

Special Board Meeting – July 21

Public Comments

ID	Name2	Last Name	Representing	Public Comment(s)
1	Jessica	Mascari	AJ Mascari	Hello, I am the parent of AJ Mascari. My son will be starting the 2nd grade this fall. This current crisis has been difficult for so many people, especially our children. Their world's are completely upside down and they have no idea when their life will return to normal. My son, for example, has not done well with school being shut down. He thrives on a routine, loves school, loves his teachers and misses his friends. To expect our children to CONTINUE to be isolated and forced to stay at home is saddening and unbelievable. To expect parents to throughly teach their school aged kids at home just isn't manageable. I have other children at home who require constant attention and having to navigate online schooling in a way that my 2nd grader will grasp this new material is ridiculous. Kids NEED school. School and education IS ESSENTIAL. I can't comprehend how this is still happening. Add whatever safety measures you need, tell the government NO! It is time we as a community make a STAND and do what is in the best interest of our kids. If there are parents out there who don;t want to send their kids to school then so be it. I find it hard to believe that there are more parents out there that want to stay home than don't. OPEN OUR SCHOOLS!! OUR KIDS ARE SUFFERING!

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2 Shawntae Smith

Please fight to get our kids back in school!! I will help however I can with obtaining the waiver, petitions, protests....anything! This is hurting our kid's so much. Please.....let's do what is right for our kids not let a political game ruin their future.

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3 Eri

Nall

Cajon Park
Students

As we revisit the school opening plan, I am frustrated at how a state government can determine what should be a locally controlled decision. Will you be applying for the waiver? If we start the school year online, will the teachers be looping? I do not see how a teacher can truly get to know their students academically, socially, and behaviorally over zoom. Thank you for your consideration.

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4 Gina Lerma Gina lerma

I'm mother of child at Carlton oaks school. This coronavirus is bad numbers are going higher the last few days. Govenor doesn't want the school to open due to numbers. I don't think mask and distance isn't going to work. A lot kids get sick at school track to other kids. Im nervous my daughter going back to school. I wish the district will consider online. I understand parents who work need there child to go to school and the learning. But I'm a staying home mom and really concerned for my child. I don't think can clean everything and masks aren't going to fully protect it. Really read this some of us concerned the coronavirus is serious and the numbers getting high. Thank you concerned parent Gina Lerma .

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5	Joan	McKeon	My 3rd grade son	<p>I would be love to send my son back to school with his teachers and friends, but that is just not feasible during these times. We can not go back to how things were at the beginning of the year. Even if we find an effective vaccine, I don't think we can ever go back to the carefree days when all we had to worry about was our kids bringing home a cold or lice. The reality is that it is not safe to go back into the classroom at this time.</p> <p>We need a distance learning program that is school based in and taught by the teachers at our children's school. Daily interaction and actual lessons are essential. When the infection rates start to decrease, a hybrid model would be the safest where we have half of the student body on campus at any given time. It will allow for us to move seamlessly back to full distant learning if/when the schools closed again.</p> <p>I know distance learning is not ideal and some kids will fall behind in some areas. But they can be caught up on education. That is not possible if they get seriously ill or (God forbid) were to die. Please don't make me have to choose between my child's safety or their education. His safety will ALWAYS win.</p>
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6 Mike S

Dear Santee School Board,

As a citizen of Santee with a young child, I was relieved to hear that the school district was finally offering a distance learning option. For the safety of the students, teachers, staff, and community members, I hope that the board will move to make this the only option through the fall and only reconsider their opening plan for January 2021 if the pandemic has subsided in the county, as the San Diego Unified and many other school districts have done. This will provide safety and consistency until the pandemic can be more contained.

I was concerned with the comments from the board on July 7th where the number one priority of the board was having the students return to school 100% in person. The number one priority should always be safety: safety of the students, safety of the teachers and staff, and safety of the community. There is a world-wide pandemic and it would be foolish to reopen schools without considering the current state of the pandemic locally and in surrounding areas. Cases in the county are on the rise and are increasing faster than any other time since the pandemic started. The reason for closing schools back in March has not gone away and in fact it has gotten worse. If restaurants and businesses must close, how can we consider opening schools, where students and teachers will be indoors for extended periods of time and without masks, according to the latest plan? If one student or teacher gets the virus, it will spread like wildfire to other students, staff, families and the community. Even if most of the infected people show little symptoms, many will have severe symptoms, and some would likely die. I do not think that is a risk worth taking.

