

TEAMSTERS Local #502

State of Pennsylvania

Commonwealth Association of School Administrators

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Dear Mayor Kenney and Superintendent Hite,

We, the members of Teamsters Local 502 CASA are dedicated to returning to in person learning, because we know it's best for students. However, we are unwavering in our assertion that it is not yet safe for PreK through grade 2 students and staff to return to an in person hybrid model because vaccinations are now available and our members, in fact, all employees have not been vaccinated (if they so choose). Vaccination prior to returning to schools would provide inoculation against Covid-19. In addition, there has been numerous issues regarding proper vetting of ventilation reports. We are requesting a stay of school reopening to allow for vaccination of school employees and the proper vetting of ventilation reports to ensure optimal safe environments.

We stand in solidarity with members of other labor unions, city officials, parents, community members and school staff who believe strongly that the following conditions must be met before staff and students return to in-person learning:

1. Vaccinations

As front line workers who will interact directly with students and others daily, school based personnel must be prioritized to receive the vaccinations that will protect the members of their school communities and their families from this deadly virus. When polled, 85% of our membership believed that schools should not open until staff have been fully vaccinated.

2. Vetting

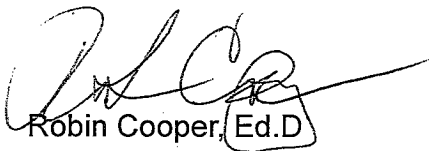
The public needs to receive *completed ventilation* reports for the school where their children or grandchildren attend, so that they can review the reports and make an informed decision about whether to return their children to school.

3. Ventilation

Contrary to what the school district is claiming, a survey of our members this week revealed that 40% of our schools have not received comprehensive air balancing assessment reports for all classrooms and spaces to be utilized. Added to this is the concern that many schools do not have adequate air handling systems to effectively

provide proper air exchange. The District's response to this - the installation of residential non-commercial window fans attached to flimsy, cracked plywood that are not intended for constant use or constructed to withstand the elements over time - is an embarrassment. It is appalling to know that our students were not deemed worthy of much greater investment to ensure their health and safety. ***As a result, we are recommending a third party meets to confer with building administrators on their air balancing reports before schools are opened.***

With a District average of only 30% of parents opting in for a hybrid return, an overwhelming number of District families have also clearly expressed their reluctance to have their children return on February 22nd. This lack of support from parents, combined with the alarm raised by school staff should be a clear signal to the District. The safety of students, their families and school staff, is too important to move forward with an unclear, haphazard, and ill conceived plan. ***We are therefore calling for a stay of the decision to return to in person learning on February 22nd, and stand ready to partner with the District, to develop a plan that prioritizes returning students to in person learning, while also addressing the above safety concerns.***



Robin Cooper, Ed.D

President and Principal Officer

Teamsters Local 502: Commonwealth Association of School Administrators (CASA)