

Danny Peltier

To: Ryan Herrick
Cc: Rebecca Feiden
Subject: In-person Learning Percentage Recommendation

From: Amy Jeffreys <amyckerr@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 10, 2020 12:12 PM
To: Ryan Herrick <rherrick@spsca.nv.gov>
Subject: In-person Learning Percentage Recommendation

Good morning Ryan,

I wanted to send the following email to you to submit as public comment for the Charter Board meeting on Friday 12/11/20.

I am hoping that the board members will also have a chance to read it prior to the meeting (My apologies in advance for it being so long).

When looking at the recommendation to remain at 40%, I cannot help but get the sense that the recommendation is based heavily on public perception.

The only reason to keep it at 40% is because there is a PERCEPTION with our increase in COVID cases, that increasing campus capacity would “look” bad. The ironic thing is....the 40% is a self-imposed limit. As I will note below, Charter schools are currently operating under stricter guidelines than what the state requires. By increasing the 40%, you are simply doing two things 1) aligning more closely with the state guidelines 2) giving each charter school the CHOICE to do what would be best fore their particular community.

It appears that the recommendation is based on public perception because I am sure the board has been kept very abreast of all of the information about COVID as it relates to children and school facilities (so I won't re-hash everything you have heard 1,000 times). All of this data supports the idea of children being able to be back in the classroom safely. I am also sure you are well aware that virtual learning is NOT a successful model (again, I won't re-hash everything you have heard 1,000 times). The 40% is better than nothing...but having a 3rd grader (like my son) go to school for 2.5 hrs a day (or my 9th grader who MIGHT get the opportunity to attend 2 days a week) cannot be the final “solution”.

I also want to point out that most top medical officials (even as high up as the CDC) want schools to find every reason to say “yes” to having kids back in school. Additionally, our own Governor has indicated that he wants our students back in school, safely of course. He issued Directive 028 for schools and to my knowledge has not issued any additional stricter guidance as it pertains to schools. So, as it stands our Charter Schools have stricter COVID guidance than the state requires. He never issued stricter guidance for schools located in elevated risk counties. It appears that is something the Charter School Authority implemented voluntarily. Please correct me if I am wrong.

I realize that most schools districts and especially large ones (such as CCSD) probably cannot execute a “return to campus” plan safely or effectively. This is mainly due to the fact that they have operated for decades in an inefficient manner, which has led to large class sizes and dwindling resources just to list a few of the issues they face. However, this is NOT the case with Charter schools. Charter schools, from the very beginning of this pandemic, have been better positioned to take on the challenges they have faced. In this particular circumstance, our charter schools are better compared to private schools. I cannot think of one private school that is operating at 40%. Charter schools have the resources, innovativeness and flexibility to actually get most of their students back in the classroom safely. At the very

least, you should give each and every charter school the option to determine if they can successfully get the majority of their students back to campus. You have already acknowledged they have been doing a great job and making good decisions about how to proceed each step of the way. Additionally, one of the great things about being part of a charter system, is the autonomy it provides. Each charter group has the ability to implement what is best for their community. Please do not diminish one of the qualities that makes the Charter System exceptional.

With all this said....there is overwhelming evidence and reasons that can easily support increasing from the current 40%. At this point, most campuses have about 20-25% of families still choosing to stay 100% virtual. So if you increase to 75%, you would be able to accommodate all those that want to be on campus. An increase to 75% can also satisfy the concerns of teachers. This is because they will also be given the choice to stay virtual or teach in-person. In the several Pinecrest Board meeting that have been apart of, each principal has made it very clear that they have worked very hard to accommodate the concerns of high-risk teachers. I don't see that changing simply because the percentage increases. School Administrators will continue to do all they can to meet the needs of those that want to return to campus and those that want to stay virtual.

I beg you to NOT let perception drive your decision. Please have faith in your Charter School Administrators, teachers, and families that we will be able to get students back to campus safely and responsibility.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Amy Jeffreys - Parent of 3rd & 9th Grader at Pinecrest - Sloan Canyon (Henderson, NV)