July 2020 – Public Comment

1) To Whom It May Concern,

My wife and I just watched the Superintendent's video about the proposed changes to the school calendar since the first two weeks of school have been pushed back due to COVID. She is proposing that Fall break and the first week of Spring break be used to make up this lost time. My wife and I totally agree with using this time for make up. However, as a dual working parent family, we do NOT agree that these two weeks should be e-learning. We have decided that it is best for our children to learn in person from the start of the school year. What is the purpose for e-learning during these make up weeks? Please consider our position before altering the school calendar.
- Chuck Cochard, IPS Parent

2) For the safety and precaution of our staff, students, and all of their families, please reconsider opening in person before we are prepared. The numbers are rising, yet we are going to go back to in-person education. My classroom is set up with students exactly 3 feet apart, and if anyone moves an inch we aren't in an acceptable range. How terrible for them to sit in one spot for the entire day?! Teachers always come through, do their best, and support our learners. Let us do it as safely as possible; virtually.
- Casey Albright, School #87

3) I am in agreement with the IEA Letter. Please utilize virtual teaching as long as possible. Thank you.
- Lisa Cotter

4) IPS Board should consider asking Lucas Oil Stadium, Banker’s Life Fieldhouse, the Indiana Convention Center and the likes of these largely unused facilities to accommodate our students in an unprecedented opportunity to help in the times of this pandemic. These places have more than adequate space and the necessary entry ways, security, restrooms, dining areas, play areas for safe and spacious occupancy. If insurance is an issue, then file for the CARES or HEALS funds to help get our kids back to their education and social livelihood. IPS Board please be innovative and take that step and collaborate with the big think tanks to think it through—It can be done and it will work! Thank you!
- Beverle Kane, IPS Alumni

5) Have you considered using pooled testing for schools in order to test more frequently and identify schools where the virus may be circulating?
- Robin Beery, IPS Parent

6) We are asking that you stand with us as the Indianapolis Public Schools Board of Commissioners and the IPS administration to focus on the matter at hand, to keep our students, families, communities and staff safe by opening virtually and revisiting the return to school in-person after Labor Day. If at that time the coronavirus numbers are headed in a sustainable direction, then we can return to regular classroom instruction.
7) I am sure you have read the Indianapolis Education Association's letter regarding our stance on the reopening of schools. As an IEA member and a teacher in IPS, I support their statement - it is not safe to return to schools yet and all IPS students and staff should start the year virtually. With Indianapolis being recently named on the nation's list of top COVID hotspots and with numbers on the rise in Marion county, I do not feel safe returning to school or allowing my students to be in school. This is especially true considering that the district was not able to provide desks for all classrooms and we will instead be using tables with plexiglass dividers and students will not be all facing the same direction. (I hope that this is a temporary solution and that the district is still trying to acquire the desks needed). The two week delay is not enough time to get our numbers where they need to be. I urge you to call for an all virtual start sooner, rather than later, to give our community the time it needs to make plans. Additionally, starting the school year virtually will give teachers more time to plan and prepare to make virtual learning better than it was in the spring. While the IEA has called for a virtual start until at least Labor Day, I believe that we should start virtually for the first quarter. Thank you for your efforts in planning and preparation for the school year and I urge you to consider the safety of our community and vote to start the school year virtually.
- Caitlin Lischer, CFI 70

8) I do not know if the start of school will be a topic this night, however, I think that Marion county needs to HIGHLY reconsider. Students shouldn’t be guinea pigs against a deadly virus. Especially speaking about a population in poverty. I highly think we need to consider E-Learning for this term. Teachers are anxious, parents are anxious, students are anxious. I don’t think anyone would be able to go about their lives knowing that students or staff becoming a statistic could have been prevented. Thank you
- Kayla Watterson, Teacher

9) Some districts in the State will be implementing alternative schedules, where a set number of students attend for part of the week, and another set of students attend on other days of the week. To what extent is the district open to exploring an alternative school schedule to accommodate social distancing and limit learning disruptions due to shifting plans in response to COVID-19?
- Jen Hancock, Parent

10) Thank you for all the hard work you're doing to get schools ready to open up. When they do open, what is the protocol for students who show any symptom (or symptoms) on the Covid-19 checklist, either at school or at home? For example, will you require parents to get their child tested before returning to school when they show any symptoms? If so, will you be providing a list of testing sites for all families?
- Mary Beth Mullins

11) As we can see Covid 19 cannot prevented from spreading within the White house and also within baseball teams in which the players are constantly getting tested and majority of the time they are outside. Why do you think you will be able to prevent the spread of Covid 19 amongst children who will be stuck inside all day? Do you really think they will strictly follow all the protocols set for them? If politicians and professional organizations that are constantly testing can't prevent the spread why do you think you can?
- Joanna Strefeler
12) What are the criteria for ending in person instruction?  
What plans are being made now for transition to remote instruction if in-person instruction stops?  
After exposure at school, will teachers be paid during self-quarantine?  
What will the contact tracing be for substitutes?  
- Rebecca Zirnheld, Parent

