

PUBLIC COMMENTS
AUGUST 5, 2020, BOARD MEETING

1. Tue, Jul 14, 2020 at 3:06 PM

To the Truckee Tahoe Unified School District Board

The aspect of this Covid pandemic that has not received the attention it deserves is that of the school closures effect on the mental state of our youngsters. Young people are accustomed to expanding both their learning and social skills within a school environment. This has been taken from them over the last 4 months. The effects of this drastic change in their environment is having negative effects on these children that are just starting to be evident - go to YouTube and witness the anguish of parents losing children to increased student suicide. We have to weigh the price they will pay for being removed from the school environs with the chances of being seriously affected by the virus. This is a no brainer. The chances of young people in primary and secondary schools being seriously affected by Covid 19 is infinitely less than their chances of being mentally affected by school closures. A study in Europe showed that children are not vectors for transmission of Covid-19! I see that one proposal directs all children to wear masks in school. That is totally contradictory to scientific studies. The teachers should be wearing the masks so they don't transmit the virus to the children!

Finally, free meals are being offered to all children up to 18. Food feeds the stomach but not the brain. If you can feed the kids then you can teach them also. Isn't that the job of the school district?

Please don't fall to political pressure or be blinded by false statistics, OPEN THE SCHOOLS for the sake of our children's future!

Thank you....

Paul Ackerman

2. Tue, Jul 14, 2020 at 2:53 PM

To the School Board for the Truckee Tahoe Unified School District.

Meeting July 14, 2020

I appreciate your hard work and labor studying and making decisions in the best interest of the children in your district.

In consideration of all the FACTS and latest data available the best decision is for our children to return to school.

"Research has been done all over the world in Switzerland, Sweden, France, Canada, Netherlands, Australia and Asia has found that children contacting and passing on the Covid19 virus is less than the seasonal flu" according to Dr. Scott Atlas, Senior Fellow from the Hoover Institute, Stanford University.

July 13, 2020

A study just published in the journal JAMA Pediatrics looked at 48 children in the United States who have required intensive care with Covid-19. Among other findings, 40 of them had significant medical issues which complicated their diagnosis.

A recent study by physicians at the University of Vermont published an article in a major Journal of Pediatrics looking at studies from Switzerland, New South Wales, China and France stating children in school and out are not spreading the virus as much as 95% of the adults.

Washington Post

By Andreas Kluth | Bloomberg

May 29, 2020 at 12:40 p.m. PDT

...where children rotate in and out of their physical classes...ask parents or children, or at least those who have access to online learning, and most will say that this stop-go education is more stressful and less effective than schooling was during the total lockdown.

You need only ask the children and parents in our community who can tell you many things about the lack of significant learning happening with on-line education. Especially if the kids know their work doesn't count or they can't move ahead because complex questions are not answered.

My concern for the children who may need glasses or hearing aids and this isn't caught because they are not in school. Also, the significant depression which occurs in many students because of the social isolation and lack of a reliable structure to their day. Not to mention not having P.E or sports which allows for frustration to be run off. And what about the child where there is abuse in the family and it is caught at school.

Washington Post June 24, 2020

Joseph G. Allen is an assistant professor of exposure assessment science, director of the Healthy Buildings program at Harvard University

"Whether we open schools will be determined by our risk tolerance as a society. What will we accept for schools? If the answer is "zero cases," that will require us shutting schools for another year. The costs of that approach are too great, especially when there are proven risk-reduction strategies at hand."

Our kids need to return to school. Let's remain faithful to the promise of making the best decisions we can for the students and not bending to the wind of the political pressures. Stay focused on the facts.

Thank you.

Judy Ackerman

3. Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 7:51 AM

I am optimistic and hopeful we will have some back to school option.

For my 3 school aged kids, 2 have been fine working remotely. But my middle schooler, it has been really difficult. I would go as far to say he was dealing with significant depression. Please don't underestimate mental health.

For our family, we don't have any risk factors at home and can adjust our lifestyles to minimize our impact on our more susceptible community. For us, it is in our best interest for WHOLE health to get back to school. At least on a reduce schedule.

As for teachers.... I am sympathetic to their concerns and do not take them for granted. However, I think there is plenty of evidence to support that they can protect themselves like so many other essential employees do already.

Thank you for your time.

Janet Mourning

4. Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 7:52 AM

First, thank you for responding so responsibly during this unprecedented time in modern history. Our household talks about each of you in the administration of our children's education every day and are respectful of these incredibly difficult choices you are trying to wrangle safely. There is no playbook for any of this.

The fact is, nothing has changed about this virus. As you are all well aware, it is HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS. Its effect on everybody is as diverse as the number of people it touches. From no symptoms to death. From one extreme to another and everything in between across all types of our citizenry.

As things have reopened, cases have spiked. Period. Whether sports, restaurants, offices, whatever, cases are on the rise across this country with the exception of those areas that have pulled back their reopenings. Those places (like Arizona) that were spiking have pulled way back and as of the last few days they are starting to stabilize.

We are raising our niece who will be a senior. We are older. We want nothing more than to give her the gift of that fully-engaged, awesome senior year experience. But despite being healthy all three of us have conditions that make her full participation impossible.

Spread at school will occur. It's just a fact. Faculty and staff will be exposed. We cannot let this happen.

When winter arrives and the in-school community is breathing recirculated air with windows that cannot be opened due to the cold, there will be spread.

Please, consider distance learning ONLY, until either:

1) all kids are able to be tested on campus WEEKLY with one-day results, and with contact-tracing and two-week isolation of positive cases and their families/friends,

Or

2) there is a vaccine that can be mandated (as with other school-mandated vaccines) so that the school environment is not by definition a "super-spreader" situation. (Hopefully that could be administered by early next year?)

Please, as much as we ALL want schools to re-open, ERR ON THE SIDE OF EXTREME CAUTION.

This will end. Our lives won't be like this forever. And the sooner we understand that the only way to slow the spread is to keep apart, the better off everyone will be.

Thank you for listening.

We are with you. What you're grappling with is incredibly tough.

Respectfully,

The Bryan Family.
Suzanne Pride Bryan

5. Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 8:26 AM

To the TTUSD board,

The safety of our teachers during this pandemic should be our first priority, if they get sick it will be difficult for our children to not just get an education but will have serious emotional effects for our little ones in elementary school. Nobody should feel scared to do their jobs and especially be scared to teach our children. With that in mind, I really hope the board is not planning to have in person instructional teaching until this virus allows for some kind of normalcy back in all of our lives.

While I completely understand the education inequalities that exist in our nation and in our schools, this should not be an excuse for the district and our teachers to not transition to do live teacher led instructional teaching in distance learning.

Back in March, this virus took all of us by surprise and as parents we understood how little time and preparation the district and teachers had to figure out distance learning. This fall, there should be no excuse and teachers across all grade levels should be required live online teaching for our kids. I understand TK, Kinder and perhaps first grade this is a challenge to do for the whole school day given the age of the kids but the rest of the kids and teachers should be expected to transition to a live online school model that would allow for instructional teaching and interaction between kids and their teacher. This is possible to do with a proper schedule and breaks just like it is done physically in school.

Technology does allow for this to be possible and while some children may be disadvantaged, it still should be offered to those that can make it work. Sending worksheets through a school platform is not teaching and it is not giving our kids the learning and interaction that is desperately needed especially at this time.

If kids are able to watch television and play video games for hours across all social economic groups then we know they have the capacity to get on zoom and also listen to their teachers so they can learn. Please we also can't have such low standards and expectations from our teachers, if they were able to go mountain biking, hiking or have an extra curricular activity during school hours back in March- June then they should be expected to be teaching during those times.

The rest of us are still expected to work outside the home or from our homes when our children are home, teachers should face the same expectations despite very real difficulties I am sure they all face with their own families. Having said that, we all face them.

If we are all truly in this together then we all have to be treated equally and everyone has to sacrifice. This virus is already taking away many freedoms for our kids (can't play, can't see friends, can't socialize, etc..) please let's not let it continue to take away their right to live instructional teacher led learning.

Thank you for your support and understanding during this very difficult time.

6. Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 8:41 AM

Hi There,

I wanted to write my comment as a consideration for the decisions. As a family with 2 working parents in essential services, we have been fortunate that both children could attend childcare through Discovery.

While we were at home and doing remote learning for our daughter who was in kinder one of us had to be next to our daughter the entire time and could not work. The stress was overwhelming, the days were longer than I knew, and it was far worse than the stress of returning to work from maternity leave with multiple kids and learning those routines. My daughter will be in first grade this year.

We will not feasibly be able to teach her remotely unless we hire someone or take a leave of work, which would only be temporary and cause significant other problems.

Other parents and myself have been discussing hiring a tutor/nanny for a small pod of kids and rotating houses and sharing costs.

I want to share these current parent discussions so in your evaluations you can include the impacts on families and the kids. While I have that option, I know many other families will not have the funding to afford private instructions and will be forced to choose between education, caregiving, and working to feed their family. I saw what seemed like multiple kids in my daughters kinder class that were with family members during the day and weren't able to keep up (we were holding on by a thread as well) though I'm sure the teacher has better perspective on that.

So while thinking of these impacts, I really hope that at the forefront of your decisions are what the alternatives will look like specifically for kids and youth with disabilities and families with lower income. If I have to stay home so they can go to school, we will figure it out and be fine (Relatively speaking and assuming we can hire support). Not every family will.

Additionally, since our kids daycare has been continuing with much stricter health guidelines, it seems to have been going very well. If there are some alternatives to partner with the local after school programs so that smaller groups can work on days not on campus, or in the remote environment, I'm sure most of us would look for that alternative. I'm not sure if we have enough caregivers to do this safely, but we'll all be scrambling to hire support one way or another. I also think what this will mean for relative exposure. The less time on school campus, the more time and additional exposures will take place as families are trying to navigate this and finding other groups to participate in.

I appreciate and respect whatever decision is made as that is in everyone's best interest and health.

Mom to 6 year old first grader in the fall with 3 year old in preschool/daycare.

Thank you very much for your considerations and making these incredibly hard decisions.

Penny Morris

7. (71 words)

Esther Ospelt@gmx.ch <esther.ospelt@gmx.ch>

Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 10:15 AM

To: boardroom@ttusd.org

Hi there

I know it is a difficult decision. But in my opinion the kids need to be with kids and not at home.

Mom's are not teachers. We never can do what the teachers are doing at school. Social interaction is so important for them.

I have a kindergartener at home, going to clubhouse
In Glenshire.

I really hope I can bring her to school again in fall.

Thank you.

Esther

Gesendet mit der GMX Mail App

8. (39 words)

Alisa <alisa@tahoedreamteam.com>

Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 11:15 AM

To: "boardroom@ttusd.org" <boardroom@ttusd.org>

Will there be a Spanish immersion distant learning option for kids on that track whose parents don't want them to attend school? I do not feel safe with my children back at school but we want to continue Spanish.

Alisa Adriani

530-412-3070

9. Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 12:18 PM

Hello,

As a parent of two elementary school children in Truckee, I have been both impressed and concerned by TTUSD's response to this unprecedented pandemic. I was amazed at the ability to go from classroom based learning to remote

learning in just a matter of days. The teachers and administration were unbelievably flexible and helpful in ensuring that my children's education remained a priority. I honestly believe that it could not have gone much more smoothly. I believe that this was all done in the best interests of children's health and safety.

It surprises me now to hear that based on a technicality that the school district is based out of Placer County that even schools in counties deemed safe will not open. Having witnessed the impact of the stay at home order on my children, I am shocked that TTUSD is not doing everything they can to provide the BEST education experience possible for my children. Children need to socialize and have time away from their parents to make their own decisions, good and bad, to slowly grow into independent adults. In addition, one of my children is on an IEP and receives phenomenal support and therapies that just cannot be replicated remotely.

I fail to understand how you come to the conclusion that a one size fits all approach should be applied here. If a county is deemed safe, and parents have the opportunity to choose remote learning if they are not comfortable, shouldn't TTUSD do everything they can to provide the best possible education experience for their students?

I understand that this may be logistically or administratively more difficult but you hit a home run on three days planning when schools were shut down! I believe you can do more with the amount of time you have before school starts than just apply the alternate plan to all schools regardless of whether they are in areas deemed safe or not. Our kids are worth it.