While case numbers in Santee have been low (the HHSA for SD county lists 222 cases as of 7/19, which is far from zero), Santee is not isolated from the surrounding areas, which have much higher cases. Many people travel to and from neighboring areas and communities for work, shopping, leisure, or other reasons. With the pandemic out of control in the county and the county being on the state watchlist, how can you say and guarantee that the students, teachers, staff, and community will be safe? There is also very little information about the effect of the coronavirus in children, and when in doubt, we should err on the side of caution and not take on unnecessary risk.

Though distance learning is not perfect, and everyone agrees in-person learning is better, distance learning is the only safe option at this time. How can we make the most out of this situation and use

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the resources available to address the needs of students? We are all going through this pandemic together and though we are each affected in different ways, the lives and safety of our students, teachers, staff, and community are too precious to risk.

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ID	Name2	Public Comment(s)	Representing	Comment
1	Sarah Kirk	<p>My concern is regarding class sizes relative to the sizes of classrooms when students return to school campuses. With the students sitting six feet apart and having 24 or 25 students to a room, how will parents and staff be ensured that the desks will be adequately spaced? Some classrooms are very small and it does not seem possible to adhere to the six foot regulation while still allowing for room for the teacher to move through the room, if needed. Has the board discussed this issue and the possibility of lowering class sizes as more students choose distance learning for the whole year? I'm concerned not only for the health and safety of our students, who will eventually end up back on campus, but also for any staff that will be in the rooms, as well.</p>		<p>Thank you for allowing me to take a moment of your time.</p>

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2 Jean Brittain

Dear Board Members and Dr. Baranski,

After reading through the safe at school reopening plan I have a few concerns. First of all thank you all for the work that is going into opening our schools in the future. I am glad we will be having distance learning but I feel we need more information about what that will be like. I have a Jr. High student and the current plan does not discuss how that will work with multiple teachers. Could you please provide clarification on the distance learning that will be provided at the beginning of the school year? Also could you please provide us with more information about the distance learning program that is going to be available for the entire school year? Is this also going to have multiple jr. high teachers and who will the teachers be?

The reopening plan has a few areas that I would like to discuss. The first one is the 6 ft. in the classrooms. Each desk should be 6ft. and if that is not possible then class size should be reduced due to safety. The lunch outside should have every student 6 ft. apart at the tables no matter what. This is a very vulnerable time and with masks off and kids talking the likelihood of spreading Covid is higher especially with asymptomatic students. The restroom plan is very complicated and I feel this needs to be a different set up with someone monitoring the restrooms. The symptoms and temperature checks should be done as soon as the student steps onto the campus. It also should not be done by the teacher. She is a teacher not a health clerk or nurse. The same goes with in classroom health needs, the health clerk should take care of those needs. Jr. high reopening is also not clear on how that is going to happen. Are teachers moving from classroom to classroom? How will science be done?

Parent

Dear Board Members and Dr. Baranski,

After reading through the safe at school reopening plan I have a few concerns. First of all thank you all for the work that is going into opening our schools in the future. I am glad we will be having distance learning but I feel we need more information about what that will be like. I have a Jr. High student and the current plan does not discuss how that will work with multiple teachers. Could you please provide clarification on the distance learning that will be provided at the beginning of the school year? Also could you please provide us with more information about the distance learning program that is going to be available for the entire school year? Is this also going to have multiple jr. high teachers and who will the teachers be?

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What about electives? If a teacher is infected will the entire Jr. go on quarantine? Who will teach the children at home during this time? I feel that these are all valid points that need to be addressed and thought about before we open safely. Thank you.

moving from classroom to classroom? How will science be done? What about electives? If a teacher is infected will the entire Jr. go on quarantine? Who will teach the children at home during this time? I feel that these are all valid points that need to be addressed and thought about before we open safely. Thank you.

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3 Cameron
Williams

Thank you for this opportunity to communicate with you again. I attended Cajon Park School from kindergarten to eighth grade where my father was also a teacher for nearly forty years. . My daughter attended Carlton Oaks from kindergarten to eighth grade. My son will begin kindergarten in a few weeks at Carlton Oaks. I have been a teacher at Carlton Oaks for 23 years, and my wife has been teaching there for 15 years. As you may guess, we love Santee: the schools, the people, the community.