13) Why are we basing the education needs of our students on the positive cases of a virus and not the amount of deaths? If we're to continue like this than we should close every FLU SEASON?  
- Andria

14) Hola me llamo Noemi y tengo dos niñas en la escuela de 67 en segundo grado y el kinder. Yo voy a mandar a mis hijas a la escuela porque no es lo mismo el aprendizaje en casa que en la escuela. Si mis hijas van estar obligadas de estudiar en casa por la situación, me gustaría ver que el elearning sea así de difícil como si estuvieran en la escuela. No me gustaría ver que pierdan otro año escolar. Y también me gustaría ver que el año escolar sea más largo para que se pongan al día. Por favor ten en cuenta los niños que no aprendieron mucho durante la pandemia.

Gracias,  
- Noemi, IPS Parent

15) Hola me llamo Sandra, y tengo 2 niños en la escuela 67. Una Esta en primer grado y el otro en cuarto grado. Yo decidi mandar a mis hijos a la escuela porque sentí que no Estaban aprendiendo mucho en casa. Yo hablo nada mas español, y hice falta que un maestro este al frente de Ellos dandoles clase. Aunque nos conectamos en el televisor y computadora , nada mas era un ratito y no hico mucha diferencia. A mi me gustaría ver que alargen el año escolar maso menos un mes para que se pongan al dia. Por la razon que todos los niños no aprendieron igual como estando en clase fisicamente. Especialmente porque puede ser que tengamos que regresar a estudios en casa.  
- Sandra Perez, IPS Parent

16) Dear Superintendent Johnson and members of the board:

I am writing to request that you consider ideas for re-opening put forward by parents like me. A group of parents sent these recommendations earlier this summer. I believe several of these are critical to ensuring a successful school year.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit; I felt overwhelmed. I had three children at home; one in high school and two in elementary while attempting to still work full time. My children’s education is very important to me and is of the highest priority in our lives. I have advocated for the change I’d like to see in my kids education as well as my community. I have always been a highly involved and engaged parent. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit it placed an extra strain on my already stressful circumstances. While attempting to navigate my new normal so many times I wanted to give up. There were many days that my kids didn’t do anything educational. I was so stressed. I had no energy to devote to making sure my kids were engaged academically; yes me a parent who has spoke out and stood up for quality education. A parent who knows full well the importance of pushing through and perseverance. A parent who understands how a great
education can transform my kids futures. I can only imagine how much learning my kids missed out on. It was only due to my children’s gym teacher who was assigned to our family by the school to maintain regular check ins that; I got motivated to assist them with completing some assignments. When you consider the barriers that many IPS families were already facing then you stack a pandemic on top that; it can be devastating. I can only image how many other parents were like me who crumbled under the stress & pressure.

It is vital that parents and educators are on one accord. Parents need options and support. The parent teacher bond needs to be solid; so that our babies can thrive. Parent engagement needs to be a top priority if we are to ensure that already struggling children don’t fall even further behind.

I believe parent/teacher communication is critically important. For one, we as parents need more guidance on how to support our children during remote learning. Also, we know our children better than anyone. So we can help inform the teachers about challenges they are having.

Please ensure the IPS re-opening plans considers these parent recommendations.

1. Ensuring teachers reach out early to families for virtual home visits to build trust;

2. Making sure there is a nurse in every building;

3. Maintaining a high bar academically for all kids, and ensuring school work counts, is graded and kids and parents get feedback on a child’s performance;

4. Adding time and days to the school calendar, as our kids are missing a lot of time in the classroom.
   - LaToya Hale-Tahirou, IPS Parent

17) Hola me llamo Elizabeth y tengo 2 niños que van a la escuela 67. A mi me gustaria ver que extiendan el año escolar para que los niños se pongan al día. Siento que los niños no aprendieron mucho el en casa con clases virtuales. Por favor toma en cuenta que los niños están atrasado.
   - Elizabeth Zesaty, IPS Parent

18) I am a teacher at Butler Lab School 60 and would like to voice my support for a 100% remote start to the school year.

   Indiana’s COVID-19 cases have been rising in recent weeks and Indianapolis has been identified as one of 11 cities in the U.S. needing aggressive action to reduce their positive case numbers. In a news conference last week Mayor Joe Hogsett and Dr. Virginia Caine made it clear that we need to reduce the number of people gathering in public spaces.