Respectfully,
David Scott

10. Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 12:24 PM

Thank you for your time and consideration.

While we would all like to see things back to a new normal and have school on campuses as soon as possible, I don't believe this is the time for it. Both Placer County and Nevada County are seeing surges which have been steady since the reopening began and if you look at the numbers it is the Truckee area and the Lake Tahoe area leading the surge in those counties. I hope you have seen the recent article in the Sierra Sun, "If Truckee Were A County, It Would Be On the COVID - 19 Watchlist." The numbers tell the story. We are in the heat of this pandemic and going back to campus would escalate the problem.

If it is not safe to hold this meeting in person or to dine indoors in the area, how can it be possible to stuff our children into classrooms with a teacher for several hours?

According to studies, children 10 and older transmit this virus at the same rate as adults. Florida has seen a rise in cases and hospitalizations of children just weeks before school is set to open there. We just don't know enough about this disease yet to sacrifice our children and staff as guinea pigs.

Just like everywhere, there are varying rates of compliance with mandates in our area. Some have stayed isolated, worn masks, and refrained from traveling and other activities that would lead to exposure. Others have not done the same. People have come to vacation in our area after testing positive, and I know at least one local family sent their child to day camp in town after a family member had been tested meaning the family should have been quarantined. We can

assume that, no matter what safety procedures are put in place, there will be people who ignore the precautions or bend the rules.

I have two students in the district and our teachers did an excellent job with distance learning on three days notice. I have no doubt that they could do the same or better with more preparation time. That is why I think it is imperative to make the right decision for their safety now and give ample time to prepare.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Marie Desmond

11. Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 12:26 PM

Hello,

Thanks for all that you do. My question/comment is, given that school will start with virtual classes and/or a mix of some in-person teaching, and given that our county/state will likely see some sort of shelter-in-place/mandated closures sometime in the next several months, why is the district not considering re-evaluating its year-long calendar? With these setbacks that we can surely count on, why not message now that the school year will extend into late June or into July to accommodate for the mitigated learning experiences and that we will likely be in a safer and more stable environment 10-11 months from now?

Ryan

12. Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 2:31 PM

Dear TTUSD Board and Staff:

I'll make this short because you have a tremendous workload associated with addressing back-to-school under COVID-safe conditions.

Here's my list of 'must haves' for our students (note: I have a daughter, 11th grade, THS).

When there is distance learning it should be consistent with a school schedule day

(many teachers said homework needed to be turned in by 'midnight' on a certain day, and that shifted my student's sleep patterns and school became a night thing).

There needs to be some level of social contact for our students and access to campus

(it is critical for our kids to have access to the school and their chosen friends with some level of frequency – nuf said).

Teachers and admin need to be aware of the extra stressors distance learning is placing on students

(when each teacher has different log ins, different times, different submission processes and office hours, and email practices it turns my daughter from being a student to being an online administrator. In the first week of distance learning one teacher sent her over 25 emails. Please please have some consistency and be aware that they shouldn't be managing a caseload and an inbox full of mass communication. Just make class times actual class times so the communication takes place so our kids don't become overwhelmed by the tasks of being a secretary!)

For high schoolers instruction should be LIVE (not recorded) and attendance for virtual class time should be mandatory and interactive

This gives a sense of community, normalcy in the student's schedule, and keeps them on track – many of them do not have the maturity to be self-motivated and watch recorded videos. It needs to be LIVE!

I'm sure you're doing everything in your power and I thank you for your commitment.

Keep up the great work and thanks for hearing my concerns.

Holly Verbeck

13. Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 3:53 PM

Hello Trustees,

I would like to suggest that the remote learning system include on-line video instruction by teachers. If the kids were in-school, they would benefit from having the teacher review the material orally and visually with them during class. Many kids need this sort of teaching method and it can be done through on-line video instruction and/or GoToMeeting or Zoom live on-line participation. For example, if the teacher is providing a live lecture in the classroom to a limited number of students who choose to go to school instead of use remote learning, that lecture (and presumably discussion amongst the class) should be video recorded and uploaded and shared with the other students who did not attend the live lecture via Google Classroom. If possible, live streaming at the time of the live lecture would also be ideal to enable students to maintain a daily schedule that simulates them being on campus and they could participate in the discussion as well. If the teacher is not at the school, the lecture could still be done at the teacher's home and uploaded by the teacher or other District personnel. This should not require any extra preparation for the teachers since they presumably already have their lesson plans and lectures prepared, but it may involve extra expense to the District to hire videographers to record and upload/stream the video of each lecture. If Google Classroom could not, for whatever reason, accommodate the upload or streaming of videos, I suggest that the District consider using Google Drive for this purpose. I know this is possible for a reasonable price because in our business, we regularly conduct and record on-line meetings using GoToMeeting and then upload those video recordings to a folder on our Google Drive account that is shared with all of our contractors. The cost to us for each contractor to access the Drive account is \$50 per year. I'm sure that as a public entity, the school District could negotiate a better price per student/teacher.

I would also like to suggest that teachers conduct on-line office hours every day for students to ask questions. Last year, many teachers only offered this opportunity once a week and that was not enough. If the kids were in school, they would have daily access to their teachers. This should not change in a remote program.

Cindy Smith

14. Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 9:15 PM

Hello TTUSD BOD,

My name is Aaron Abraham and I am a volunteer with the local soccer club, Truckee River United Futbol Club (TRU FC).

Over the years, TRU FC has relied heavily on TTUSD to help support our community in gaining access to fields. Teri and Gib have been awesome to work with over the years as they are prompt on communication and put a lot of time and energy into the community. TRU FC would like to inquire how we can access the TTUSD fields. We would not use the fields for games and scrimmages. Only for socially distance training where we can get the youth of our community engaged in a healthy and structured setting.

At the moment, TRU FC is facing a serious challenge as we prepare for the upcoming Fall, Winter and Spring seasons. We heavily rely on the relationship we have with TTUSD to supply fields for our local community families. If we cannot secure local fields, we may need to source fields outside of the area. If we cannot gain access to fields at all, we could face the possibility of losing our local families to Reno based programs and see a collapse of our organization that has serviced the community since the early 2000's. This could lead to a scenario where TRU FC does not have the membership to continue operating as families will flee to the Reno area to join youth organizations in this area. Either of these outcomes are not in the best interest of our community and athletes.

We are requesting that a committee is set up to create a socially responsible and distancing protocol that can allow youth organizations to access TTUSD fields. We would also be following US Soccer guidelines that are specific to soccer. I am willing to help assist with this committee if needed as I have had extensive training in the construction industry and youth sports over the last several months.

Please let us know how we can best navigate these uncharted waters. We appreciate all that you and TTUSD has done for our program over the years and hope we can find a responsible solution. TRU FC is available to discuss this with the TTUSD BOD or others within TTUSD to create a sustainable gameplan for the youth of our community.

Please feel free to call.

Thanks for your help,
Aaron Abraham

15. Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 11:59 PM

Hello! See below article. Could we try to start the school year at least partly outside until it gets cold? I will not be sending my kids for indoor instruction but I would consider a hybrid of distance learning / outdoor instruction.

Jen McVey

Why Can't We Just Have Class Outside?

It might be the answer to America's school-reopening problem.

Read in The Atlantic: https://apple.news/Akp_JsHgeR8-EydcoZc18_g

16. Wed, Jul 29, 2020 at 5:56 PM

Dear Superintendents Rob Leri and Carmen Ghysels and TTUSD board members,

With the scheduled start date for school a month away, there is definite concern and uncertainty for what the future holds. Unfortunately, there is not a "one size fits all" solution.

On July 17, 2020, Governor Newsom released his pandemic plan for schools to be able to reopen. His first key area is, "Safe in-person school based on local health data" which includes, "Schools located in counties that are on the Monitoring List must not physically open for inperson instruction until their county has come off the Monitoring List for 14 consecutive days. Schools in counties that have not been on the Monitoring List for the prior 14 days may begin in-person instruction, following public health guidelines." However, "There is a single exception. Local health officers may grant a waiver to allow elementary schools to reopen inperson instruction if the waiver is requested by the district superintendent, in consultation with labor, parents and community-based organizations. When considering a waiver request, the local health officer must consider local data and consult with the California Department of Public Health."

The total and current cases of COVID-19 in the Eastern portion of both Placer and Nevada counties have remained extremely low.

To achieve the best outcome for our children, we must balance their physical and mental health with their education. The Elementary students require in person instruction. Children need the structure and the safety of being in the classroom during these unsettled times. They are too young to stay home alone and, regrettably, many parents have essential jobs outside the home that preclude them from taking time off to help their children with their lessons.

I strongly urge you to take advantage of the Elementary school waiver that Governor Newsom included in his plan. It is imperative that our youngest students return to the classroom, even if Placer County remains on the watch list. Our children's future demands it.

Thank you for your time.

Mara Russell
Parent of a second and fifth grader

17. Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 10:34 AM

Hello good day to you all. Over the past few months, I have been interviewing different age group children, single mothers, also married mothers, and have come to the conclusion that we need to get our community and our children back into school. I get comments like parents don't have the time to sit down with their children And actually teach their son/daughters the correct material for their own understanding. It's difficult for parents to teach in the way the child learns. From the child's perspective they think home is for family, love, and good moral teaching they get excited to wake up in the morning wanting to see their friends and teachers so that they learn the right educational way at school not in their bedrooms or living rooms with a screen in front of their faces. Now finally speaking with a single mothers perspective she doesn't have resources to have the time to teach, she's worried about providing for her children a roof over their heads and food in their bellies. I mean I fight every day to get my children to read during "summer vacation" and now to wear a mask to cover up their emotions in what they are going through. They just want to see their friends and learn to be challenged so they can grow get smarter. Ya let's say it as parents I must admit we can get tired, frustrated, and annoyed with them but in the end we are to set an example and to prepare them for their future to help

them succeed. I'm not so sure we are doing a great job at that by covering up our emotions and pretending to "learn at home" thank you for your time in reading.

Rachel O

18. Fri, Jul 31, 2020 at 8:24 AM

Good morning TTUSD board,

Thank you for creating this sensible proposal. My only hope is that we, as a rural community in Eastern Placer County, may appeal to the state to distinguish our numbers from South Placer, a much more densely populated region situated approximately 80 miles from where we live.

Thank you for your hard work and consideration on this concept. For the mental well being of our children I do believe it's important to create as much in person instruction as possible.

Best,
Renee Kojane

19. Sat, Aug 1, 2020 at 2:08 PM

Dear President Szczurek and fellow Trustees:

This correspondence is in reference to the options under consideration to begin the upcoming school year in the face of the ongoing Covid Pandemic. We acknowledge, as do you, that the safety for students, staff, parents, and the community at-large, as well as ensuring the academic progress of students, is at the forefront of these discussions. In such unprecedented times it is important that any such decision err on the side of safety. Our staff and students, individually and collectively, have shown a high degree of resiliency and adaptability in the face of uncertainty; this asset can only be called upon if we keep those populations safe from harm. In this everchanging medical environment, the only prudent course of education to pursue as we enter the Fall 2020 academic year is exclusively via Distance Learning, with students and staff learning and teaching from their respective homes. There is no viable alternative that will adequately shield against additional infections and death.

As pedagogical innovations emerge, they should and shall be integrated into our local Distance Learning environment. As medical research and break-throughs better understand, defend, and ultimately defeat this modern day plague, we will once again be quick to adapt and apply best practices for students, staff, and all concerned. Decisions that you are being asked to make on this issue are never easy, but the consequences of getting this one wrong literally involve life and death. As such, in keeping with our safe environment mandate, we urge you, in the strongest terms possible, to set board policy without equivocation: All educational contact will be exclusively remote until such time as it is proven safe to do otherwise.

We recognize that you face pressures to pursue avenues other than that for which we have advocated. Recent regional history alone clearly demonstrates the deleterious outcome of equivocation. When health and safety was set against

economics in our region, the effort to address both ultimately only served to fail both interests; our economy continued to be weak and tenuous, while our illness and death rates rose unacceptably. Placer County's watch list status is a case in point. During their period of highly restrictive distancing their case numbers dropped dramatically and stabilized. More recently, having sought to decrease some of the restrictions in the hopes of helping the economy, the net effect is a dramatic surge in the numbers, 163 per hundred thousand, well above the standard for considering any reduction in restrictive best practices.