I sent you all an email over a week ago, and while I understand that you have received many emails from teachers and parents, I was disappointed that I did not get a single response addressing my very real concern about the number of students who can fit in a classroom with six feet of social distancing. I am concerned as a teacher, as a father, and as a husband. I want to present the facts to you again, and also allow the Santee community to be aware.

I take the safety of my students very seriously. It's even more important than a return to classrooms. I have read and reread the "Safe at School Reopening Plan." After Karl Christensen communicated to teachers that we would be receiving new single desks to allow for six feet (or close to it) of distancing between students, and that those desks would allow us to fit 25 students in a classroom, I immediately went to work. I measured my room and set up chairs five feet apart, which is only 83% of the recommended six feet, and even at that I was only able to fit 19 chairs. To fit 25 chairs, my students would have to sit less than four feet apart. To be truly six feet apart, I could fit

Teachers and
Parents

Nothing else at this time.

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only 13 students.

In case you think I have an unusually small classroom, I will share some details. My classroom is the largest one in the upstairs of one of the “new” junior high buildings. There are seven of these buildings in the district. On my campus at Carlton Oaks, there are only four classrooms larger than mine: the two science rooms downstairs, the old “shop” on the main campus, and the old “home-ec” room on the main campus. While there are campuses with overall larger classrooms than Carlton Oaks, you know that there are two other round campuses that are near replicas.

I hope that someone can share with parents and teachers which option for a classroom of my large size that the District will be choosing when campuses do open:

OPTION A: students less than four feet apart, 25 in a room.

OPTION B: students five feet apart, 19 in a room.

OPTION C: students six feet apart, 13 in a room.

How about the smaller rooms, of which there are many? My wife’s third grade classroom can fit 10 or 11 students with six feet of social distancing, and that has her confined to her desk without being able to access the white boards or any teaching supplies.

If you would like to see the visuals again, the email I sent you all with photos of my room was on Monday, July 13, at 1:28pm.

Thank you.

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| 4 Amy Miller | Is there a reason why we are not training our teachers to be prepared for distance learning? Train and prepare them now so we are not scrambling when we are unable to safely open. | Santee families | In the likely event that our numbers do not lower and we are still on the watch this, we need to be preparing our staff and teachers now. We have the time now so do not assume it will re-open. Prepare that it doesn't and if it does we will be better prepared for the future if the need should arise. The lack of preparation from the Santee School District is sad. |
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5 Kaely G

Dear Santee School Board,

Based on the community spread of COVID-19, Distance Learning taught by teachers our student's would normally be taught by pre-COVID would be the best and safest option at this time until COVID19 cases decrease. It would allow for continuity of learning back on campus, when it is deemed safer to do so.

As Distance Learning impacts parents/guardians who work and need childcare that in-school hours would provide them, are there possibilities with Project Safe, Santee Parks and Rec, Cameron YMCA or other local resources to offer full day supervision for children who's parents work?

Thank you Kaely

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6 Adrienne

Please consider 3 hour school days in the beginning, to have a 50% capacity for the kids (half the school 8-11 and half 12-3 with cleaning in between). Siblings should be allowed the same time slot. They need time to adjust to the new school routines/safety measures. This will allow for in school instruction and social distancing. If everything goes well, the school can look to make changes every 30-60 days, if no Covid outbreaks.

Cajon Park

Please consider 3 hour school days in the beginning, to have a 50% capacity for the kids (half the school 8-11 and half 12-3 with cleaning in between). Siblings should be allowed the same time slot. They need time to adjust to the new school routines/safety measures. This will allow for in school instruction and social distancing. If everything goes well, the school can look to make changes every 30-60 days, if no Covid outbreaks.