   Schools are one place where we can reduce social gatherings by teaching remotely. While remote learning was not ideal in the spring we are more prepared as a district to deliver an even better remote learning experience. Teachers are more prepared with how to handle remote learning and the recent investment of 1-to-1 devices for students and MiFis to assist our families without internet access will set us up for success while keeping our students and staff healthy.
Some of the buildings in IPS are not up to recommended health standards in combating COVID-19 during in-person instruction. In my building while we were able to redistribute class locations to classrooms with windows (we normally have a few classrooms without windows in our basement), in most of those rooms with windows only two windows open a few inches which is very little help with ventilation. Research has shown that this virus is airborne and extremely contagious, especially indoors. We do not need to use our students as an experiment to see how contagious it is in a classroom.

I applaud the efforts of the leaders within the district who provided food and supporting technology to our students and families during spring remote learning. We have seen that we are capable of caring for the most vulnerable in our district during remote learning and are even more prepared this time with more devices and internet access for our students and families. We need to continue to care for all our students, and especially those most vulnerable, by protecting their health through remote learning.

As elected leaders of the Indianapolis Public Schools Board of Commissioners I am asking that you support the recommendation of the IPS administration for a 100% remote start through October with a planned date to reassess data to make the safest decision for our students and staff going forward. If numbers begin to improve I support a hybrid plan to keep in-classroom numbers low for our students and then, if the numbers continue to improve, a return to regular classroom instruction.

- Emily Bax, Butler Lab School 60 & IEA

19) If the district moves forward with eLearning for all, can the district revert to its earlier calendar, beginning school on August 3rd and not taking away fall and part of spring breaks? I see no reason to wait until the 17th if we are making the move to virtual learning anyways. Thank you for considering.

- Erica Christie, IPS Parent

20) Dear Supt. Johnson and member of the board:

I am writing to request that you consider ideas for re-opening put forward by parents like me. A group of parents sent recommendations earlier this summer, and I believe several of these are critical to ensuring a successful school year.

After schools shut down last year, I felt like I was not prepared to support my child with home learning. I felt disconnected from our school and teachers. No one reached out until the packets were to be received. I had questions about the packets and the schedule but was not able to connect with the teacher. Once the communication started it was very vague, “do what you can do, don’t worry too much”.

I believe parent/teacher communication is critically important. For one, we as parents need more guidance on how to support our children during remote learning. Also, we know our children better than anyone. So, we can help inform the teachers about challenges they are having.

Please ensure the IPS re-opening plans considers these parent recommendations, especially:
1) Ensuring teachers reach out early to families for virtual home visits to build trust;
2) Making sure there is a nurse in every building;
3) Maintaining a high bar academically for all kids, and ensuring school work counts, is graded and kids and parents get feedback on a child’s performance;
4) Adding time and days to the school calendar, as our kids are missing a lot of time in the classroom.
5) Police in schools
   - Sashah Robertson, IPS Parent

21) I one hundred percent agree with the school board’s recommendations to open school with virtual learning until October. This will not only give educators and administrators more time to plan and allocate resources for students and families, but also to track (and hopefully decrease) Covid-19 cases. This decision is not taken lightly, but with great responsibility. If virtual learning takes place, we understand as educators that new and inventive ways of learning and care must take place. We are ready to take on the responsibility to adapt, change, be flexible, learn quickly with online curriculum and resources, but most importantly be there for the families of IPS.
   - Chris Henderson, IPS Teacher

22) The news of possibly doing 100% Virtual e-learning starting Aug. 17th is extremely upsetting. We are a dual working household and are both essential employees that have to physically be at work and are not able to stay home with our young child. Day-cares have been open with no social distancing and only teachers wearing masks during this entire pandemic and have not recorded spikes in COVID cases. If daycare's can do it so can schools. Not opening schools in person is going to put a massive strain on parents to keep their jobs, pay for food and keep a roof over their heads. Also it will put the children behind developmentally. CHILDREN NEED TO BE IN SCHOOL WITH OTHER KIDS! I realize there is a risk but there are risks every where in life.
   - Tanja Hale, Butler Lab 60 Parent

23) I am a teacher at Butler Lab School 55 and would like to voice my support for a 100% remote start to the school year.

   Indiana’s COVID-19 cases have been rising in recent weeks and Indianapolis has been identified as one of 11 cities in the U.S. needing aggressive action to reduce their positive case numbers. In a news conference last week Mayor Joe Hogsett and Dr. Virginia Caine made it clear that we need to reduce the number of people gathering in public spaces.

   Schools are one place where we can reduce social gatherings by teaching remotely. While remote learning was not ideal in the spring we are more prepared as a district to deliver an even better remote learning experience. Teachers are more prepared with how to handle remote learning and the recent investment of 1-to-1 devices for students and MiFis to assist our families without internet access will set us up for success while keeping our students and staff healthy.