Thank you for taking the time and effort to review and consider this earnest plea. We are confident that given all the facts you will do the right thing for all parties concerned, namely, cast your vote for distance learning, with all teaching and learning to occur from home.

Sincerely,

s/John Falk- Parent, Community Member

s/Rachel Falk- Counselor TTUSD, TTEA Member, Parent, Community Member

20. Fri, Jul 31, 2020 at 7:06 PM

My husband and I were wondering how the summer camps and places such as club house, play date, and many other forms of day care in truckee are allowed to operate normally 5 days a week, 8 hrs a day with zero social distancing....and we see the kids inside and outside with no masks on (which is fine with us because masks in many many studies have proven to show little to zero protection, if anything it creates more germs transmitted to kids noses and mouths because while they are wearing the masks they touch their faces about 10 times per minute) however we are just wondering how and why schools in particular SELs can't find a way to socially distance during class time and why schools such as small charter schools like SELS can't open full time ?

I understand we follow the same guidelines as TTUSD but this is an unprecedented time so you think there would be exceptions to every rule about how and why we are not opening our small charter school.

My husband and I are both healthcare workers. We go to work every single day regardless of if we encounter a Covid patient or not. We don't know if someone who walks into the ER or calls 911 for an ambulance ride is positive or negative for the illness. We do our jobs and show up to work. Kids have a very very low transmission rate as well. The statistics for covid Deaths in California are 0.023% per capita. Even less for kids.

We understand that this Virus is now a part of our life. We cannot run and hide from this virus. We hope that SELS can find a way to get kids back to school full time in person ASAP. The kids are suffering, the parents are suffering, not all of us are meant to be teachers for our own children. We need to find a way to do our jobs just as health care workers show up everyday to do their jobs. In person. I'm sure many teachers would like to go back to work as well. Spread the desks apart, have class outdoors, let's get the kids back!! Thanks.

Sincerely, the concerned parents of a kindergartener and second grader.

21. Sat, Aug 1, 2020 at 8:50 AM

First and foremost thank you for your efforts to communicate with parents during this ever changing time. I am so impressed and grateful for this simple honest communication from you.

IF we are able to safely attend in a hybrid manner, in addition to all you are communicating and working on as solutions, is outdoor Ed on the table. Can it be incorporated into the school day to relieve the pressure on inside learning and also being at the computer (the machine) yuck, for the rest of the week at home?

I am hoping this is an obvious idea given our natural outdoor world.

Thank you for considering.

I'll be on the call Wednesday.

Best,

Lisa Ascher

22. Mon, Aug 3, 2020 at 12:01 PM

Hello,

Thank you for reading public comments at this board meeting in regards to returning to school. Having our youngest elementary school children learn in a classroom setting is extremely important for growth and development. Homeschooling from March-June 2020 was not healthy for full time working parents nor for children, ages 5-8 who need the constant direction and supervision with school work and the constant attention that this age group needs to thrive in a positive way.

Although there are many concerns with COVID-19 and returning to school, it is of utmost importance, (to those of us who choose), both working and nonworking parents, to have our children in the TTUSD school district return to school in September. Offering different learning options will allow parents to choose what is right for their families whether it is full time distance learning, part time return to school or full time return to school. For those of us working full time from home, our jobs are on the line by having children homeschooled full time. It is not an option for many of us. Working parents cannot provide the adequate support at home that our children need for their education at the same time of providing the full attention needed for our own employment.

Our two Glenshire Elementary school children have attended Boys and Girls Club this entire summer in Kings Beach and by wearing masks, practicing social distancing and elevated health measures, we have felt safe having them in a group environment. The same would take place in the schools this fall.

Thank you again for reading public comments and we look forward to various options that can fit each and every TTUSD family's needs this fall.

Sincerely,

Amanda Serna

23. Mon, Aug 3, 2020 at 3:00 PM

To: Kim Sxyzurek, President, TTUSD School Board and Board Members
Dr. Robert Leri, Superintendent Chief Learning Officer - retiring August 2020
Carmen Ghysels, Superintendent Chief Learning Officer - incoming August 2020

Last Spring, the TTUSD Board with the TTUSD administrative leadership made the difficult and important decision to close schools on March 13 and transition to distance learning.

Students went home with their Chrome Books, equipped and ready to learn from home. The teachers and staff made an amazing pivot and engaged the students in effective distance learning beginning the following week. The cafeteria staff and distribution team jumped right in to ensure that all students had access to daily breakfast and lunch. One and all are to be complemented on their accomplishments and the conclusion of a successful school year with distance learning.

This effort contributed to the early flattening of the curve in our community.

Today, the Covid-19 threat to our students, teachers, staff and community is even greater. It is essential that we follow the science and facts. I urge you not to yield to political pressure to open physical classrooms at this critical time in the pandemic.

- A new study shows that children between the ages of 10 and 19 spread the virus at the same rate as adults. Children younger than 10 transmit to others less often, but the risk is not zero. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/18/health/coronavirus-children-schools.html>
- Placer County remains on the CA State Monitor List, as do many other California Counties. Counties must be off of CA State Monitor List for 14 days to continue reopening.
- Since the easing of limits on closures by the Governor in late May, cases have climbed. Due to the escalation in cases, on July 13, the Governor initiated further restrictions on indoor gatherings, cases have continued to climb. <https://www.latimes.com/projects/california-coronavirus-cases-tracking-outbreak/placer-county/>
- <https://www.latimes.com/projects/california-coronavirus-cases-tracking-outbreak/nevada-county/>
- In person classes will create gatherings larger than currently recommended, with an increase in the risk of transmission and escalating cases in our community. Covid-19 Risk Assessment for Nevada County is at 61%, Eldorado County is at 66% and Placer County is at 76%. <https://covid19risk.biosci.gatech.edu/>

Keeping the schools physically closed and opening with continued distance learning reduces the risk of both spreading and contracting Covid-19 within the school population and the community. The option to open schools for in person learning can be explored when the pandemic numbers are brought down to a more controlled level through testing, effective contact tracing and/or there is a safe and effective vaccine.

I urge you to support starting the school year in a distance learning model to comply with the Governor's order and keep everyone safe.

Stay safe, be well,

Gudrun Dybdal, RN, MA

24. Mon, Aug 3, 2020 at 7:38 PM

Dear Tahoe Truckee Unified School District School Board Members,

Thank you so much for your service to the school district especially during this unprecedented time. I am a parent of a sixth grader and community member concerned about the upcoming school year. As you weigh the benefits and risks of different options, I hope you will provide an option for in person learning like Washoe County School District and others have done.

According to the CDC if children become infected, they are not likely to suffer severe symptoms plus the rate of transmission from students to teachers has been found to be very low. At the same time, it's well known that children are suffering significantly socially, emotionally, economically and academically by schools being closed.

I've seen first-hand the devastating effect that home schooling has had on my daughter. She's become depressed and despondent. She doesn't want to get out of bed. She didn't try to do any school work, she didn't want to check in via zoom, she didn't turn her video camera on when she did check in, she did the bare minimum amount of work, yet she passed but didn't get any grades. Our home turned into a battleground as we yelled, bribed, threatened, cried, coerced, and begged our daughter to do some math and social studies worksheets. When she was receptive to doing some homework we struggled to understand and explain New Math, we didn't understand the lessons and couldn't figure out what was going on so we weren't good teachers.

Teachers are essential workers and schools are essential infrastructure. In Nevada County and the Eastern portion of Placer County the rate of infection is lower than the rest of California. The Eastern portion of Placer County should not have to wait for the more densely populated Western portion to get off the watch list in order for schools to open. The Truckee Tahoe Region meets Governor Newsom's guidelines for schools to re-open and have in person instruction. Other industries with essential workers have opened and adapted to meet safety guidelines, schools can too.

Children are already socializing and gathering. They are going to birthday parties, water parks, having playdates and sleepovers. They are not distancing and isolating, they are getting into trouble and committing crimes. There is already an increase of vandalism in Truckee and reports of kids pulling BB guns on other kids in the park, ripping tents for the theater camps, and destroying the community garden and green houses. These kids are bored and need to be back in school.

We all risk our lives every day when we get in a car, airplane, with the food choices we make, in the sports we do and how hard we push it. Everything is a choice and I hope you will provide us with a CHOICE to send our children back to school.

Thank you,

Pam Jahnke

25. Mon, Aug 3, 2020 at 8:42 PM

I request that the following letter be read into the record of the TTUSD Board meeting of Wednesday, August 5 under public comments.

I am writing in regard to the opening of the new school year.

To the Board of the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District

Board Members,

This letter is written to support our public school system.

First, I want to say that I am a supporter of public education. I have two daughters. Each has school-age children. One is a teacher and has children in Truckee public schools. The other has been home schooling her children for several years. She does not have the fortune to live in the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District. I greatly value the education and other support of this outstanding and superior school district. I wish all my grandchildren had the opportunity to attend school in Truckee.

I know you are facing a difficult and complicated decision. I hope that you will place public health and well-being at the top of your list of considerations. We are nowhere near the end of this pandemic. The situation changes from day to day, with signs of optimism and also causes for grave concern. Comparing the incidence of COVID-19 today to its incidence at the beginning of March, it would not be possible to say we are in a better place. It is impossible to predict where we will be in only a few more short weeks.

The goal needs to be to get children back in school to receive a good public education. But the district needs to be flexible in how that is achieved, and willing to delay in-school education until a time when the children, teachers, administrative staff, custodians, support staff, bus drivers, and all other personnel can be assured that they are not at risk and they are not placing at risk their family members by being at school.

Just today a rather terrifying account appeared on the news about a summer camp in Georgia that made a commendable effort to open following guidelines. They now have a serious health disaster on their hands.

I hope you will defer the opening of in-school classes until we are safely beyond this pandemic. In the meantime, I hope you will support distance learning and will find the means to make sure that all students have access to safe, quality education as you did this past spring and that you will plan for a safe working environment for your teachers and other staff.

Jon Gresley

26. Tue, Aug 4, 2020 at 5:08 PM

I want to start off by saying thank you to the board, Dr Leri and the new superintendent, the teachers and staff of all of our schools as I know this is a challenging time. I believe that our country, our elected state, county and even the town of Truckee officials have failed our parents and, most especially, our children. We should not even be in this position. Other countries have been able to safely open schools, but we have put opening bars and restaurants and stuffing rental

homes full of tourists as a higher priority as have the tourists themselves by acting carelessly and selfishly. Where does this leave us?

Our family has two parents, without any family support, who both work from home full-time. We have two children and last spring was extremely stressful and we all suffered mentally. But, by the same token, my son and I both have asthma. So we are torn and know that you will make the best decision for everyone. In that decision I hope you consider the following:

1. Can the TTUSD board put any pressure on our other local government agencies to do more to stop the spread? Can we work with the counties to do more to limit people bringing the virus in so that we can get kids back in school FIRST?
2. If we can't open schools in the fall inside, can we open for even a few days or weeks outside so that teachers and students can get to know one another? Or even meeting outside in small groups or one on one so that there is a connection between teacher and student?
3. If we can't open schools in the fall, can the district provide support to families to form small learning pods and resources to help offset those that need to work? This is especially true, of course, of our minority families but all families who work are suffering. Can we work with places like KidZone or other local places to assist this. Get the kids outside and at least interacting some with their peers. Local camps did this successfully this summer, and having something during the warmer fall months would go a long way to supporting our kid's mental health.

Again, I know you are all doing all you can and I know we can do more for our kids.

Kelly and James Conley

27. Tue, Aug 4, 2020 at 8:39 PM

Dear teachers and faculty,

I am writing on behalf of my wife and I that really do not have an option of homeschooling. Distance learning was an ok option for my daughter (2nd grade) for a short period she is very studious but became very emotional and a bit of depression started to set in toward end of the year. I feel from lack of peer contact and social stimulation. Also with the start of my son who is in kindergarten this option would be very difficult as he is not as studious but needs activity and creativity to learn. In addition we have our 3rd son running around distracting him with what little attention he does have for a screen. This would be very hard for our family because both my wife and I work outside home and would have to find or have sitters trying to navigate those waters. I believe the risk for especially elementary students is very low and believe the long term effects of not having kids go to school will be very big in coming years if this becomes normal. Depression, anxiety, suicide to name a few were on the rise during last few months with distance learning and knowing that many especially boys will and have started to fall behind. I am pleading with you to open schools and allow our kids to get back to filling their brains with knowledge and interacting with their peers for their wellbeing.

