

Name	Public Comment
Anonymous	<p>Good afternoon. I wanted to voice quickly concerns I have regarding any plans for our return to school Fall 20/21. As a district, we need to have a viable distance-only option ready, with full support, that makes sense for each unique school site regardless of how school begins. We may, at any time, have to revert back to distance learning at a moment's notice; falling back into triage mode each time is an untenable option. To this end, the district will need to establish clear expectations for students regarding work load and attendance. Additionally, we need to ensure access and equity in the realm of internet access and technology to support the students and educators. Chrome books work for a majority of coursework, but our CTE and specialty programs require fully functioning computers and peripherals, as well as software licenses, that are expensive but are a must in order to meet the needs of students in these classes. If we are in a physical space, the vast majority of these specialty classes utilize shared equipment with an average class size of 36 which would need to be addressed. Any return to physical school must adhere to CDC guidelines. In addition, our district will have to be flexible in allowing educators to opt to teach remotely if their children are not able to attend physical school, if loved ones require care, or if those faculty or staff are in a high risk population. These are only a few of the concerns that crop up at a cursory glance of most school plans hitting the news. Please consider this when making your decisions.</p>
Katherine Kousser	<p>When the Board meets with the San Dieguito Faculty Association / California School Employees Association in closed session on July 16th, I hope the Board will consider the important role that trust plays in the success of any school district, especially with its teacher and staff. It is in the best interest of students that their teachers and the staff can be confident and feel secure in their return to campus, especially because some students will be nervous themselves about the return. As a parent of two students at two different schools in the district, I am concerned about how the District plans to physically reopen our schools this August, especially with regard to the health protections to be provided for teachers and staff, not just the students. Our schools cannot open and stay open without healthy teachers and staff. I want to trust that the Board is prioritizing the health of our teachers, staff, students and their families in making plans for reopening. Adopting basic protective measures – like the mandatory use of masks indoors and the use of physical distancing – and enforcing their practice – are essential at a minimum. Also, I encourage the Board to directly address the specific health concerns of our teachers and staff by listening carefully to what they require – collectively and individually – to be able to return to the classroom and campus. A one size fits all approach may not work. The District may have to be flexible in how to reopen specific courses or subjects according to the degree of health concerns vary among teachers and staff; for example, some may want to hold class outside while others may want to teach remotely until spring. The Board should consider ways to honor these requests while still providing in-person education. Teachers and staff need to be able to trust that the Board and the District Administration prioritizes their health and safety; this is the first step to building trust with students and their families. If the District Administration cannot satisfactorily address the health concerns of our teachers and staff, as a parent, how can our families and the students have confidence that our schools are safe to reopen to in-person education and are likely to stay open? Requiring the use of masks and physical distancing is only a first step. Addressing the concerns of teachers and staff is next toward putting a comprehensive plan together for reopening.</p>
Adam Bishop	<p>My name is Adam Bishop and I am a veteran teacher with 20 years of classroom experience, currently teaching at San Dieguito Academy. I am writing to implore the Board to follow the lead of LAUSD and SDUSD and vote to begin the 2020-21 school year via distance learning.</p> <p>I teach 11th and 12th grade English, my students are young adults, and my class average is 40. If we return to school, I will be working in close proximity to 120+ young adults for a roughly 4-5 hours per day. No other profession that I am aware of is currently working under such conditions. Simply put, there is no such thing as a "safe" reopening of a school during a global pandemic, with infections on the rise, and hospitals near or at capacity to treat patients. A mask and some hand sanitizer is not enough to make this fundamental reality any different. We cannot ask our community to risk their lives (and livelihoods) to attempt to return to "normal" when we are obviously living through a pandemic of historic proportions. Nothing is normal now.</p> <p>School facilities being what they are, and school funding being what it is, there is no way to modify the school day or physical structure to meet (or even approach) the CDC guidelines for safe gatherings. If eating a sandwich at a café is too dangerous to allow, how can 40+ adults in a single poorly ventilated room possibly be safe for anyone? As a teacher and parent, I find in unconscionable that we are actually considering putting our students and the adults who serve them directly in harm's way, when conditions have actually worsened since the last time we shut down. How much sickness and death is acceptable, just so that we can pretend to be living our "normal" lives? In addition to the risk of death, how many premature strokes and kidney failures can we risk? How much chronic heart and lung damage are we willing to risk among our staff and students to mollify a vocal minority of parents?