   Some of the buildings in IPS are not up to recommended health standards in combating COVID-19 during in-person instruction. In my building, we have portable classrooms that are quite small and will not allow the 20-some students planning to return to be appropriately socially distant. Not all of our indoor classrooms would have enough space either. We do not need to use our students as an experiment to see how contagious it is in a classroom.
I applaud the efforts of the leaders within the district who provided food and supporting technology to our students and families during spring remote learning. We have seen that we are capable of caring for the most vulnerable in our district during remote learning and are even more prepared this time with more devices and internet access for our students and families. We need to continue to care for all our students, and especially those most vulnerable, by protecting their health through remote learning.

As elected leaders of the Indianapolis Public Schools Board of Commissioners I am asking that you support the recommendation of the IPS administration for a 100% remote start through October with a planned date to reassess data to make the safest decision for our students and staff going forward. If numbers begin to improve I support a hybrid plan to keep in-classroom numbers low for our students and then, if the numbers continue to improve, a return to regular classroom instruction.

- Becky Pokrandt, Butler Lab 55

24) Will Asynchronous options be available for parents that work during the day? Will later times be available for synchronous learning to accommodate parents working during the day (i.e. recorded instruction from earlier in the day)? How many teachers will support e-learning? Previously it was stated 12-14 teachers but if the entire district is e-learning will additional teachers support learning? Will teachers be laid off with the transition to e-learning?

- Candice Moore, Parent

25) Please listen to the recommendation of the school district leaders. Almost every teacher I know stands behind the recommendation to start the school year 100% virtually. Listen to your teachers. Do what is right for the health and safety of the adults and children of IPS.

- Bridget Spitale, IPS Teacher

26) Will meal services be available or will more Pebt benefits be issued to families?

- Candice Moore, Parent

27) I am fully opposed to starting the school year with remote learning and would consider it negligent of the board to move forward with that plan. The remote learning that was instituted at the end of last school year failed to provide any actual instruction to the student body and directly resulted in my child not receiving high school credit in multiple courses even though he was an A honor roll recipient. While I understand that additional planning and technology is now in place, I have zero confidence that remote education is able to provide any valuable instruction to the students this year and it would be a disservice to the community to continue to fail to educate the children in the district.

The district has also had five months to figure out a plan that would allow for safe in-person instruction, the same amount of time as other school districts and Indiana's public higher education institutions. Why have these institutions been able to develop a plan that allows for a safe return to in-person instruction, but IPS has not? My only conclusion is that the IPS leadership has not taken educating the students seriously and has felt that dumping money into technology solves the problem.

- Chris Carrel, Parent

28) New cases in ISDH district 5, and Marion County specifically, are relatively flat when the increased (doubled) sample rate is considered.
Deaths in ISDH district 5, and Marion County specifically, are practically zero. The average positivity rate is only 8%.

These are manageable numbers for other school systems across the country and around the world. Virtual learning is absolutely no substitute for in-class instruction (quite frankly the spring semester was a farce). We understand the IPS administration is afraid. But, a lot of other school systems are doing this successfully and we can too.

Please have the courage to make the right decision for our children and our families and reject this recommendation (100% virtual classes) from the IPS administration. More harm is done by not getting them back to school.
- Keith Huehls

Please have special needs students and at risk students educationally in Hubs - please also be advised that it is impossible for everyone to work remotely - remote learning with special needs last year was a disaster - no blame. This has to be made a priority with parameters in place - Do remember the lack of compliance of students signing on - parental non compliance and children that will suffer - . We parents feel like spiders over a flame with information that cannot and will not work for everyone - please consider this or consider the plight of children that are forced to fall behind because of poor parental follow through . I’ve worked with adults at risk educationally after the fact - prison and the streets is a brutal place to come back from - please receive this plea - I will assist per gratis in the school to assist in achieving this. Jim super - adoptive parents of 2 special needs sons
- Jim Super, Shortridge High School

I know that fluid situations are very hard, and I’m proud of my district for a recommendation that protects the entire IPS community. I truly believe that there will be some form of remote learning going on for the entire school year, and with all of us starting online, teachers and staff can be so much more successful at honing our online teaching skills. The spring took all of us too much by surprise- parents, students, staff, and teachers. To put children back in schools with the current rate of infection would be reckless. The unknowns are many and the consequences very likely deadly for who knows how many. The recommendation to go all virtual, in my opinion, is the wisest choice.

As elected leaders of the Indianapolis Public Schools Board of Commissioners, I am asking that you support the recommendation of the IPS administration for a 100% remote start at least until October, with a planned date to reassess data to make the safest decision for our students and staff going forward. If numbers begin to improve, I support a hybrid plan for all students who desire face-to-face instruction, with half of the school population attending two days and the other half for two days, with the fifth day for teachers to facilitate the online learners. If numbers continue to further improve, we could then go to full-time instruction.