Brad and Lael Noel

28. Tue, Aug 4, 2020 at 9:10 PM

Please consider having a Spanish teacher for every grade at Cold Stream this year. Otherwise, preplanned remote learning is not an option for KBE kids.

Thank you,

Brooke Barnum-Roberts
Parent of Maude Barnum

29. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 8:27 AM

Dear TTUSD School Board,

Thank you for your time and service to our community's schools. I realize that you likely never anticipated being put in a position that could literally affect the lives of our children and their families, and we appreciate the pressure you're under making the decision whether to open schools for in-person learning in the fall.

We hope you'll consider the possible life and death consequences of this action. This decision will possibly have long-term effects that will be looked upon for years to come. Requiring students and staff to report to school increases district liability for COVID-19 illnesses unnecessarily. We have been watching the current COVID-19 rates in Tahoe-Truckee and in California rising with dismay. We have watched the rate of visitors to our area explode to well over normal. The rate of illness now is much higher locally and in the state than it was in March, when schools closed for the first time. When we took the parent survey, we were hopeful that rates would decline and we could send our child safely to school, but that has not happened.

We believe that the children of our district receive better education when they are in school in person, but COVID-19 is not currently well controlled. Recent news articles about schools that have already opened are showing that it is difficult, if not impossible, to avoid transmission among students and staff, sometimes within days of reopening.

With the Governor's July 17 order closing down all non-critical infrastructure offices, we encourage the District to adopt a Distance Learning model to start the year and let us deliver high quality education and services remotely.

Sincerely,

Douglas and Wendy DeVore

30. Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 2:40 PM

Hello,

In the event that the school year starts all remote, will students have a chance to meet their teachers at least once in-person?

Thanks,

Patrick Davis

31. Wed, Jul 8, 2020 at 2:28 PM

We wanted to ask that kids and teachers of lower grades (TK-2) will please not need to wear masks while in the classrooms for the upcoming school year.

The kids need to see the teacher's and the other kid's facial expressions for social emotional development, as well as to see movements of the mouth for being able to learn sounds and language.

Best regards,

Katharina & Jorg Tonett

THE DAY OF BOARD MEETING RECEIVED AFTER 8:30 A.M.

32. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 9:52 AM

I believe mandatory masks for both the children and the teacher will have detrimental effects on the young ones. They need to see the teachers face and mouth. Prolonged distance learning is also bad for the children. This is the time they are developing and need peer interaction regularly. Based upon the numbers of death in Nevada County (one) and the lack of data showing it is harmful for children, we need to reopen the schools just like we did every other year. Thank you for your time.

Thank you,

The Valdez family

33. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 10:26 AM

Hello,

I wanted the following public comment to be on record for the 8/5/2020 school board meeting. Please let me know if I need to submit it to another email address.

Comment for August 5, 2020 TTJUSD Meeting:

As parents of a high school student at Truckee High School, we feel it is important to offer online learning opportunities of the same academic rigor as in person instruction. We don't know the long-term effects of the novel coronavirus for either young people or older adults. It is not fair to make parents choose between the immediate health and safety of students and teachers and an appropriate course load for their student. Online instruction for older, independent students would allow for a safer environment for both students and teachers, and help stop the spread of the virus until a vaccine is available. Thank you for considering this perspective.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Kunz & John Mon Pere

34. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 10:43 AM

Hello,

Spanish Immersion for English speakers is nearly impossible to do distance learning without screen time and my children does not do well emotionally or mentally on zoom calls and completing activities online. It strained our parent child relationship and I will not do that again. What options will be available for parents who want in person education when and if it is available and do not want to participate in screen time learning until then? I do not want the Coldstream option.

What will happen to the KBE immersion program if too many parents drop out due to the massive challenges of distance immersion? Will the school close and loss funding?

Has the school looked into outside learning? Renting tents and speaking with SELS and TEA about how to move curriculum outdoors for the fall? Schools in North Country San Diego have this set up for as soon as they are off the watch list.

Thank you,
Audrey

35. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 10:46 AM

I support the recommendation from Drs. Leri and Ghysels to begin the school year in a distance learning format. I am impressed and pleased with the efforts put forth by teachers and staff at ACMS for a successful conclusion to the school year in the Spring. I am equally confident in the ACMS teachers and staff to provide excellent quality education to my child for this coming school year.

Kerry Stendell

36. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 10:47 AM

Ttusd school board

I am a concerned parent that lives in ttusd, since the beginning of the shut down I have seen how much it has affected the kids in our district. It seems again and again politics are being put in front of children's well being, and I would love to see our community and school board put the children first. The overwhelming science shows kids are not spreading the coronavirus, yet they are being punished with closed schools, closed playgrounds, no sports. Please let our kids go to school.

Let them be kids, without masks and without masked teachers. The social development of kids is hampered by all adults wearing mask. Kids emotional state can be missed when half their face is covered. As well as prolonged mask use also has not been tested on children's development.

I'm all for safely opening so please increase hand washing and all kids wash hands after recess, before lunch and after lunch recess to help reduce spread of germs.

I have heard from some families that distanced learning worked great for them, but for others it was a very hard time that they felt their kids didn't grow in their educational goals. This is most concerning in our low income neighbors who may not have anyone to supervise their children's education. Leaving them under educated and vulnerable. If it's possible offer this to the families who have medically fragile children or who don't feel safe returning this fall but please don't force all families to choose distance learning.

Arienne

37. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 11:35 AM

Dear board members,

I am a member of the Truckee community and a concerned parent of a pre-k child. I am asking for the re-opening of school today.

The shutdown has had a detrimental effect on my child. The psychological damage that she endures everyday by being forced to isolate from other children breaks her heart. She's a normal, happy child that just wants NORMAL interaction with other children.

I'm asking that schools reopen without masks. Perhaps, give parents an online option if that's what they feel is best for them, but let us decide what is best for our children. I am a citizen of the United States of America. Denying my child of an education is criminal. It's unAmerican.

Many parents I speak with, in this school district and others, feel exactly the same way I do. But they're too afraid to speak up. I will not be putting a mask on my daughter, nor will I make her social distance from other children. She's a human being. She deserves to be treated like one.

Please open up school today.

Sincerely,

Jamie Kassak

38. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 11:38 AM

Hi,

I wanted to submit my concern around the lack of data around short and long term consequences of extended face mask usage among children. I would ask that before a decision is made for them to wear face masks in the classroom, that this is looked at in further detail. There have been no safety studies around this and it is concerning to many parents that I have spoken with. Especially considering the fact that kids are not proving to be transmitters of CV as discussed here by the CDC. For those parents concerned about their kids getting the virus, their kids could wear masks. If my kids are mandated to wear masks all day, we will be pulling them out of school and homeschooling them.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/reopening-schools.html>

Thank you,

Susan

39. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 11:54 AM

Please start the school year with some in classroom learning. The benefits far outweigh the risks. Our children, parents, business and community will suffer if kids are not back in school in person in some capacity. It is not the children or teachers in camps or day cares that are increasing the cases, it's the influx of tourists. If kids can't go back to school, town should be closed to all that are not full time year round residence. Thank you for your consideration.

Karli Rydd

40. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 2:27 PM

To the School Board of TTUSD

Kim Szczurek-President
Cris Hennessey-TTUSD
Kirsten Ivan
Dianna Driller
Gaylan Larson

School Superintendent
Dr. Robert Leri
Carmen Ghysels

Thank you for what you all are doing, it's a tough job with long lasting affects of your decision. In order to secure the best "re-opening plan" I would like to present the below graphs and information. In case you haven't had a chance to look at them here are the Nevada, Placer and El Dorado County Coronavirus Dashboards. Check out the number of new cases dropping in each County.



Nevada County, CA: Coronavirus Dashboard

Data Current as of: 8/4/2020, 4:19 PM

Tests Conducted: 13,183

Total Cases
316

West County

161

57.949% of 316

East County

155

49.051% of 316

2.397% Tested Positive of

Active
61

Recovered
254

19.304% Active of 316 Cases

80.38% Recovered of

Deaths
1

Active Hospitalizations
0

As reported by the California

0.316% Deceased of 316

Total Confirmed Cases Over Time



New County Cases by Day



Cases by Mode of Transmission

other modes of transmission = 310
Travel = 6

Cases by Gender

Female = 159
Male = 157

Cases by Age



Nevada County Public Health updates new confirmed COVID-19 cases Monday through Friday. As case investigations are conducted and more information is gathered, case counts may change as more diagnoses are confirmed in nearby counties. Number of laboratory tests performed is not shown.

COVID-19 Dashboard

Cases

Hospitalizations and Deaths

Cases by Zip Code

Case Rate and Testing Data

Data Notes

cases presented here are likely an underestimate of true incident cases being reported. This impacts many of our statistics, including case rates and percent increase estimates.

1,998

Total Cases

45

New Cases Added Since Yesterday

1,691

Likely Recovered

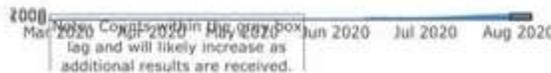
19

Total Deaths



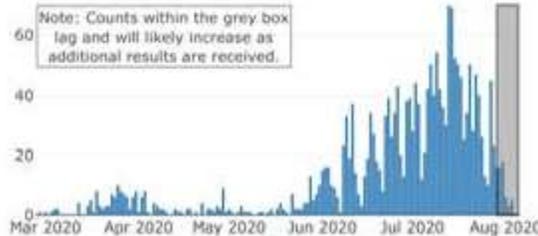
Wednesday, August 05, 2020 10:37:48 AM
Dashboard data last updated

Cumulative Cases by Collection Date¹



The graphs display cases by date of specimen collection. Cases for whom date of specimen collection is unknown will NOT show up in the graphs, but are still included in the total case count. Counts for any given day (particularly the most recent 5-7 days) are likely to increase as new results are received.

New Cases by Collection Date¹



The graphs display cases by date of specimen collection. Cases for whom date of specimen collection is unknown will NOT show up in the graphs, but are still included in the total case count. Counts for any given day (particularly the most recent 5-7 days) are likely to increase as new results are received.

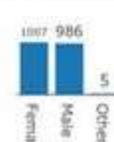
Total New Cases Since Yesterday
45

South
39

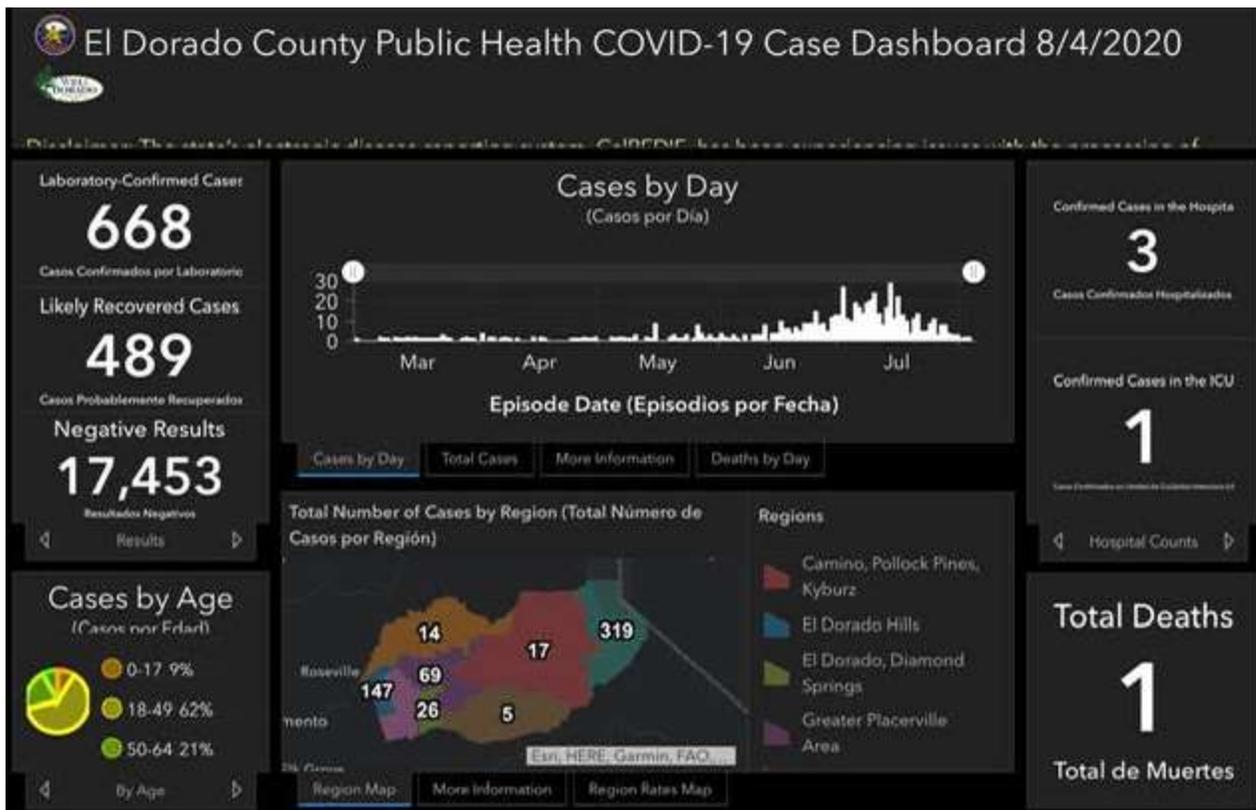
Cases by Age



Cases by Sex



For more information about the data



The Population of Nevada County 99,755 (2019) approximately 100K

The population of Placer County is 398,329 (2019) Approximately 400K

The population of El Dorado County is 192,843 (2019) approximately 193K

You can see the cases, those recovered and 21 deaths since the beginning of Coronavirus recording with only one death each in Placer and Nevada Counties.