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7 Robert Swathwood	Unless you are going to make masks mandatory and be able to keep classes under 15 kids you should not be sending any kids back to school. What makes you think you know better than our public health facilities? You should be ashamed of yourself for trying to force this. Do not sacrifice our kids welfare because you want to get things back to normal. I've worked for the santee school district and been in these classrooms. If you can't do it safely you shouldn't have any kids at school.	My family	See above.
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| 8 Suzanne Sgroi | <p>Please embrace a blended program. Look to Grossmont or other districts for answers and how to's. It cannot be one or the other but rather a phased-in approach. Not five days, full time everyone, starting day one. They postponed CIF until October. Have the resources to start online and phase back into in person. You cannot expect us to choose black and white when this is gray. Having a santee vote BEFORE the numbers skyrocketed and then not adjusting at all. This is an ever changing and developing situation. Be prepared either way. Have a curriculum for online. Classes with instruction. Not just assignments and check ins.</p> | Matthew, Olivia and Isabella Sgroi | <p>Please embrace a blended program. Look to Grossmont or other districts. It cannot be one or the other but rather a phased-in approach. Not five days, full time everyone day one. They postponed CIF until October. Have the resources to start online and phase back into in person. You cannot expect us to choose black and white when this is gray! It's constantly changing and developing. Be prepared either way. Have a curriculum for online. Classes with instruction. Not just assignments and check ins.</p> |
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9 Jill Schmitt	<p>I stopped by school today to pick up necessary supplies for Distance Learning. In my classroom there are now 12 individual replacement student desks I assume will be used for students when they return to school. These desks are old, damaged, and have carvings on the surface. One of them has the number “420” scratched on the desktop, another has a broken basket with sharp edges, which could cause an injury, and several others are noticeably defaced. Many concerns come to mind with having a class size of 25, but now I am also worried about the quality of the replacement furniture in the classroom. Our students deserve better.</p>	Carlton Oaks Junior High	Thank you
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10 Staci

How will the district support families who are not able to stay at home with their children? Both of the parents in our home have worked throughout the ENTIRE lockdown. We have limited childcare options and the first round of distant learning was incredibly difficult on our family given that we were trying to monitor from our jobs, and most days our children were home alone, which was not a choice we wanted to make.

Please ask the governor for an exemption from the current order, the data supports it in santee and your original plan was thoughtful and supported everyone (those that want to stay home and those that feel safe having in person learning).

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11	Pam Hunt	We are hoping to begin school with distant learning, with frequent evaluations to determine when it's safe for all to return to the school.	Myself	Hoping to begin school with distant learning, evaluation frequently to decide when it's safe to return to the school. Based on low numbers. In coordination with SD Unified.
12	Ryan Cline	Due to the governors new directive of all cities in the watch list will be distance learning do we as parents need to choose distance learning. Will we know the districts plan before July 31? I would like more directive from the district before the end of July. I would also like to know how the extra 8th grade math class will work with distance learning.	Parent	Due to the governors new directive of all cities in the watch list will be distance learning do we as parents need to choose distance learning. Will we know the districts plan before July 31? I would like more directive from the district before the end of July. I would also like to know how the extra 8th grade math class will work with distance learning.

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13 Joseph Kemery	<p>As of today, we are still seeing the number of COVID cases rising rapidly. With around five weeks left before the return of teachers, I am happy that our state has provided guidelines for distance learning until we are safely moving in the right direction as it relates to county-wide infections. With this amount of time, I am confident that our Santee teachers will rise to the challenge of providing a robust, rigorous online experience for our students until it is safe to return to our campuses.</p> <p>While I know that face-to-face learning would be ideal once we have the virus fully under control, it is important to realize that we do not have a grip on this virus. A return to school will not be like anything that we know of as school. There will not be the collaboration, socialization, and interactions that we think of when we return to school. When we do eventually return to the classroom, I do have some concern still with the number of students that will be in every class. 25 students in a classroom at one time with a virus that thrives in enclosed environments seems like the bare minimum that can be done. Although this may allow for EXACTLY 6 feet between seats, that will leave absolutely no room in between for the teacher to maintain the 6 feet. Students will be shoved up against walls and cabinets, and can't even drop a pencil without encroaching on someone else's 6 feet. Also, our classrooms are not all uniform in size, making the 25 students will maintaining 6 ft very difficult in a lot of spaces. Even though masks do greatly improve safety, none of this provides 100% certainty for anyone in a room that is so full. This will not be business as usual. If anything, it will only</p>	self	No additional comment
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further make the experience of school to be unrecognizable from what we know.

As I said earlier, there is no business as usual when we do return to school. We can't while ensuring that our students and staff are safe. I hope you consider ways to further lower the number of students in a classroom to provide more than the minimum amount of space needed to slow the spread of this virus, while also collaborating with teachers to develop a robust distance learning model to sustain us while our county COVID numbers are so high.