Thank you for all of your hard work during this very difficult time.
- Laura Bartolomeo, CFI 70
31) Very supportive of the new plan for 100% virtual learning with in person hubs for those with special needs/accommodations. This is terribly difficult for everyone to navigate, but I applaud our administrators for putting the health and safety of our teachers, staff and students first.

- Katie Kasper, Parent

32) I am a teacher at George Washington Carver 87 and would like to voice my support for a 100% remote start to the school year.

Indiana’s COVID-19 cases have been rising in recent weeks and Indianapolis has been identified as one of 11 cities in the U.S. needing aggressive action to reduce their positive case numbers. In a news conference last week Mayor Joe Hogsett and Dr. Virginia Caine made it clear that we need to reduce the number of people gathering in public spaces.

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I applaud the efforts of the leaders within the district who provided food and supporting technology to our students and families during spring remote learning. We have seen that we are capable of caring for the most vulnerable in our district during remote learning and are even more prepared this time with more devices and internet access for our students and families. We need to continue to care for all our students, and especially those most vulnerable, by protecting their health through remote learning.

As elected leaders of the Indianapolis Public Schools Board of Commissioners I am asking that you support the recommendation of the IPS administration for a 100% remote start through October with a planned date to reassess data to make the safest decision for our students and staff going forward. If numbers begin to improve I support a hybrid plan to keep in-classroom numbers low for our students and then, if the numbers continue to improve, a return to regular classroom instruction.

- Carter Bell

33) I think we should let our kids go back to school. Some parents can't find child care, some kids really need to be in person to comprehend and learn well especially for our upcoming freshman and kindergartens and all kids and we as a community really need to realize that some kids really need sports it's like they free time, maybe the only way out. Thanks for your time.
34) I’m a single parent and cannot stay home and teach my 2nd and 7th grade children. My tax dollars pay for public school and it needs to be open and in person for my children to get the education they need and deserve.
- Jessica, IPS Parent

35) My name is Shawanda. I’m really torn about the decision for re-opening. We as parents support our teachers and school district, but I just heard that the IPS administration has recommended that the district go 100% online. I understand that health and safety are important during this pandemic, but I doubt that my children will get what they really need while at home for another school year. I have a child with autism, and I can’t let his level of focus to get low. The only place where I have seen him grow and learn over the past few years has been in the classroom where he can be supported by the appropriate teachers and staff. I’m concerned that Marell will fall behind not only academically, but socially.

Having my children at home full-time will not only affect my children’s education, but also my ability to provide for them. I am a single mother and in order to support my children the way they need to be supported, I fear that I will have to quit my job in order to do so. There are so many things to consider and I understand this is hard for you all too. However, as you plan reopening, please consider the “Ensuring Every Child and Every Day Counts” document. I was a part of the parent committee who submitted this document and I hope that you will support the following recommendations:

1. Ensuring teachers reach out early to families for virtual home visits to build trust
2. Making sure there is a nurse in every building
3. Maintaining a high bar academically for all kids, and ensuring school work counts, is graded and kids and parents get feedback on a child’s performance
4. Adding time and days to the school calendar, as our kids are missing a lot of time in the classroom.

Please consider those students like mine with disabilities and IEPs who require one-on-one attention and professional staff in order to learn. Have you considered donating desks and chairs to create a good home-learning space? Or finding alternative ways to be the needs of special needs kids during this pandemic.

All in all, 100% online learning will not work for every family. There will continue to be huge gaps in access to quality education for black and brown students, as well as low-income families and students with IEPs.

Finally, if you can’t protect and provide quality in-person now, what will be your plan in October?

- Shawanda Tyson, IPS Parent
36) I just heard that IPS will likely be doing 100% e-learning until October, at least. My daughter Samaj has Down Syndrome and has been out of the classroom for quite some time now. I have had to quit my job in order to take care of her and her brother who is autistic and it has been extremely hard.

My child requires support from a professional teacher. She needs to be challenged and have opportunities for accelerated learning. Online learning was so hard last year and I don’t think she’s learning what she needs to learn. Students need to be challenged. Their work needs to count. The gaps in opportunity to quality education has grown due to this pandemic and schools and educators have to work harder with families to close those gaps.

When you plan for re-opening, please think about kids with special needs. I hope you are able to extend in-person classes to students like mine. If daycare centers are still open, why can’t isolated classrooms and services for special education be available during this time.

I hope that you guys make decisions in the best interest of ALL students, and not just those that are privileged.

- Robyn Clayborne, IPS Parent

37) My name is Earl Scott and I'm a parent of IPS students. I have a list of things that I would like the board to consider while deciding the future of moving forward with back to school activities. Thanks for your consideration as we want the best for our childrens safe return to school.