A total population of 691,000 in three counties the percentage is .00003. This is a minuscule number with even the total cases very, very small. I don't believe this number even comes close to the yearly flu deaths. However, the main concern is the cases have dropped. In ALL three counties the numbers have dropped dramatically. The total cases may been high but the bottom line is that they have dropped so low going forward there shouldn't be such a concern children are not able to return to school. There is absolutely no reason the children in for sure in Placer and Nevada Counties should not return. El Dorado there are higher numbers but not to the point children should no return to school. The School Districts should have been preparing over the summer for this to happen. We are doing an extreme disservice but not allowing children to return to the security of school and their learning environment. The numbers do not warrant them staying home with a continuance distance learning.

El Dorado County should not influence what happens in our TTUSD. We are a separate entity with a different population etc..

Study after study has shown children are not at much at risk at getting or spreading the virus. With the proper school preparation and hygiene we take in every other sector of life, children are prepared and protected to return to school. Hopefully the TTSD has been preparing for this physically and with grants.

The Academy of Pediatrics recommends "students should be physically present at school". Dr. Sean O'Leary, a pediatrics infectious disease specialist at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, helped write the academy's guidelines. He emphasizes that there are major health, social and educational risks to keeping children at home.

Our neighbors next door in Washoe County have opted to have the children K-5 return to school full time, Middle and High School students on a hybrid schedule. The health department case rate per 100,000 is about 243 far greater than ours. We should not have our heads in the sand and our children's future jeopardized by politicalization of this issue. Our children should always come first let's prove it. Return to the facts and look at them.

This is a war. In wartime there are battles and often times lives lost. We will not win the war by giving up and "getting scared" of the case numbers. Taking care with the best practices we know, NOT retreating, is the way to win. In wartime there are casualties unfortunately, but we need to continually move forward to win. My husband and I are in the vulnerable age group, however, we are not afraid of living. We are not giving up our activities, our joys or the pursuit of happiness. Especially with the privilege of living both in the Lake Tahoe and Reno regions. Albeit we are careful, respectful but will not stop living. This war will be WON as each of us goes forth with courage, conviction and encouraging every generation to do the same. Re-opening the schools is moving forward.

Sincere thanks to all the Board of Trustees the Superintendent and wishes for a prosperous and successful opening of the 2020-21 school year. Our family is here to support you in any way we can.

"There can be no keener revelation a society's soul than the way in which it treats it's children." Nelson Mandela

Judy Ackerman
Concerned Grandmother and Citizen of Placer County

41. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 11:35 AM

Hi,

I am a parent of an incoming sophomore. I am worried about my daughter's academics for the upcoming year, especially if we have remote learning for an extended period of time. For the record, I would like my daughter to go back to in classroom learning. However, safety trumps everything so given the current state of the pandemic, I'm most comfortable with remote learning.

I realize that our school district had to pivot very quickly in response to an unprecedented event. My intent is not to criticize but to offer some observations and suggestions as we move forward in this challenging time as follows:

1. There was very little structure to my daughter's school day and not enough direct instruction from her teachers. She was frequently asked to complete projects & assignments by a certain deadline. Sometimes she had to watch a video or read related material in support of these assignments but had minimal real time interaction with her teachers. All of her teachers encouraged her to reach out to them during office hours but she was reluctant to do so. Her grades slipped and we (her parents) got very involved to get her back on track. This was met with resistance on her part & was very frustrating for us all. Some teenagers have a high level of executive function. My daughter is not one of them and could have benefited from more support (beyond what I could give her) in this area.

A better scenario for her would be to have to attend online/video classes at specific times during the school day where as normal as possible instruction could take place. For example, if a period is 30 minutes, the teacher could teach for 15-

20 minutes then stay online for a Q&A period for those in need & have office hours if help is needed beyond the Q&A. Attendance would be required for these online classes.

2. My daughter had lots of missing assignments. Sometimes she told us that the teacher had not updated the assignments yet so they were truly not missing and other times she handed them in late but it took a long time to see an update in Aeries. Sometimes Google Classroom would say one thing and Aeries, another. Of course it would have been best had assignments been turned in in the first place but it was very confusing and frustrating for us/parents to work with Aeries to help our daughter stay on track.

A better scenario would be for all of the teachers to follow a consistent protocol with updating Aeries. From a parental perspective, daily would be great, but if that is too much for teachers to administer than less frequent updates could work. The key is consistency & managing expectations.

3. I found it challenging to try to figure out how each class was operating remotely. Part of the problem was that our daughter was not forthcoming with information. It would be helpful if each teacher had an online zoom with parents (students too) to explain how their class would operate remotely & how they would use G-classroom, etc.

4. This has been a challenging time on so many levels. Beyond academics, I am concerned for the mental health of my daughter as well as other students. We have taken steps to address this in our family and have reached out to Ms. Dulberg for help. It would be ideal to have a counselor meet with each student periodically to check in on their well-being, especially those students at high risk. My daughter has a great relationship with Ms. Dulberg but resisted meeting with her/getting help so having check-ins that are initiated by the counselors would be beneficial.

5. Winter will be here before we know it but if we were able to conduct 'open air' classrooms for a couple of months in the fall that would be great. Maybe using large event tents with no sides, only a roof & socially distanced seating. There are probably some tents that are sitting idle these days as folks have dialed back larger gatherings. That would minimize the risk of infection and give our students a chance to have some 'in-classroom' experience before going back to remote learning, assuming remote learning continues to be our only option through the winter. If there are limited 'open-air' classroom opportunities then provide them for those students who would benefit the most - elementary students?

We love our schools/school district. Thank you for keeping our children safe and being thoughtful about how to best move forward for the upcoming school year.

I'm happy to discuss any of my feedback/suggestions with anyone.

Best,
Michelle Nowicki

42. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 12:13 PM

Thank you for the work you are doing trying to forge a best path forward for our kids this school year. I am the parent of a (soon to be) second grader at Glenshire Elementary. I'm also a single mom, also caring for her four-year-old sister and (trying/needng) to be a full-time working mom, as well.

Needless to say, distance learning was a complete disaster for us last year-- I had to give up even trying about two weeks from the end of the year due to a severe mental health crisis brought on largely by my complete inability to navigate my child through the distance learning materials. Optimistically, I assumed it would all be better by this year and she'd be able to quickly catch up. No dice.

Following are some things I feel are vital to address if we're to move forward with distance this year:

- **Parent Education** I was unable to teach/guide my child in the way that was being asked because I, myself, simply didn't understand the methods. How is a parent to teach a child if they don't understand it themselves?

- **Least Possible Required Zoom Time** As mentioned, I work full time and also have a four-year-old in the house. This meant I wasn't able to be present on the Zoom calls, and many first graders simply don't have the mental development to self-engage in Zoom-style calls. She became more of a distraction to the class and was getting nothing out of them, so we stopped. I see that the current proposal requires attendance on Zoom calls, which (at least for my child) means required parent-involvement in all Zoom time), so I'd like to propose that Zoom time be used extremely judiciously.

- **Efficiency over "robustness" + Clarity on Bare Minimums** I'd love if there is as much focus on efficiency as on "robustness." I get that you want to provide a "robust" experience, but for single working parents like me, that word "robust" makes me break out into hives. We don't want to be doing stuff just for the sake of "robustness." As mentioned above-- what is the BARE MINIMUM? I asked my teacher several times last year "what is the ONE THING we need to do every day" and the answer was always a laundry list of options-- they all sounded quite lovely, but what is the ONE THING that checks the box for the day?

- **School District Help in Setting up Pods-** I'd love to connect my kid with her classmates in small, outdoor/safe learning experiences. How does the district plan to help parents create these, either by making available classmates' contact info if they opt in or even providing a list of tutors, teachers aides, etc. that might be able to guide small groups of same-class kids in a safe setting? (For the record, I think the district would be wise to explore the "pod" idea as a way to get kids back to some semblance of in-person school quicker. There isn't a whole lot of need for kids to cross-mingle right now if that's been deemed unsafe. I'd much rather have my child in school for even a few hours a week, even if that means none of the "extras"-- One teacher and 15 kids, together for the day at the elementary level seems like a fine compromise.)

If you have any questions on these thoughts, please do reach out. And best wishes getting this whole tangle sorted out!

Heather

43. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 12:42 PM

Dear TTUSD Board Members,

I am writing to express my concern not only as a TTUSD teacher of the past 13 years, but also as a concerned parent. Like all TTUSD employees I long to be back in the classroom, in person with my students. I want my own children in the school building and with their peers. However, at this time and per the Governor's orders it not a safe option. We are a district that is 100 percent scholar focused and because of this and how much we care for our scholars, we need to start the school year working remotely, from the safety of our own homes. Our district is made up of great teachers and staff

and we can and we will continue to deliver high level instruction for all via distance learning. I would like to see the first quarter, nine weeks, be distance learning while we reevaluate what it will take to open our schools safely and watch COVID carefully as we go into the fall months.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and thank you for making sure our scholars, staff and community stay safe during this time.

Kathryn Markovchick

44. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 12:50 PM

As a parent of a preschooler with special needs currently enrolled in Truckee EI, I am very opposed to masks being used inside the classroom and the forced use of social distance, which is the complete opposite that most children with lengthy IEPs and differently abled kiddos need to thrive in school. Masks interfere with social cues, speech, and hearing, all of which my son needs services for. He requires assistance in and out of his wheelchair and around the classroom. Numerous studies back the fact that children do not spread Covid, they are not in danger themselves, and that mental health is JUST as important as physical health.

My son was making tremendous progress with the incredible staff of teachers and aides who work in the TTUSD district. It was a huge blow for him, and we are trying frantically and spending massive amounts of financial resources to find him other resources to help maintain his progress so he doesn't relapse during this time.

Our kids need to be in the classroom. They need services that I cannot replicate at home. They need to not be isolated, fearful, and hurt when they are pushed away. They deserve the right to education, and to pursue happiness.

Bryn Wied

45. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 12:55 PM

Dear Board,

I'm writing in regards to a couple of items before the board today.

First, the proposed school opening plan. While I appreciate the concerns for teachers and staff associated with reopening schools for in person learning, I believe that this plan doesn't adequately address the needs of our children and families. For one, the mental and emotional impacts of continued social distancing and lack of interaction with their peers and teachers. As an only child, with both parents working full time, our 6 year old son was greatly impacted by distance learning last spring. He was disconnected from his class and teacher, every day was a fight to get work completed and his behavior and attitude suffered. My husband's work requires that he work outside our home so the bulk of distance learning fell to me while I was also required to maintain a minimum 40 hour work week. While we made do as best we could it was incredibly stressful and there is no way that our family can successfully continue in this environment. I fear that his academic success will be greatly impacted as will my work productivity and the stress to our family will be incredibly detrimental. And, we're lucky to be a two parent, dual earner family, I can only imagine that the impact to single parent families will be even more substantial.

