



5516 NE 107<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 200, Vancouver, WA 98662 | 360-256-0880 | [wea-riverside.org](http://wea-riverside.org)

Date: August 10, 2020

To: Washington Schools Risk Management Pool, Deborah Callahan, Exec. Director  
Clear Risk Solutions, Richard McBride, Director Risk Management  
And the co-signed Superintendents of Washington State

Re: Letter to Gov. Inslee dated July 24, 2020

On behalf of the nearly 5,000 educators of the WEA-Riverside Council, we reject the misplaced priorities of superintendents focusing on appeasing insurance adjusters instead of committing to the health and safety of the learning environments in which they oversee. In fact, this sends a clear message to the public that district leadership have no confidence in their plans to safely reopen facilities. The science is clear that COVID-19 is a mutating, aerosol spreading virus that is highly contagious in creating superspreader events of infection at schools in children and adults. We reserve the community's right to hold school districts publicly accountable for the illness and death of any Washington State family member from an inadequate and unfunded reopening plan. We encourage school leaders to focus on advocating for resources and policies to address inequities in remote learning so that educators are ready to teach, students are ready to learn, and families are equipped to support them:

- The social-emotional learning of students to cope through societal trauma is paramount. With an ongoing pandemic, civil unrest, and no relief for families experiencing an economic collapse, we must meet the basic needs and mental health of students and staff first.
- Families need explicit support to facilitate learning at home with training, resources, and clear communication from school districts. Multilingual language translation should support families in using their students' Learning Management System, checking grades, contacting teachers, and more.
- Each and every student needs a team of paraprofessional and educators ready to support their success and connection with school. Suggesting staffing cuts at a time when students need more support is deplorable. Staff must be retrained to deliver an authentic learning experience for students, particularly those with 504 plans, IEPs, English Language Learners, and Highly Capable.
- Per state and federal law, IEP teams must remain unencumbered by management to make decisions and create policies and procedures within the school district. Any eventual on-site support services for underserved students must be undertaken by volunteer staff who receive unlimited medical grade protections in PPE and training along with rigorous cleaning protocols to isolate exposure inside and outside of a classroom. There must be zero incidents of contamination to reduce liability.
- Standardized class schedules where there are no conflicts in synchronous learning sessions between elementary and secondary students are necessary to accommodate families with multiple students.
- Educators are offered the option of flexible office hours to provide feedback to students, meet with students and families, collaborate with administration, and planning time.

This work simply cannot be top-down or driven by austerity. Superintendents, labor unions, students and their families must all work together to use our collective experiences, skills, and ingenuity to create equitable remote learning opportunities that serve each and every student.

Sincerely,

WEA-Riverside Uniserv Council Equity Committee and Executive Board