1. Ensuring teachers reach out early to families for virtual home visits to build trust;
2. Making sure there is a nurse in every building;
3. Maintaining a high bar academically for all kids, and ensuring school work counts, is graded and kids and parents get feedback on a child’s performance;
4. Adding time and days to the school calendar, as our kids are missing a lot of time in the classroom.
5. Scheduling online classes for morning and evening times to ensure that parents will be available for their child during online learning. Teacher's will have to choose what shift will work best for them.

- Earl Scott, IPS Parent

38) I am submitting this because I am concerned about my children’s education. I have 4 children in the IPS school district and I want to make sure my children and all the other children in the IPS school district get a quality education.

I would like to make sure all parents have technology and internet for their children at home. I would like teachers to regularly check in with parents and children to make sure we are doing what we are supposed to be doing. When school does start, I would like to see a nurse in all schools to make sure the health of our children is safe. I would also like to see a school calendar with set days and times because our children have lost a lot of school already.

Please take action in supporting our children.

- John Cooper, IPS Parent
39) Soy MAUGUINX CHERENFANT padres de hijo en el distrito IPS family
Le escribo para solicitarle que considere ideas para la reapertura presentadas por padres como yo. Un grupo de padres envió estas recomendaciones a principios de este verano, y creí que varias de ellas son críticas para asegurar un año escolar exitoso.
Quisiera que usted sepa después de que las escuelas cerraron el año pasado sentí que no estaba preparado para apoyar a mi hijo con el aprendizaje en el hogar. Mi hijo es muy pequeño para aprender en línea.
Mi hijo tenía preguntas para su maestra no podría contestarse, en la casa no tenemos Internet y computadora.
Creo que la comunicación entre padres y maestros es de importancia crítica por lado nosotros como padres necesitamos más orientación sobre cómo apoyar a nuestros hijos durante el aprendizaje remoto.
Mi recomendación es
- Asegurar que los maestros lleguen a tiempo a las familias para realizar visitas virtuales al hogar para generar confianza
- Poner un sistema en los buses para controlar la temperatura de cada estudiante
- Asegurarse de que haya una enfermera en cada edificio asegurarse que cada familia tiene Internet y tecnología en su casa

MAUGUINX CHERENFANT PADRES
- Mauguinx Cherenfant, IPS Parent

40) Estimado supt. Johnson y miembro de la junta:
Le escribo para que solicitarle ideas para la apertura de las escuelas yo como padre de familia. Me preocupa la salud de los niños.
IPS consideren estas recomendaciones:
- Asegurar la puntualidad virtual en los hogares y generar confianza;
- Asedurarse de que haya enfermera en cada edificio;
- Mantener Un alto nivel académico para todos los niños, garantizar que el trabajo escolar ciente, de califica y los padres reciben comentarios sobre el desempeño de los niños;
- La importancia de que todos tengan acceso al internet en casa muchos no Cuestan con ese servicio; para agregar tiempo a nuestro calendario para los estudios de nuestros hijos.
- Lucia Coyotl, IPS Parent

41) My name is Reaven Allen and my children attend Urban Act Academy. Ever since our school was closed due to Covid it has been extremely hard for my children to continue learning due to many barriers. For this reason, I am asking that you please consider my demands below for the return of this upcoming school year.

1. Since all children will be doing school virtually, please make sure all children have internet and devices to do their school work.
2. Please make sure teachers are reaching out regularly to parents because we do not know how to use technology and need support in supporting our children.
3. Please make sure children’s school work is being graded so we know where our children are at academically.
4. Please make sure that when school does open back up that there is a school nurse in all schools.
5. Lastly, please make sure you all are adding dates and times to the school calendars so our kids are not missing a lot of school.
42) Hola llamo Azucena 2 niños en la escuela 67 Los Voy a tener a mis Hijos estudiando virtual por que me da miedo la pandemic. Me gustaria mas apoyo como visitas virtuales de la maestra. Por favor toma en cuenta esto.

- Azucena, IPS Parent

43) My name is Dontia Dyson and I am a IPS parent of 2 that go to Cold Spring. I am upset that IPS is taking actions to go %100 remote learning until October. I don't understand how I can go shopping at the mall but my kids can't go to school. My daughters have been so excited to get back into the building. The parents asked for a choice and the parents were willing to take a risk because of necessity. There are parents that will now choose between bringing food to the table and making sure their child receives a proper education. What is the plan to make sure that each kid will actually learn during elearning? Virtual home visits? Real home visits? For the special ED and the ELL students, they need even more attention. Many kids are already behind, because of lack there proper planning for elearning. Now, we need to make sure they don't fall further behind. It needs to be actually demanding for my daughters so they can learn. I need the support from my educators. I am sure my kids will not have a good experience with the elearning plan because I know my kids best. We have been trying to get kids off the computer but now we encourage them to be on it. This is alarming. I will end this by saying, this is wrong but please at least make sure kids don't fall behind with a solid virtual plan.