In addition, I'm struggling to understand why daycare and preschools have been able to continue to operate successfully with little to no confirmed case transmissions yet schools can't. So far almost every study has indicated that child to child and child to adult transmissions are very rare so keeping schools closed doesn't make sense.

I'm also concerned regarding the requirement for families to enroll in Coldstream prior to the school year and commit to a full semester when the current opening plan is basically a wait and see plan. These families risk losing their enrollment at their current school which has the potential to have even greater impact on their children's academic success and emotional well being.

Please consider reopening schools as usual with limited social distancing, environmental and health friendly disinfectants, increased hand washing and no masks requirements for students. Our children's future is at risk and a virus, that while incredibly contagious is not life threatening for the majority, 98%, shouldn't stand in the way of their success.

I also have a concern regarding the plan to recognize Vaccine Awareness Month. By doing so the district fails to recognize the thousands of families that have been impacted by injury, disability and death associated with vaccines. So far over 4.3 billion dollars has been awarded to victims of injuries and death related to vaccines and those individuals and families deserve to be recognized as well. Vaccines are not one size fits all and a quick visit to the VAERS, Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System, is worthwhile in order to better understand how widespread vaccine injuries are. Please consider voting no on this proposal. In turn, please consider designating October as Vaccine Injury Awareness Month.

Thank you for your careful consideration of these issues.

Regards,

Cirra Mason

46. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 12:59 PM

Board members,

I appreciate that students have always been at the center of your decisions, and I am sure that will continue to be the case. I'm excited to start the new school year and am ready to put in the effort necessary to ensure our students learn, but I need your help to ensure the community is safe. I strongly support starting the year in Distance Learning to comply with the Governor's order and keep everyone safe.

Working from home and keeping schools physically closed lowers the risk of both contracting and spreading COVID-19. Requiring students and staff to report to school increases district liability for COVID-19 illnesses unnecessarily. Given these facts, current COVID-19 rates in Tahoe-Truckee, along with the Governor's July 17 order closing down all non-critical infrastructure offices, I encourage the District to adopt a Distance Learning model to for this school year and let us deliver high quality education and services remotely.

I am asking you, as our elected Board Member, to direct the District to allow staff to deliver Distance Learning through this pandemic and keep the students and staff of TTUSD safe and educated.

Courtney Delgado (Shalvis)

47. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 1:06 PM

My name is Mary Hetherington. I have lived in Truckee for 30 years, raised my three children here, and I am speaking as a public citizen.

I have heard from a credible source that the Sewer Plant (TTSA) is planning to not renew the lease with the School District for the bus barn as TTSA wants to keep that parcel for sewage disposal. This will create a huge problem for all the schools, and students, in the entire region as this leased parcel was intended for both the School District's bus barn and maintenance facility. Where will those facilities go? What land in our region is both available and affordable for those facilities?

Also, to be considered is the fact that the Airport District owns a 40-acre parcel near the School District's bus barn. This 40-acre parcel was considered for a business park back in 2006. Access to both of these parcels is on Joerger Road, which is privately owned by the TTSA. The TTSA and the Airport District are in negotiations to trade lands so that TTSA can also acquire the 40-acre parcel for future sewage disposal.

That 40-acre parcel would be an ideal location for developing an industrial park, which could include the School District's facilities, and could also enable moving entities off the Truckee River. The idea of moving industrial uses off the river has been a dream for this community for as long as I have lived here.

We have so many different Special Districts that we often get in our silos and only consider those needs rather than the broader community needs. Please start negotiations with the Town of Truckee, the Airport District and TTSA to consider the needs of the entire region. Is there not some way to work together for the benefit of all of our constituents in all of our communities?

Thank you and I am also submitting these comments in writing to be included in the public record.

48. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 1:14 PM

To ALL,

The kids need to go back to school + resume a normal life/schedule. If parents are comfortable sending their kids back, they should be able to attend. If teachers are too afraid to teach, they need to find another job! Other students not comfortable attending, need to do homeschool. Doctors, nurses, grocery clerks, cops don't get to just say they are too afraid to go back to work. It's not right! AND If we do distance learning from home, teachers should be required to go into their classrooms to teach virtually. We had a terrible experience with virtual last semester. Especially my middle schooler. He was told along with his classmates to turn video screen to black. As did the teacher. She had her instruction/check in for 30 mins on black screens m-th. Nothing fri. My son ended up with a ton of missing assignments

only because different teachers listed things differently. So confusing + frustrating. I know lots of parents that we're just doing the kids homework assignments just to get it done + passed. Our children learned nothing last semester. I am now paying for tutoring \$70/hr x 4 hours a week so my kids do not fall behind. I will be forced to move my kids to private schools that will allow attendance + proper teaching.

Raegan Twisselmann Designer | Tinsel House Studio

Thank you and I am also submitting these comments in writing to be included in the public record.

49. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 1:33 PM

If Placer County is off the watchlist in two weeks will schools open?

50. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 1:35 PM

Does TTUSD have scientific data that shows masks are safe for children as young as 3rd graders to wear for 7 hours a day? Do we know if kids are more likely to touch their face while wearing them?

Thank you,

Audrey

51. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 1:47 PM

Dear Rob Leri, Carmen Ghysels and board members,

I am a single dad of 3 boys who will be attending Truckee Elementary school this year. I am also an essential worker. I am writing to encourage you to start the 2020-2021 school year with face to face, in person learning and a remote learning option.

From your letter, I am confident that my children will be safe. From my experience last spring, I am certain that my sons' education will be best served in the classroom. My sons do best when their teacher is in front of them throughout their academic day.

In addition to academics, I believe in person learning is important in my sons' emotional and social growth. My oldest son is in special education class and needs socialization and 1:1 to Meet his IEP goals.

Thank you for taking the time to consider opening the school year to in person learning with a remote option.

Sincerely,

Austin Pickens

52. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 1:58 PM wrote:

Dear Board of Directors,

We fully support the proposal to begin the school year with remote learning, and we would support a decision to continue remote learning beyond the end of September. While we understand that this will be difficult for some, the bottom line is that no decision the Board could make this evening will make every parent happy but only one decision can keep every parent - and our community as a whole - healthy.

Respectfully,

Lisa and Paul Purchard

53. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 1:59 PM wrote:

Hello,

Just a quick message to say I support our children going back to in case learning. I do feel my kids would be safe and feel they need their teachers.

Thank you,

Art Hallenberg

54. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 2:02 PM

Hi,

I think this advice from the CDC says it all. Open schools. The real risk is in not opening them. In person instruction is absolutely critical to child development & will have wide spread long lasting devastating effects!

Please read this page & revise your decision! Thank you!

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/reopening-schools.html>

Wendy Lautner

55. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 2:07 PM

Good evening. My name is Lauren Tapia and I am a mother to an 8th grader at ACMS who also has an IEP. Last spring was a challenge.... for parents, students, educators and administrators. I think we can safely say that it was crisis learning not virtual/distance learning. My son is not an independent learner, I, unfortunately was not given the luxury to send him to his room to do his studies on his own this past spring. He sat right next to me at the kitchen table moving

through his subjects while I worked in between, every single day. It was quite possibly the most stressful three months I have ever experienced. I do not want to experience that again.

What turned last spring around was when Ms. Adomshick started holding Math and ELA instruction (45 minutes each) via google meet, everyday. It was amazing, and took the pressure off of me for two subjects! It was successful too, my son was still able to gain concepts and meet his academic goals in the middle of a crisis! He was also able to maintain a connection with his teacher every day as well as his classmates. This is what needs to occur this fall during the next round of virtual learning, in all of the classes, for every student. I am sure many parents would also appreciate continuity in how teachers (speaking for Middle and high school) utilize the Google Classroom, it caused great frustration because each teacher had a different way turning homework, posting homework, messaging, taking attendance... it was so bad that my husband could not just step in and fill my shoes when I needed a break. I would appreciate it if school administration have continuity in Google Classroom as a goal for their instructors this fall.

We can all hope that virtual learning will only last until the end of September, but I have made peace with the fact that that probably won't be the case. We will most likely be doing this style of learning for the rest of the school year. Opening and closing schools in response to outbreaks is way more disruptive and traumatic to students/families than virtual learning itself, especially when we are still in the unknowns of this virus. I would also appreciate virtual learning not be approached with a "month to month" mindset. Families need to be able to set a healthy mental environment for their household, and a month to month outlook is anything but. Also, families shouldn't have to pull their kids out of their home school, and in my child case, take them away from their special education team, and enroll them at an alternative school. School Districts with more students and with much less (money) are offering virtual learning and an in-class hybrid option (if they're lucky enough to hold in class instruction) at their home school site and not forcing families to enroll their children into a completely different school. I would appreciate Administrators and the School Board Members to rethink this option as well.

Thank you for taking the time to read my comment, I am appreciative of the public process of these meetings and do not envy the position all of you are in. Have a good evening.

Lauren Tapia

56. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 2:13 PM

We have read that the powers to be in the Truckee Unified School District have recommended that schools not open in September. It appears that the guiding statistic is 100 Covid-19 cases per 100,000 population. The present ratio of cases per 100,000 in California is 122 in the 0 to 17 age group. I am sure the ratio is much less for elementary school age children. I would highly recommend opening in person learning for elementary school age children and hybrid learning for high school age kids - alternating 2 and 3 day per week in person learning with distance learning, just like Washoe County, NV.

Another factor to consider in this decision is the fact that if all the children stay home they be exposed to a much greater portion of the population who are more likely carriers than if they go to school. Grandparents will visit; they will go shopping with their mom or dad; neighbors or playmates will come over; and on and on!

Preferring a disciplined and safe environment at school is a no brainer!!

Please open the schools for the sake of the future of our children ...

Regards,
Paul Ackerman

57. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 2:16 PM

Dear Schoolboard,

The most recent science is showing that Covid-19 is contracted and spread much easier than previously thought by children over 10 years old.

I don't think any of our children should be back in the classroom this fall due to the pandemic, and especially not middle and high school.

Thank you for your consideration, Kerri Bradley

58. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 2:23 PM

The distance learning of this Spring has caused many issues with our family and others that we know and our children. Most importantly we feel our child is not getting the education he or she deserves, nor are they learning to the potential that the in classroom setting will provide. The other major issue is the fact that the majority of parents have to go to work for 8 to 10 hours a day, and besides the many facts of the safety issues involved with our children staying home alone, we (the parents) cannot stay home to teach our children a learning program that we ourselves have a hard time understanding. There is a reason we choose and support the public school system, and this form of home schooling/distance learning is not part of that decision. The decision should be unanimous amongst the community not a board who is choosing for us. Please take these thoughts into consideration before you come to a decision.

Thank you for hearing our voice.

59. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 2:52 PM

Greetings to all TTUSD Board Members. I would like to present the following thoughts in response to what I understand to be a decision being made on behalf of our school age children. This will be posted to Facebook as well.

I write this with high degree of respect for educators. I have spent time and money (a lot of both) over the years as I guided three kids through TTUSD. We experienced 4 different schools and I volunteered at each of them. I am not a passive parent nor am I a non-contributor, so when I start to question what is going on with our schools, it is with a heavy heart. However, the TTUSD has decided in spite of parent input from the survey sent out earlier this year, which yielded a 75% response rate to GO BACK TO SCHOOL that, instead, our kids will be taught via Zoom.

Interesting isn't it, that we have complained for years that kids have too much screen time, and now our educators are telling us that Zoom is an adequate replacement for teaching. If that is the case, why do we have schools (and why are we remodeling them?) and why do we seek highly qualified teachers if Zoom is a suitable replacement. If that is the case, any home school program can do the job just as well AND YOU GET PAID FOR TEACHING YOUR KIDS when you sign up for a Home School Course. YES. YOU GET PAID NOT THE SCHOOL. If you (parents) are left to have to figure out how to become your children's teacher, you may as well do it on YOUR TIME as your schedule allows and get paid for the job.

Parents – especially those of young kids, make no mistake, this will become your job. You may think that a teacher on the Zoom screen is teaching your child, but you will be the one doing the heavy lifting.

