



## Washington State Legislature

March 1, 2021

The Honorable Governor Jay Inslee  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504

Superintendent Chris Reykdal  
PO Box 47200  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Gov. Inslee and Superintendent Reykdal,

We have had conversations with many of the school districts in eastern Washington. They are unified in their opposition to the current guidelines and requirements established under the Healthy Washington – Roadmap to Recovery plan.

Our school districts have been complying with the guidelines for almost a year. The school administrators and educators are the boots on the ground. They recognize the issues and concerns the guidelines have created, and the inability to connect with our kids they have caused.

This past year, we have seen the damage our society has suffered through during the shutdown orders. Our youth have made great sacrifices through the pandemic – no in-person school, no extracurricular activities and little social interaction.

For many, virtual learning isn't working. Our children need more than that, they need in person interaction with the teachers and each other. Based on our conversations and communication with the school districts in our region, we urge you to consider the proposed following guidelines:

- Modify physical distancing requirements, six feet to three feet;
- Prioritize educator and school staff vaccinations;
- Enhance and expedite student testing results;
- Increase nursing staff support and funding;
- Improve and enhance quarantine times; and
- Further open up our sports programs.

Finally, we need fair and collaborative leadership between the teachers' union, school boards, administrators and all staff so districts are communicating and supporting each other to solve the issues that get our students back in the classroom.

The mental health of our most precious natural resource, our kids, is at stake. Lack of social interaction is causing depression, attempted suicides and many other mental health

issues. Our children's future and success will be shaped by the decisions we make right now.

Please find attached a document from Moses Lake School District Superintendent Joshua Meek outlining recommendations that will allow restoration of our schools for all of our students. These recommendations are echoed by many of the school districts in the state.

The time has come to allow local control, both in our schools and in our communities. The citizens of the great state of Washington are capable of making their own decisions. Let's end the state of emergency and trust the people of Washington. You continue to praise them for the great work they have done. It's time to demonstrate your support with action. No plan will be without risk, but we are risking a quality education and the mental health of our youth if we do not move forward.

We look forward to your reply.

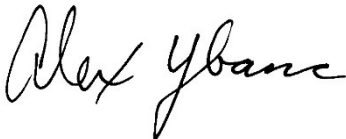
Best regards,



Senator Judy Warnick  
13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Representative Tom Dent  
13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Representative Alex Ybarra  
13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District