Regards,
- Dontia Dyson, IPS Parent

44) I am writing to request that you consider ideas for re-opening put forward by parents like me. A group of parents sent these recommendations earlier this summer, and I believe several of these are critical to ensuring a successful school year.

After schools shut down in the Spring, I felt like I was not prepared to support my child with home learning. I had questions about the packets and the schedule but wasn’t able to immediately connect with the teacher. I eventually got in contact with the principal and the following week was contacted by the teacher’s assistant. About a week after talking with the teacher’s assistant the teacher finally called and talked to both me and my child and explained the process for getting finished work checked.

I believe parent/teacher communication is critically important. For one, we as parents need more guidance on how to support our children during remote learning. Also, we know our children better than anyone, so we can help inform the teachers about challenges they are having.

Please ensure the IPS re-opening plans considers these parent recommendations, especially, ensuring teachers reach out early to families for virtual home visits to build trust, making sure there is a nurse in every building, and maintaining a high bar academically for all kids, and ensuring school work counts, is graded and kids and parents get feedback on a child’s performance.
Thank you,
- Swantella Nelson, IPS Parent

Buenas tardes el motivo de este correo es por qué algunos padres estamos inquietos con todos estos cambios en la educación de nuestros hijos.

Hay un par de circunstancias que necesitamos saber por parte de ustedes:

1.- de acuerdo a lo que nos informaron el día de hoy, quisiéramos saber si abra apoyo por parte de maestro y directivos con respecto a los alumnos que no hablen el inglés, y a los que se les dificulte el aprendizaje.

2.- en caso de que en el mes de octubre reabran las instalaciones escolares nos aseguren que abra enfermeras o personas especializadas en la salud y puedan apoyar al personal de la escuela para asegurar la salud de nuestros hijos

3.- que sean rigurosos con todos los alumnos en cuestión de asistencia y cumplir con los deberes impuestos por los maestros

4.- como deben saber la crisis de trabajo está complicada, algunas familias no tenemos como pagar por servicios de internet o algún dispositivo para el aprendizaje en casa entonces, ustedes apoyarán a los alumnos con eso?

5.-y la última sería muy bueno que nos mantuvieran informados acerca de los cambios que vayan surgiendo como hasta ahora lo han hecho

Bueno pues perdón si sueno un poco exagerada pero somos muchos padres que estamos preocupados por la educación de nuestros hijos, de antemano agradezco que tomaran en cuenta estas peticiones
- Irma Perdomo, IPS Parent

My name is Lena Dickerson and I have several children who attend IPS Schools. Going into the 2020-2021 school year I have a bonus daughter going into her sophomore year, a daughter going into second grade, and a daughter going into kindergarten. As you all plan re-opening, please ensure the IPS re-opening plans considers these recommendations, especially:

1. Ensuring teachers reach out early to families for virtual home visits to build trust
2. Making sure there is a nurse in every building
3. Maintaining a high bar academically for all kids, and ensuring school work counts, is graded and kids and parents get feedback on a child’s performance
4. Adding time and days to the school calendar, as our kids are missing a lot of time in the classroom.

These recommendations were also included in the “Ensuring Every Child and Every Day Counts” parent guidance that was presented to the board.
I recently heard that the IPS administration is recommending 100% online learning for the 2020-
2021 school year. Although I understand the concern with health and I do know that you all are working hard to make sure that schools are clean and safe when they reopen. If the health department continues to say that it is safe, I am asking you to maintain your decision to give us parents a choice in whether we send our kids to school or keep them home.

I am a fulltime college student and founder of a local up and coming nonprofit. I have to go to class, study and work within and for the nonprofit organization. I can't keep my children with me while in school, class, and working. My daughter going into the second grade is already behind due to her not being able to start school the year she turned five since her birthday is in the middle of September; and now both her and I feel that she is behind. She is a straight A student and she has forgotten stuff. I know my own abilities and I am no teacher! My daughter that is going into kindergarten and I don't want her to miss the important foundation that she will receive for the in-class experience. Also, I don’t have internet at home, nor the technology for E-learning.

Thank you for considering me and other parents like me.

- Lena Dickerson, IPS Parent

47) My name is Consuelo Poland and I am a welding teacher at Arsenal Tech. I am very grateful that you have decided to go %100 remote. This is my first year teaching and I was very worried about safety due to the pandemic. Yet, I would like to make sure that our virtual learners don’t miss out on a great education. Elearning doesn’t seem to be going away quickly and as a welding teacher I am also trying to figure out how I am going to teach my kids virtually. I want to make sure that the student’s academics are progressing even during elearning. It needs to be rigorist, with the same expectation as if the students were in the school physically. We know it will never be the same, but we need to be as close as possible! Welding is a physical trait, and I am going to hope to find the best solution to stay safe along with my students, and teach them this amazing skill.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my gratitude and concerns on elearning.