</p> <p>No, distance learning is not ideal, but nothing about this pandemic is ideal. With enough time to prepare and collaborate, we can create a quality educational experience for our students. The Board and the SDUHSD just have to make the right call, and trust its staff to be the professionals that we are, and give us the time and space necessary to do what we do best.</p> <p>As a district, we have failed to answer even the most basic questions about reopening. We must not return to class this fall if we are to avoid the potential catastrophe that the school year will become once the pandemic inevitably hits the SDUHSD.</p>
Anonymous	<p>Good evening Board Members and Superintendent Haley,</p> <p>As you discuss with the Teachers' Union a safe plan for Fall Learning, I am writing to ask you to please consider offering students a CHOICE this fall for on campus live instruction as well as a robust distance learning option for those who cannot return to campus. Many districts are moving to this model in a safe, reasonable, fiscally reasonable manner. The model could have some of the following elements to ensure success and safety for both teachers and students:</p> <p>On campus instruction: Face mask use r Staggered Start and End. Two class years on campus at a time. Inside classrooms: looking at models being followed successfully in other countries, desks could be spaced 3' apart Teachers are kept safe: strong PPE, teach behind a plexiglass barrier, a taped-off area where students cannot approach them. Students have cleaning materials Consideration of teacher presenting remotely into the classroom (with monitor facing classroom for students to see the teacher, and then a proctor to monitor class behavior but does not have to be close to kids) Allow seniors to eat lunch in their car</p> <p>Distance learning · Synchronous and asynchronous classes for those students who cannot participate in live instruction. To provide structure to the learning day, and to help with group dynamics, questions/answers session, teacher engagement. ·</p> <p>Lack of transparency and early communication with clear plans. Whatever the District is planning, there MUST be early communication with parents so they can make alternative plans or any plans for the upcoming Fall Semester.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>

Name	Public Comment
Ellen di Cristina	I am a teacher for SDUHSD. I would love nothing more than to return to my classroom and my students for a normal year. But these times are anything but normal. The safety of our community should be our chief concern, and opening schools for in-person instruction will — at the very least — cause many to fall ill who wouldn't have otherwise. Please protect the lives of everyone impacted by your decision.
Anonymous	It is essential for the emotional, social and cognitive well-being of our adolescents that in-person classes are implemented to the fullest extent possible. All the data shows that the vast majority of children are not getting more than mild effects, if any, from COVID-19 and that they are most likely not transmitting the virus due to carrying a much smaller viral load than adults. As a former teacher, I understand the concern for teachers' health and fully support having teachers who are in a higher risk category stay home and implement the distance learning portion of the curriculum. Please give our families a choice in whether in-person or distance learning is right for our particular situation. Distance learning should still be an option, but for many students, in-person learning could literally be a lifesaver. Let's not underestimate the devastating social and emotional impact that distance learning can have on this age group.
Anonymous	I am writing to you in the capacity of a parent of a student in the district and as a 16 year teacher of SDUHSD. I have just found out about the emergency meeting. All of us want to return to school but I cannot stress to you enough the importance of giving serious consideration to distance learning to start the year. Granted, last spring was far from optimal BUT, we have a chance to plan accordingly. I am proud of the work my students did and of their just released AP scores last spring. I worked extremely hard last spring, even harder than I did when I owned my own business. I am STRONGLY opposed to the notion that SDUHSD has no model "off the table." A district in Utah is considering opening under normal procedures- they have a template "what to do if a student/staff member dies" template. Are you prepared to plan for that? Would any business take the risk of putting 40 (let's be honest about class sizes) people in a 900 square foot room WITHOUT masks? There will be those who say "children don't transmit COVID.." that's because they have been quarantined and we aren't dealing with children. My students are between 15-18 years old. Is the district REALLY considering the liability involved of an outbreak, of a student who infects a teacher/staff member, of assuming long term subs for quarantines of classes? Who will disinfect the classes between sessions? There are too many variables to consider that haven't been communicated. The only rational option is to begin via distance and hopefully people understand the guidance, wear masks and the outbreak gets under control. PLEASE consider the safety and well being of teachers and their families in addition to the students.