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14	Candace Schmitthener	Thank you for changing course last week and adding the option of distance learning to the programs offered this fall. As you are recalibrating after Governor Newsom’s announcement on Friday, I ask that you try to offer programs with as much consistency as possible. In a year where we are going to demand our children to be incredibly flexible as life changes in a moment and where we can potentially expect to see kids on campus one week and at home for several weeks because a classmate tested positive, we need as much consistency as possible. Please consider that kids do better with routine, and it is critical whenever we can to meet kids’ needs for routines and consistency. For the estimated 250 families that registered for a year of distance learning, many of us are looking for a way to provide routine this year, be it with consistent schedules, consistent teachers, or consistent programs. I know our family would gladly commit to a whole year if it meant we were able to have the same teacher and program for the year.	Carlton Hills	See public comment.
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15 Kris Voigtritter	<p>It is an absolute relief to hear the very clear, very reasonable guidelines for safe school re-opening from the governor. As a parent of two children in the district, I was terrified at the prospect of sending them to in-person school in the midst of an out-of-control pandemic, and deeply saddened to hear that the district had not considered a realistic distance learning plan for the safety of the students and staff. Is distance learning ideal? No, of course not. But is it necessary for right now? Absolutely.</p> <p>Moving forward, I would very much like to see the district put efforts into a solid distance learning plan to sustain us during this time, and communicate it with parents so we have time to prepare. We do not know how long this pandemic will last - even the president this morning said that it will get worse before it gets better. We need to have a plan in place. I have the utmost respect for Santee teachers, and I know they will do an absolutely phenomenal job at engaging our kids in distance learning.</p> <p>One final, yet gravely important, note. I have seen in the news that there is a waiver that elementary schools can apply for to bypass the governor's orders. As a stakeholder and community member, I absolutely DO NOT support Santee School District even considering the waiver. It would be an incredible waste of time, given that Santee's infection rate is rapidly increasing. We are at almost 400 cases per 100,000 and rising - far above the recommended 100 per 100,000. If you are considering putting any time into applying for this waiver, please consider instead putting that time toward developing your distance learning plan. This will show families and staff</p>	My family	<p>It is an absolute relief to hear the very clear, very reasonable guidelines for safe school re-opening from the governor. As a parent of two children in the district, I was terrified at the prospect of sending them to in-person school in the midst of an out-of-control pandemic, and deeply saddened to hear that the district had not considered a realistic distance learning plan for the safety of the students and staff. Is distance learning ideal? No, of course not. But is it necessary for right now? Absolutely.</p> <p>Moving forward, I would very much like to see the district put efforts into a solid distance learning plan to sustain us during this time, and communicate it with parents so we have time to prepare. We do not know how long this pandemic will last - even the president this morning said that it will get worse before it gets better. We need to have a plan in place. I have the utmost respect for Santee teachers, and I know they will do an absolutely phenomenal job at engaging our kids in distance learning.</p> <p>One final, yet gravely important, note. I have seen in the news that there is a waiver that elementary schools can apply for to bypass the governor's orders. As a stakeholder and community member, I absolutely DO NOT support Santee School District even considering the waiver. It would be an incredible waste of time, given that Santee's infection rate is rapidly increasing. We are at almost 400 cases per 100,000 and rising - far above the recommended 100 per 100,000. If you are considering putting any time into applying for this waiver, please consider instead putting that time toward developing your distance learning plan. This will show families and</p>
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members that you truly care about their lives, and they are not just a number to you.

staff members that you truly care about their lives, and they are not just a number to you.