I work in the event business and industry standard is dictating that a virtual event carries 50% of the value as an in-person event. So, are the teachers and administrators taking a 50% pay cut? And are we, the people being granted a refund for the facilities management costs that are not being spent due to our schools sitting empty? Anyone want to make a bet that the October re-evaluation date that will be promised tonight will be “pushed back for the safety of all”? That will be a carrot offered to get the parents to back down and accept this situation.

For those of you who will celebrate the distanced learning model, I think that is great that it works for you. You should be given the choice to keep your children home if you feel that works for your family and your child. Some kids will thrive. They are the minority, but for them, it will be fantastic, and I think it is great to have the option. Be aware, though, that you always have that option. Home school has been a concept for a long time.

For those of you who feel their children are as safe as necessary to return to in-person school and who learn better in that environment, or who do not have the family support systems in place to be successful in a distanced learning model, you are being left behind and when (not if) your child fails, it isn't YOUR fault. It is the fault of the educators who are making this decision on your behalf. It appears you have NO choice.

Is anyone else shaking their heads, wondering why we were not presented with more choices than “Distanced Learning”? Is anyone going to address any of the overriding concerns and default dilemmas that this mandated style of “learning” will create?

Families who have NO choice but to go to work to earn a living to survive – what do they do?

Families who don't have resources (physical, emotional, financial) to support distanced learning. What do they do?

Families who cannot afford childcare, what do they do?

Families who count on schools to help close the gaps with food and a safe place to be during the day, what do they do?

Kids who don't have a large social network and need the interaction of an in-person school environment to succeed. What do they do?

Kids who are NOT independent learners and NEED the group interaction of an actual classroom, peers, discussion, questions, and accountability – What do they do?

Social and community connection, sports, music, theater, leadership. How are we providing these kids with important developmental opportunities?

And did ya hear that there WILL be some childcare offered? How does that fit with the narrative that schools should be closed if organized childcare is okay? In that case, it seems going to school should also be okay.

When the topic of “safety” comes up, and I am sure it will, please know that I do a LOT of research. I can share links, stats, protocols, recommendations from the big agencies (CDC, WHO, IHO, FDA, what Fauci himself has said, continues to say and many others including Gates, officials in the white house, stats on the cases, testing, tracking of cases and deaths, trends from March, use of qualified and approved medications that have been available for over 65 years, the viral make up of SARS1 and now SARS2 (single strand RNA virus's), Corona as a virus, how long it's been around and where it comes from, vaccine protocol and more. I make no claims of being a medical professional, but this information is readily available for anyone who is willing to take the time to find it. I am also NOT on one side (mask on or mask off) I am NOT pushing a political agenda at all. I am looking for the truth, I am on the side of health and to me that does not

stop at a vaccine. Health is the WHOLE person, mind, body and soul and the model of “Distances Learning” is anything but learning and it is contributing to the destruction of our health as a whole person. Choices matter and I am not seeing one being offered by TTUSD.

Parents, if you want to have a voice, you need to send your comments in tonight by 4:30pm to boardroom@ttusd.org

They will be announcing Distanced Learning, but at least you will have had a chance to weigh in if you so-choose.

You may also log in to watch it live by going to: Board meeting agendas

Live stream of all TTUSD Board Meetings

Good luck Truckee. I truly hope we survive this situation and return to some kind of life that we all recognize.

Wishing good health to all!

Thank you,
Kim Parisi

60. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 2:54 PM

My initial thought is to unenroll my incoming KBE 1st grader. My experience as an educator is minimal in comparison to the members of the board. I respect the background and experience of those in charge. My reasoning behind my initial decision is that logic and data tell me a very different story than the main stream media depicts. Not a single person in addressing the psychological needs of our children. Not a single person is talking about the need for hugs, high fives, hand shakes, smiles, frowns, sharing, holding hands, seeing sad faces, playing tag, bringing your own lunch, etc. At the moment the narrative is all based on corrupted data and assumption. My fear is not starting school, but rather what nonsense “rules” will be encouraged mid school season, what new “ideas” will be decided. I’m not accepting this current state of affairs as the “new normal”. This will go down in history as a giant mistake made by political nonsense and media driven hysteria. I will not subject my children to the decision made by union members who do not have my children’s best interest at heart. Distance learning and modified classroom settings are not education, that appears to be more like prison. I am forced to do more and be better in my small business owner and as a parent. I expect the very same effort from you as board members and all teachers and staff. There is a bigger picture that needs to be discussed and the big picture is the well being and future of our children. I am willing to sign waivers and release all liability in order to achieve a normal childhood for my children. If logic is not a factor in your decision, then logic tells me I will educate my own children. Thank you for your time.

Myles Lewis

61. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 2:57 PM

TTUSD Board and Staff,

As a parent of a Tahoe Lake Elementary student who will be entering 2nd grade this September, I am very concerned about the quality of education that my child and others will be getting if the school district continues the online/at home

distance learning procedure. After what I learned last spring with distance learning, I found it significantly ineffective for my child and with the other parents that I spoke to regarding distance learning and their children. Distance learning (at home) puts tremendous stress on family dynamics and relationships, and further strains resources and time that parents may need to properly perform their jobs at home, which I greatly need to support my family.

I personally feel that my child will not succeed under the current structure of distance learning, and neither can I as a parent. The only thing that may help in our situation would be online meetings with a teacher or teacher's aid daily (for at least 1.5 hours) to keep my 2nd grader focused and on-track with his learning objectives, and to help mend our personal relationship, which turned very sour and ugly during last spring's distance learning program. Our family cannot afford outside resources for distance learning, such as private tutors and aides. If the TTUSD is going to continue distance learning then they MUST provide families with live in-person instruction online daily as a bare-minimum service to students and their families to enhance the distance learning experience (more than what happened last spring).

Our students (the majority) cannot thrive educationally and physically if we allow distance learning to continue into the near future. And the emotional wellness of our families and community cannot continue to thrive under the distance learning strategy. I urge the TTUSD Board to consider objecting the recommendations of the TTUSD Superintendents and to move forward with in-person learning at our schools (via the state exemption waiver) with the possibility of postponing the start of the school year two weeks to reassess what individual schools need to do to re-open safely.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Flavia Sordelet

62. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 3:05 PM

My number one priority as a parent is student safety. However, I'm sure you'll agree as professionals who work with children and doctors that "safety" covers many forms from physical to psychological to emotional. I see Dr. Leri write the words that student safety is his number one priority. However, the seemingly unwillingness to follow the recommended CDC guidelines to open schools, reflects that he isn't considering the wholistic health of his students at all. Based on the CDC guidelines, there should be the option for the parents who feel going back to school protects those three areas of safety for their children more than isolating them at home. My child has attended daycare programs and different Truckee camps weekly, all summer. If Dr. Leri and the Board inquired about the numerous Truckee Rec summer programs, and daycares allowed to run, they would see the successful outcomes amidst the Governor's recommendations and during an unprecedented pandemic.

Dr. Leri's personal fear based approach to the Pandemic is only hurting the children and parents who would like a choice, not protecting their safety. As for the teachers, I can imagine they didn't all quarantine themselves for the whole summer, not venture out, travel, gather, protest, put themselves at risk because of their concern for their safety. Their individual choices and actions over the summer, during a Pandemic should speak to the concern they have for their safety as well as their dedication to putting their student's safety first. Teachers are essential. People like teachers have been going to work amidst the Pandemic. Teachers have always chose to and endured an environment where they are constantly exposed to sickness. They are no different than the nurse that reports to the clinic, the gas station attendant or grocery store clerk who has many interactions with different people daily. Going to school and teaching the kids whose parents believe it is best for their child and being paid by those parents' public tax dollars is demonstrating putting children first. The Remote learning last year was not the same at all as being instructed by a trained teacher.

TTUSD's and the State of California's missing school policy should be evidence of this fact. If distance learning could take the equal place of being in school, then why hasn't independent learning been more widely approved for any day a child's parent feels for their kid's safety, the child should learn at home? The answer is because TTUSD doesn't believe it is the same as learning, in class, with a teacher, at the school. So please know trying to reverse the district's stance and change the narrative of how important it is for kids to be in school, only spotlights a self-serving agenda. Dr. Leri's fear based approach, which given his retirement has no implications for his own personal future, investment, or experience with the school district or the children should therefor hold no wait with the Board. His safety words are empty as his past actions for our son at 7 years old beginning his career in the TTUSD school system reflects. When my son's physical, emotional, and psychological safety was threatened by bullying at SELS and the damaging Administrative actions and decisions by David Manahan towards my son that violated my son's educational rights, which also included the reprehensible unethical threat that Mr. Manahan verbally made towards our family, Dr. Leri turned a blind eye and his inaction therefore reflected complicity and the condoning Mr. Manahan's actions. If you really mean what you say, about Children's safety being a number one priority, please vote to start off trying the in school option and distance learning option like so many schools around the country are doing who are making the decisions using logic instead of fear. We want to raise courageous children so we need an example of courage to try.

Thank you for your time.

63. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 3:09 PM

Please listen to the CDC and the Pediatrics of America. They are the experts. Our children need to go back to school.

So many more problems are going to arise by keeping them home.

Take action and allow them to go back. The Gov. has said we can. Let us!

Please listen to this Mom:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cuWxEfR5Za8>

Bree Waters

64. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 3:19 PM

TO: TTUSD Board Members

My daughter will start her junior year at North Tahoe High School this fall. Regarding your pending decision on the question of in-person or online instruction in TTUSD schools this coming school year. I strongly request and urge you to make the right decision and keep school safe with ONLINE INSTRUCTION ONLY until such time as the virus threat has significantly been mitigated and the schools and teaching environment can be completely safe for students, instructors, staff, and parents.

Thank you,

Eric T. Brandt

65. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 3:38 PM

My name is Cory Allison and I have three children at Tahoe Lake Elementary. I support the action requested, even though I know it's a hard decision to make.

Thank you to all the TTUSD staff and teachers who have spent their summer preparing for the unknown. We are in a situation with no right answer, but I know that our District is doing the absolute best they can for our kids. Our family looks forward to being back in our new school hopefully sooner than later!

Sincerely,
Cory Allison

66. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 3:53 PM

Given the current predictions for the pandemic, I'd like to advocate for an all virtual fall semester. I am a healthcare professional, and mother of a middle and high schooler. While the immediate risk of serious COVID-19 complications may be low for children, it will not be safe for teachers, other adults in contact with students, and the greater community. As seen in camps and other school like settings, it is inevitable that COVID-19 transmission will occur. This leads to the likelihood of repeated disruption of attempts for in person learning as well as the aforementioned health risks. In person learning will be an unsustainable environment. Rather than put staff, students, and family through this, I believe it will be better to accept the reality of these historic times and deploy distance learning models that can be sustained at least through January. That being said, a small program for children of essential workers, children with special needs, and at risk students who need on-site support could be an option if done right, eg cohorts of no more than 10. However, I urge the board to limit the numbers of students and staff onsite as much as possible.

Thank you,

Nicole Howard

67. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 4:15 PM

As the mother of twin girls going into sixth grade I would like nothing more for them to be in physically in school full time like normal this Fall. However, given the current situation with wide-spread community spread of COVID and problems with testing through our country, state and community, I urge you to vote for an all virtual Fall semester. I don't believe that school can open physically and keep students and staff safe. Rather than put staff, students, and family through the uncertainty of opening and then closing schools, I believe it will be better to accept the reality of these historic times and deploy distance learning models that can be sustained at least through January.

Thank you.

Stephanie Bright

68. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 4:16 PM

Couple of issues I'm hoping are already on TTUSD's radar.

1. Please look at COVID-19 data from EAST Placer County and EAST Nevada County and not the Counties as a whole when making decisions about kids returning to school or not. For instance, Roseville/west Placer County have much higher numbers than east Placer (Truckee).
2. If the kids are forced to do web-based learning, TTUSD must do better with lesson plans, lectures, activities, and homework assignments. Last spring the teachers (at North Tahoe Middle School at least) just doled out homework assignments with no innovative or creative ways of teaching the subject matter. The kids were extremely bored, frustrated and pissed off. As were the parents...

Last comment:

Sports, theatre, band and other extracurricular activities are CRITICAL for the physical and mental well-being of our kids. TTUSD MUST figure out a way to allow these activities to proceed despite COVID-19. We'll need to get creative but please don't just throw in the towel and cancel these important activities.

