



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEA-Las Cruces Supports a Safe and Equitable Return to In Person Learning

(LAS CRUCES) -- NEA-Las Cruces appreciates the Las Cruces Public School Board for their thoughtful and responsible approach to expanding in-person learning. Our unit is eager to return to in-person learning, but under safe conditions for students and staff.

Today, NEA-New Mexico is preparing to release a statewide member survey of over 3,000 educators from more than 60 school districts across the state regarding expanded in-person learning. The survey demonstrates that in many districts across the state, hybrid learning has been neither safe nor an effective learning environment from the standpoint of many educators. More than one in five respondents said they were “never provided” PPE while working during the pandemic under a hybrid model or when working from a school building. Moreover, despite the myth that children are not vulnerable to COVID-19, 56% of survey respondents had students who had been infected with COVID-19. Following the science means the preparedness of implementing required mitigation strategies correctly. Proper documented training is critical in the success of in person learning. Incorrect use of PPE and inadequate cleaning can spread contamination and not contain the virus.

NEA-Las Cruces appreciates that our school district is resisting the rush to open schools carelessly. While other districts have prematurely expanded in-person learning, causing additional outbreaks and furthering interruption of student learning, our district is taking a more responsible approach that values the lives of students, families (many of which are intergenerational), and educators alike.

Shared leadership is part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between NEA-LC and the Board of Education. Bargaining is a key component that allows NEA-LC to bargain a change in working conditions for all certified staff. Both educators and parents have expressed concern over the quality of education of teaching simultaneously. This instructional model will reduce the quality of instruction for those students who opt to stay remote and for those in the classroom. Privacy issues are a concern for students in the classroom and for staff.

NEA-Las Cruces members are educators and parents, and we share the great desire to return to in-person learning but we must continue to follow the science and implement it correctly. We remain diligent in our message to our members and community members to mask, social distance and follow CDC guidelines to ensure the process of returning to buildings is safe and just for our students, staff and the families of Las Cruces.

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