

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Andrew Estep, CAE
Executive Director
Washington State PTA
(253) 214-7410
www.wastatepta.org

Local Voices Needed in Plans to Reopen Schools

Tacoma, WA (June 15, 2020): The recently released *Reopening Washington Schools 2020 District Planning Guide* directs school districts to work with students, families, staff, and health authorities to prepare two plans for the 2020-2021 school year that works best for their community. The first plan prioritizes face-to-face instruction as allowed by public health conditions within the physical constraints of the school buildings. The second is a contingency plan for continuous remote learning if school buildings are unable to open.

Washington State PTA urges all families to seek answers from their local boards of education and school districts, and hold leaders accountable if family and student voices do not hold equal seats at the discussion table. Through our local and council PTAs, we will be working closely with these groups to find solutions that meet the needs of students and families. Just as the impact of the pandemic has varied considerably from community to community, so too will the needs of our members and their families. This can be an opportunity for school districts to work with their families and community members to reframe the school system around trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and anti-racist practices.

Together we will find solutions to the problems posed by this unique situation. We will work to ensure that every child receives the education they deserve regardless of the community in which they reside. No child's education should suffer. All of our children deserve an excellent education from qualified instructors in a safe and welcoming environment.

Washington State PTA asks the Governor, OSPI, the State Board of Education, and Department of Health to work with our association over the summer on further guidance for family and community engagement to reopen schools so that every child's potential can become a reality.

About Washington State PTA: Washington State PTA is the state's oldest and largest child advocacy organization founded in 1905 by Abby Williams Hill of Tacoma, an artist who saw the need for an organization to support Washington's children. Thanks to her leadership and vision—and current members who continue to carry her vision forward—Washington State PTA has been a leading voice for children in Washington for more than 110 years. To learn more about the Washington State PTA, please visit www.wastatepta.org.

15 Oregon Avenue, Suite 202, Tacoma, WA 98409-7463 (253) 214-7410

###