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16 Megan Granger	<p>1. How will classrooms will be able to accommodate best practices for student learning with the requirement for there to be 25 students in one classroom with desks 6 feet apart? In many classrooms, in order to accommodate the 6-foot requirement, the desks would need to be placed in such a way that students may have a difficult time seeing material presented by the teacher (i.e. having a desk against a wall making it very hard for students to see the projector screen). How would teachers be able to teach effectively if students can't see the materials easily? Additionally, what procedures are in place for classrooms that are not big enough to place 25 desks 6 feet apart?</p> <p>2. The re-opening plan previously approved stated that students may take their masks off in the classroom when they are at their desks 6 feet apart. With the guidelines that Governor Newsom implemented last week, will this be changed? Many of the classrooms don't have windows or circulated air. How can teachers and parents be assured the safety of everyone on campus when teachers and students are in an enclosed space with limited circulation for increments of time that are longer than 15 minutes?</p> <p>3. What resources are the curriculum resource teachers creating for the teachers in the district to ensure the students have access to rigorous content through digital learning that meets the standards?</p>	Teachers	<p>I am very concerned that the current school re-opening plan does not ensure the safety of staff and students to the extent that it needs to for us to return to school in person. Additionally, we know an effective learning environment is imperative to academic success, yet the current re-opening plan does not allow for teachers to teach effectively and students to learn effectively with the current number of students required to be at a 6-foot distance causing them to be scattered throughout the classroom.</p>
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17 Amanda
Madsen

I am speaking out on schools reopening in the fall. The fact that we as parents have had zero say in whether our children can resume school in the fall is absolutely ludicrous. My children have been facing many challenges during this shutdown that have effected their social, emotional, and psychological development. They have been robbed of their childhood over the past 5 months. With this current situation, how much longer will schools be shut down?? A few weeks? Months? A whole year? What's the point of having a superintendent if they can't even make decisions for their own district? As a full time working mom and my husband who is currently working from home, when do we fit time in the day to homeschool our kids all while taking care of an infant? This has gone on FAR enough. If there is anyway to override the governor's decision on shutting schools done, we NEED to do it. If there is a waiver to be filled out and sent to the County Public Health Department, then one needs to be submitted NOW. If the majority of parents stated in the survey that was sent out a couple weeks ago regarding resuming school in the fall, that they are ready and prepared to send their children back to school, then let's do it! Enough is enough.

My child who will be entering the first grade in the fall. And my other son who will be attending preschool at Yale. And all of the parents in Santee school district who feel helpless during this shutdown and need their children in a school environment.

I am speaking out on schools reopening in the fall. The fact that we as parents have had zero say in whether our children can resume school in the fall is absolutely ludicrous. My children have been facing many challenges during this shutdown that have effected their social, emotional, and psychological development. They have been robbed of their childhood over the past 5 months. With this current situation, how much longer will schools be shut down?? A few weeks? Months? A whole year? What's the point of having a superintendent if they can't even make decisions for their own district? As a full time working mom and my husband who is currently working from home, when do we fit time in the day to homeschool our kids all while taking care of an infant? This has gone on FAR enough. If there is anyway to override the governor's decision on shutting schools done, we NEED to do it. If there is a waiver to be filled out and sent to the County Public Health Department, then one needs to be submitted NOW. If the majority of parents stated in the survey that was sent out a couple weeks ago regarding resuming school in the fall, that they are ready and prepared to send their children back to school, then let's do it! Enough is enough.

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18 Sarah Lathers Good evening,

Let me begin by saying how impressed I am with the district's reopening plan. It is extremely thorough and detailed, doing an admirable job of outlining best practices during a very difficult and unprecedented time.

That being said, I am still highly concerned about the number of students expected to be in classrooms. 24 to 25 children, coming from a myriad of households practicing a variety of social distancing, or, more concerning, a lack thereof, is frightening. We are already seeing deaths associated with teachers being back in classrooms. The idea that this could happen in our district, to my colleagues, or even to children or their families, is terrifying. I realize that there is no magical safe number of children to have a room, but, as we've been instructed to practice as adults, the smaller the number gathering, the better. Less congregating within enclosed rooms will lead to less potential for infections and outbreaks. Furthermore, I realize that there is the potential to ask teachers to return to their classrooms for instruction during distance learning. I am asking you not to make this a decision for Santee school District. The potential for exposure is, once again, heightened by asking us to continually come on and off campus. It also means, as all of San Diego will be experiencing distance learning, that teachers will be required to send their own children to daycare, potentially resulting in further infections and outbreaks, leading to a longer setback in reopening classrooms.

Please see above (I'm sorry, I'm not sure if my comments should be here.)

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I miss my kids and I miss my classroom. I am desperate for the day that I can return to the room and teach. I am an educator who genuinely loves my profession and my students and wants to be with them, but only when it is safe to do so. I strongly urge you all to please consider the safety of all of those who will be affected by being exposed to high numbers of children, who are potentially exposed outside of school to a high number of adults.

Thank you,
Sarah Lathers