Cindy Gray	I would like to encourage the board and the administration as they work to re-open our schools. Since I am not clear what the labor negotiations is about, I'm assuming it is related to the re-opening of our campuses and the steps needed to make that happen. I am disappointed that these conversations are happening behind closed doors as we, the taxpayers, parents and other stakeholders want to know what the expectations of the union are along with what recommendations the administration is putting forth for discussion. We do support our teachers and want them to be protected, but we also want our students back in the classroom where they can fully engage in learning.
Anonymous	<p>With COVID outbreaks increasing and uncontrolled in our county and our zip code and most indoor services closing or facing restrictions, it is absolutely not the time to be re-opening the schools and exposing our children to hours of shared indoor airspace with others, which is the highest risk activity known for this virus. Please follow the health experts on this, and not wishful thinking. We all want the kids back in school but only once it is safe for students, teachers and staff. Absolutely not now! Other countries returned to school after controlling their outbreaks, not before. AAP's 7/10/2020 letter emphasizes that "schools in areas with high levels of COVID-19 community spread should not be compelled to reopen." AAP further recommends that if and when schools open, masks should be definitely be required. As LA Unified Superintendent Austin Beutner recently said, "Schools are different than Walmarts. ... It's not a 10-year-old in isolation. It's a 10-year-old with a 30-year-old teacher and a 50-year-old bus driver, who goes home to a 70-year-old grandmother. We have a high school with about 2,800 students and staff who have regular contact every day with another 100,000 people. ... Not so simple. Can't just tap our heels like Dorothy in 'The Wizard of Oz' and get right back to school. Got to make sure it's safe. And until the virus in our community is at a lesser level, below World Health Organization guidelines, it's just not safe." Following a letter from 239 scientists from 32 countries to the World Health Organization arguing that covid-19 can be transmitted through the air, a 7/14/20 MIT Technology Review article points out that "The more people you have coming in and out of an indoor space, the more likely it is that someone who is infected will show up. The longer those infected individuals spend in that space, the higher the concentration of virus in the air over time. This is particularly bad news for spaces where people congregate for hours on end, like restaurants, bars, offices, classrooms, and churches."</p> <p>LINKS TO CITED REFERENCES: https://services.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/aap/2020/pediatricians-educators-and-superintendents-urge-a-safe-return-to-school-this-fall/ https://academic.oup.com/cid/article/doi/10.1093/cid/ciaa939/5867798 https://www.technologyreview.com/2020/06/30/1004625/is-it-safe-to-send-kids-back-to-school/ https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2020/07/14/covid-19-online-school-los-angeles</p>
ANNAMARIE BEZZERIDES	While a large district to the north of us (LA Unified) and one to the South (SD Unified) have each made a decision to deliver instruction fully remotely, we in the SDUHS District, do NOT have to follow suit. Given the significant negative impacts on not having students engage through in person learning with their teachers and classmates as well as to not participate in extra curricular activities iek the arts and sports, this district should find a safe path forward to provide for in person instruction and activities. Let us be a model and demonstrate it can happen. There are universities that are making the move to do so and to create strong communities of students in the process. We do not need to throw in the towel and do as these other districts are doing. We can leverage the power of community and be stronger for it. Create ambassadors out of our students and our teachers and we will reap a set of benefits of leadership and community while ensuring a far better learning and formation experience for our youth.