
- Students will be required to maintain 6 feet distance, therefore not allowing a lot of cooperative learning or being in close proximity to their teachers.
- Students will not be allowed to move freely around the classroom/campus and there will be no socialization time built in as it is deemed unsafe.

- Some students and classrooms will have plexiglass and the desks will now be in rows and facing forward.
- Classrooms could be shut down at any time because of COVID exposure and students will be constantly in a state of uncertainty.

As a parent and teacher, I am so proud of how our district has embraced distance learning and though it is nowhere close to perfect, it is much better than in the spring and students are adjusting to their new schedules and school day. We have additional support and critical outreach in place for students and families that are not responding well to distance learning and/or have not shown up. As a parent of students at TE and ACMS, I am impressed with the curriculum and engagement. I, as a teacher, have received positive input from classroom parents. Why rock this boat with moving to hybrid and shifting kids all around? Too much change and transition is not healthy for students. We need to stay in distant learning for at least the first half of school while we wait and see what happens with COVID over the next couple of months

We need to continue distance learning until it is safe to return to school full time. Truckee is a community that prides itself for being healthy, active and socially aware. Let's continue that trend and keep our kids home. Thank you so much for continuing to put our students, faculty and community first.

Kathryn Markovchick

7. Tue, Sep 15, 2020 at 8:17 AM

TTUSD Board,

I wanted to voice my concern about in-person school this fall (I know this is dependent on quite a few things). This is my third email to the district and I do appreciate that the emails have been read and responded to. I have high risk kids at home, I work full time (although, I've had to cut my hours back due to the pandemic) and am a mother of three. I've looked into other ways to keep my oldest home (9yrs of age) but there are not any viable options as of right now and that is incredibly disappointing. The distance learning option has not been put together well. In many other districts kids that choose distance learning get to stay at their school and in their class, which is not an option for us (and I'm not sure why). That puts my twins at risk (both in which were born with major lung issues and started life on ventilators). The CDC has come forward to say that this winter (that COVID paired with influenza) could be the worse rate of infection we will see.

Secondly, I have concerns with the fact that we have no idea what the long term effects might be for those that get infected with COVID, whether they show signs or not (obviously many children don't show signs or if they do get sick, it's usually very mild, we still have no idea what the long term effects of this illness are). I'm just not willing to put my kids long term health and safety at risk.

Lastly, you have several high-risk faculty that need to be added to the equation in a much more serious fashion. I feel as though the needs of the teachers and administrators life and health are not being taken seriously. I have several teacher friends that scared and fearful to go back to school right now in an in-person setting. I know there is pressure from those parents that want their kids back in school and for those students that are in high risk situations at home. Right now we are dealing with something unprecedented and we can see from other schools across the nation and world, that opening up possess significant risks and a high rate of COVID transmission. Why bring that to our community?

As hard as distance learning is as a working mother (and I actually think the teachers are doing a phenomenal job with this right now), I am a huge proponent for distance learning for at least the first full semester of school for all local elementary schools. Trust me, I want to get back to “normal” as quickly as possible...staying home with twin 4yr olds and a 9yr old, with nowhere to go, is hard and has been very trying, but their health and safety trumps all else. If the hybrid model is how the school transitions, there will inevitably be outbreaks in our schools and shutdowns will be eminent (we’re already seen this in local daycares and other parts of the state and in schools across the country). Our children’s health and safety as well as the teachers and school administrators should be at the forefront of this decision. I urge you to please consider distance learning as the model for school this fall (at least for the first full semester and then reevaluate).

Thank you for reading and for your consideration.

Erin Ellis

8. Wed, Sep 16, 2020 at 4:14 PM

Hello TTUSD board,

The teachers have done an amazing job with an incredibly difficult task of teaching during distance learning. I applaud their efforts and the enormous undertaking. However very few children and families are thriving in these circumstances. I know safety is paramount and thank the district for figuring out a way to get the children back into the classroom as soon as possible. We are looking forward to hopefully starting school in-person in a few weeks.

Kind Regards,
Audrey McGinty

9. Wed, Sep 16, 2020 at 4:23 PM

Dear Members of the TTUSD School Board,

As I get ready to live stream the school board meeting tonight I am sitting here wondering why we are expecting our students to be in school around people, when our school board meetings are still being held virtually. We are asking adults to stay home, but want our children in school? It is a big mistake to rush the openings of our schools and to even consider the hybrid model.

Please reconsider rushing to open our schools.

Thanks,
Jonathan Moulton

10. Wed, Sep 16, 2020 at 4:35 PM

Dear Superintendent Ghysels and TTUSD Board Members -

You have been tasked with making very difficult decisions many times but probably no more so than the past 6 months. Thank you all for your consideration in every decision you have made. Now it is time to make another decision, and again in the face of feeling stuck between a rock and a hard place, to send our children back into the classroom in person.

Since you have stated that you are making decisions by looking at the "science", the science and the numbers in Placer and Nevada counties show that we no longer have a "health emergency" and, as I am sure you are all aware, the Placer County Board of Supervisors rescinded the health emergency here in Placer at their recent BOS meeting. The numbers were presented and it was a unanimous decision.

I urge you to also recognize that "cases" equal "positive test results" even if the person tested is asymptomatic and it has been shown over and over that asymptomatic people do not spread Covid.

We cannot continue to live in hiding and fear. Again, children are at much greater risk of serious illness or death from the annual flu. Life itself is risky, driving is risky, hiking, biking, skiing, snowboarding are all risky, yet we do them anyway, accepting the risk. We know a lot more about this virus than we did 6 months ago. It's time to let our children be children again. Get them back in school in person.

I want to also commend TTUSD for the way the current "distance" model is being done - it is significantly better than the pivot plan (and from speaking with parents from other districts and states TTUSD also did a much better job at the pivot in the Spring) from the spring. That being said, it's time to put those children whose families desire and need our children in school in person while finding a way for those who are at risk or still concerned/fearful to have an option to remain in distance learning.

Thank you.
Ann Sura

11. Wed, Sep 16, 2020 at 4:52 PM

All 5 members of the Placer County Board of Supervisors voted to end the public health emergency declaration. It's time to open our schools for in-person learning!

Bethany Eisinger

12. Wed, Sep 16, 2020 at 5:02 PM

Superintendent Ghysels, members of the Executive Cabinet and School Board,

On behalf of the Tahoe Truckee Teachers Association, I would like to submit the following public comment.

Last night, the Representative Council for our association held our monthly meeting. There were many issues discussed including clarifying our position on reopening schools. We felt it was important to inform all of you prior to making any public statements. As a council, we voted on and adopted the following position:

TTEA supports a return to in-person instruction when allowed by California guidelines and when TTUSD commits to implementing all of the requirements and recommendations from the California Department of Public Health for school reopening in order to keep students, staff, and our community safe and healthy.

While this may be the official stance of TTEA, we recognize that a significant portion of our membership currently do not feel safe returning to school. To those teachers, we want to reiterate our association's commitment to representing all of our members in any way that we can.

Thank you,

Nik Fertitta

TTEA Vice President and Grievance Chair

13. Wed, Sep 16, 2020 at 5:08 PM

I am in favor of school moving to in person hybrid learning. I feel confident you are taking all necessary safety precautions to provide what is desperately needed, in person learning. Thank you for all your work and consideration.

Karli Rydd