Thanks for your consideration of these issues during tonight's Board meeting.

Linda Martello

69. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 4:25 PM

A group of parents and children are outside of the District Office right now. We are disappointed that the community has been left out of the meeting process; the very people who are directly affected by the decisions you are making behind closed doors. We need to come together as a community to voice our collective solutions. Our children's voices need to be heard, teachers voices need to be heard, parents voices need to be heard and that hasn't happened yet. If tonight's decision does not result in solutions for all, then the discussion needs to be continued. Your next action must be providing us with the opportunity to have our ALL our voices heard in a public town hall.



70. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 4:26 PM

As a parent struggling with the thought of our children not being able to go back to school, I would like to offer this as a possible suggestion. We have seen many local businesses shut down throughout this time, only to reopen and now thrive with an outdoor setting and maintain social distance. Is there any way we could entertain the idea of outdoor classrooms while the weather is nice? mainly just to buy us some time while we work on a more permanent solution. we do not feel that the home school idea has worked nor will continue to work very well for our children, as many parents continue, as well as have to resume working for 8 to 10 hours a day, there are both the issues of safety with our children being left home alone and the issue of not getting a proper nor adequate education. I understand I have presented a pretty vague idea, but I know that the powers that make up the board should be able to revamp this into something special. We appreciate any consideration to this option that you give.

71. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 4:27 PM

TTUSD Board and Ms. Ghysels -

The science is in and it is clear - there is greater harm and risk to children from NOT being in school, than there is from COVID-19.

In Eastern Placer and Nevada counties the COVID-19 case numbers do not support a full distance teaching model to start this fall. Also note that even in the "cases" being reported, -cases do not equal "symptomatic illness" - and according to the CDC the accuracy of the PCR COVID-19 nasopharyngeal swab is about 50-70%.

There are many doctors and epidemiologists saying that COVID-19, although in a less virulent form, may be with us for the foreseeable future - much like the flu now. Immunology 101 tells us that we need to focus on how to live with this and other viruses, not hide from them. The policies developed now will become 'normal' and could be the standard for years to come. I would hope that our board and decision makers would carefully consider policies that complement our unique rural, active and generally health conscious community characteristics rather than adopting a "one-size-fits all" narrative.

Sanitation and proper hygiene practices are scientifically proven to be effective at reducing transmission of an illness. So let's encourage frequent hand washing, teach proper hygiene techniques for blowing noses and covering sneezes, schedule regular cleansing of shared surfaces with the least toxic but effective cleaners (if soap and water works for hands and the virus doesn't "live" on surfaces very long as once thought - let's use hot water and soap!), and avoid using water fountains.

Schools can and should encourage diligent enforcement of sick policies to ensure that only healthy children attend school each day. Absence policies need to be re-examined so families or schools are not punished for absences. Forehead thermometers are notoriously inaccurate and this screening will lead to the over-use of NSAIDs and likely cause unnecessary anxiety and stress rather than prevent spread.

School is a place for children to develop social skills and cultivate emotional intelligence. When masks are required, they prevent children from reading facial expressions and distancing prevents them from authentically engaging with their peers. (there are numerous studies going back years that show the importance of facial expressions in communication, social connection and learning) Maintaining six feet of distance between classmates is not only damaging to social-emotional connections, but it is practically impossible to enforce. Face coverings would be counterproductive as children would end up touching their faces more - again there are numerous studies that have shown this and all one has to do is watch a briefing by Dr Fauci and how often even he touches his face moving and adjusting his mask!. Expecting young children to wear a mask for 6 hours a day is just not feasible. We can only imagine how often students would be redirected to stop fidgeting with their masks or reprimanded for getting too close to a friend. We worry about the unintended consequences of creating a culture of fear.

We also recognize that employees' rights must be protected. Teachers and staff should not be required to wear a mask if they feel it will impact how they can connect and teach or if they feel it negatively impacts their health. If a teacher or staff member feels safer wearing a mask or face shield then they should have that choice. If a teacher doesn't feel safe returning to school perhaps they can lead distance learning options for other families who don't feel safe coming back to school or for children that are absent due to illness.

What we decide for this school year has huge implications for years to come. I do not want to raise children in a society filled with fear and disconnection. Our children and their future mental health is in a critical place that is just as important as our elderly's physical health. And, again, this is supported by numerous physicians and researchers.

The science from studies around the world show that children are "viral dead ends" in that even if they test positive for coronavirus, they show no or few symptoms but most importantly they do not transmit the virus like adults do. The largest notable study in the US is from Brown University which compiled information from all the childcare centers and the YMCA that stayed open to care for children of front line "essential" workers - those exposed to COVID-19 day in and

day out. IF children were a significant risk for getting and/or passing on the virus, this would be the demographic that showed it....and it didn't.

Also, in countries that have either already sent children back to school or never took them out, the numbers show the same result - "closure or not of schools had no measurable impact on the number of laboratory confirmed cases in school age children".

And Iceland, which performed extensive contact tracing reported only two cases nationwide of child-to-parent transmission. Elliot Haspel—an education policy expert stated, "There are almost no recorded cases of child-to-adult transmission of COVID-19. It's not zero risk, [but] we're acting with a March 2020 understanding of COVID-19 and kids, and not with a June 2020 understanding of COVID-19 and kids"

Even the CDC has recommended that schools reopen and points out the low risk to children and the low risk of transmission by children, as well the risks to children from continued "distance learning" models with children NOT being in school for in person learning. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/reopening-schools.html>)

We also need to be cognizant of inequity challenges. Not every family has the ability for long-term distance learning. In our community at large and especially in our large Hispanic community, schedules or half day attendance will further increase the achievement gap while preventing parents from working and cause hardships on families. In our rural community there are many opportunities for outdoor work, so blanketly banning off-site school trips for all CA schools is unnecessary. Similarly, physical education and many sports can be safely implemented outside and are a main reason why students attend public school. If we're going to return to school, full-time is preferable.

Personally - my husband and I both work full time. The "distance teaching" (it needs to be called what it is - "distance teaching" - there is very little if any "learning" happening!!) model does not work for our family, nor for our 13 yr old who is NOT a visual learner, nor is he motivated to learn on his own. I have heard this from many of his friend's parents as well. There are numerous reasons we did not choose to "home school" our children. We pay property taxes and we are assessed for all the TTUSD "measures" that have passed to "enhance learning" for our children, yet you are considering not allowing our children to attend the very schools that these taxes and assessments go toward.

Please stop making decisions based upon a "March 2020 understanding of COVID-19 and kids" and start making them with a June/July 2020 understanding. The science is all there should you choose to actually look into it rather than blindly following "guidance" from bureaucrats. In fact, our parent group presented much of it to you complete with citations. How disappointing that of the 25 decision makers within TTUSD that we sent the position paper to, only 4 of them had the courtesy to even respond that it was received, and of those 4 only 1 actively engaged with a deep concern for understanding our position and was willing to do the research himself about this subject and continue a healthy and respectful dialogue about it. And the fact that our new Superintendent was NOT one of those to even do us the courtesy of responding, is deeply discouraging to parents.

Our children NEED to be back in the classroom - FULL TIME! The science supports it.

I am attaching reminders for you all about what "learning" looks like!! and why the TTUSD teachers and staff love working with kids. THIS IS WHAT OUR CHILDREN NEED TO GO BACK TO not just for their academics, but for the social-emotional growth and their overall mental health as well.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Dr Ann Sura, NMD

Mark Sura

72. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 4:29 PM

I'm so sorry to have heard that the board has already made a decision to continue so-called "distance learning." That model is all but ineffective. There is very little learning taking place at a distance. It's more of an oxymoron than a legitimate pedagogy. This model does not address the social, emotional or physical needs of the developing mind and body. Several studies have shown that K-12 learning is almost 90% peer-to-peer rather than teacher-to-student. We MUST get these students back to the campus!

In fact, at the high school level, we already had. Athletes such as football, volleyball and track were allowed training time and space. It appears that we value our athletics more than our academics in this district.

I beg this district to please reconsider. Our district is essentially making the decision to trade a supposed health crisis for a mental health crisis. Suicide and depression are up. Obesity is up. Diabetes and alcoholism are up. Spousal abuse and child abuse are up. Does our district want to contribute to those kind of statistics?

Home isn't a safe place or a healthy place for nearly half of our entire student body. Is that really where you want them to stay every day and every night? School gives them healthy meals. A safe place to grow and develop. It gives many of them an opportunity at a better life. We can't limit those possibilities because we are living in the fear and ignorance of our faulty political system. The data is in. We now have access to the science behind COVID19 and enough global success stories to know that our present path isn't effective or productive and only serves to undermine economies and communities. Please don't let that happen to ours.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please choose wisely. Our children are going to experience long term effects that will be nearly impossible to recover from, and that science is already available also. The benefits of a thriving campus community absolutely outweigh the risks of this chaotic time in our nation's history. What happened to the survey asking what we needed as a community, that was taken early on in this ordeal? I thought 75% of those who responded asked for our kids to return to school. Well 75%, and maybe more now, want them to return. Please answer our call and help us educate our children effectively by returning them to campus on September 3.

Jennifer Standteiner

73. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 4:47 PM

I'd like to preface my input with the fact that I want to recognize teachers concerns/safety and would never want them to feel forced to be in an environment that felt unsafe to them.

That being said, I wonder if an outdoor classroom situation for at least the start of the school year, has been considered? I feel like this could be a safe way to gather and educate .

I know many of us struggled with the social distancing and distance learning. The toll on our mental health was a real thing. My 16 year old was very depressed and we were very worried about him. I really can't imagine him doing another school year like how last year ended .

I appreciate you taking the time to read my email.

Thank you,
Shana Boyd

74. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 5:04 PM

RE: School Opening Plan

Dear Dr. Robert Leri, Superintendent Chief Learning Officer, and Ms. Carmen Ghysels, Superintendent Chief Learning Officer,

Thank you for allowing us to comment on the agenda item of the school opening plan. I respectfully disagree with your proposed plan and honestly am really saddened with this decision. I believe the plan to have some in classroom learning with distance learning as an option for families in this school district was a better choice. I know many families would prefer distance learning as well as families wanting in-classroom learning.

I would like to know if the School District applied for a county waiver? What other options were considered? I ask because I have children in the Truckee-Donner Recreation & Park District where they have participated in daily this summer with no positive Covid19 test among the children or the counselors.

Did the school district consider the impact of this plan on working-class families? Was the long term psychological impact of kid's mental health considered? I wonder what such a sweeping decision would have had on your personal wellbeing when you were a child. There seems to be little or no concern given to the children. Be clear they are safely congregating in daycare environments, and that fact makes me believe this decision is about teachers and not students. How would teachers feel if public safety or individuals in the medical industry simply said they were going home for the year.

Alisha and Jim

75. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 5:12 PM

I'm writing this public comment as a concerned parent and elementary school teacher. I strongly support starting the 2020/2021 school year in Distance Learning.

The current cases in Placer County are currently 137.6 per 100K with 6 deaths in the last 14 days and 18 total deaths. Due to this data, Placer County has been on the monitoring list since July 17th. Working from home and keeping schools physically closed lowers the risk of both contracting and spreading COVID-19. Requiring students and staff to report to school increases district liability for COVID-19 illnesses and possible death, unnecessarily.

I am asking you, our elected Board Members, to support Distance Learning and keep the students and staff of TTUSD safe, engaged and educated.

Thank you,

Edith Martinez

76. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 9:08 AM

Good Morning Board of Trustees Members and Superintendents Carmen Ghysels and Rob Leri,

I am one of the founders of "Tahoe-Truckee Advocates for Reasonable School Reopening." We heard a paper from an anonymous group was met with some skepticism, so we've collected signatures backing our position.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Bethany Eisinger

77. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 5:35 PM

I understand school districts can request a waiver from the state to allow elementary schools to open in-person learning. Is the TTUSD planning to apply for the waiver and if not, why not.

Thank you.

Irina Naduhovskaya

78. Wed, Aug 5, 2020 at 6:01 PM

The remondini family wishes to have in class learning starting as soon as possible. Isabella is going into her sophomore year and anders to his 8 th. The family understands the safety protocols and realizes the ramifications of this decision. Please let them go back to school!