- Consuelo Poland, IPS Parent

48) 100% remote learning is totally unacceptable for working parents. Some parents are essential workers and can not devote the time for young children to adequately be educated. The struggle of working from home and trying to teach a 1st grader from home was bazaar. Children simply floated through in order to complete assignments given through the online platform.

I found that even though my child is an excellent learner who is used to mommy pushing her to do accelerated work beyond what was actually being taught in the classroom, it was very confusing for her because of the platforms used to do the work. My child spent the first two weeks of remote learning trying to navigate the way to draw on the assignments, design text boxes in order to type in answers. I ultimately was able to push my child and assist with the material, but only on the weekends and in the evenings.

My fear is more for the children who have parents that may not understand the material, so they are totally unable to push their children to complete assignments. What about the parents who
have no knowledge of using technology devices?

It should totally be the option of each individual family if they are sending their children to school.

I believe that there are more than enough families that are opting out of sending their children to school. I actually did my own poll on my street. Out of the 10 households within our 1 block radius, eight of the families are opting to keep their children at home. Of course these are parents who do not have to work during the day to assist the economy during this pandemic.

My other neighbor and myself, she is a nurse, and I a social services worker, are knee deep in work with assisting communities and individuals with navigating this pandemic.

I ask that you all give thought to this perspective......

Maybe let people who work on the front line, essential workers, community center workers, and social service workers, send their children to school.

How are we expected to work full time to help the community and individuals during this pandemic, without sending our children to school....

It has been a total relief to focus on providing services to the Community during this pandemic now that we have been able to send our children to the YMCA during the business days every since they allowed these type of services to reopen at a capacity that allows for room for my child to attend and for me to pay the expensive price.

The fee for this is pretty pricey paying upwards of $165.00 per week just to send our children to the YMCA.

Hypothetically, if schools do not reopen. Paying this sort of price for children to go to a center during the day for parents that are working and not in Poverty, therefore not qualifying for income based additional assistance....... The math would look like this (165 per week x 4 weeks in a month x 4 Sept thru Dec = $2,640) + ($700 already spent on School Uniforms, face mask, hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes) = $3,340 ( I actually had not purchased school uniforms, supplies, the mask, etc. until I made a phone call to the Walnut center location and they said uniforms would be required. And purchase the other items after following what the plan to reopen schools would be, went ahead and purchased all of these items because of the reopening plan.)

The $2640 that it would cost to send my child to a YMCA, if this is an option, is actually nearly our same food budget for the (Sept. to Dec. period)....... 

Now a family who barely made it out of poverty, works very very hard to serve the community and brings home $33000, is brushing the surface of being back at poverty level. Just a thought.....
I ultimately want you all to do what is best for the children and their safety, but really wanted to speak to this perspective.

Here is a solution.... Is there a way to allocate funding for working parents, such as myself, facing this type of dilemma if it is deemed necessary to go 100% remote?

For example, this past spring and summer on the East Coast, essential workers were provided childcare cost for their children, who could not be instructed at home. Is it possible for IPS to use a similar strategy here?

Direct learning instruction could be paid for by IPS for parents such as myself who are essential workers in near poverty (not getting any assistance due to income level).

Could IPS use unspent money for school bus operations to assist to meet the educational needs of the children whose parents can not devote the time necessary for 100% remote learning?

I ask that you all consider helping all income levels of families. I appreciate the focus on the poverty level children, older children that can follow online platforms and stay home by themselves, but please consider the "middle".

- Lamira Henry, IPS Parent

49) Please open public schools back up I don't believe E learning is in the best interest of any of the elementary students, being tied to a computer screen most of the day seems to discourage the eLearning process, some children like mine don't have any interest or the ability to do eLearning he needs to be in class action everyday we had to pull up several online portals just to get through the subjects, the amount of effort it takes for the eLearning is far too complicating and causes alot of overload for the parents. Parents have 2 jobs we have a job at work and then we have another job raising kids, teaching our kids will be a third job for us which seems too much to bare. My child will be in the first grade it is VITAL for him to be amongst a teacher for his introduction to reading and learning how to read properly. The school systems must find a way to make reopening schools safe as possible.

- Jennifer Walker, BioLife

50) Thank you for moving everyone online with learning centers for those in need. THANK YOU

- Nicole Goodson, Parent

51) I am VERY frustrated and annoyed to hear that the IPS administration is recommending to the board to begin the school year with e-learning. I feel strongly that children should be in school per CDC recommendations and other recommendations of professional organizations. I'm asking the board to DENY the administration's request to begin the school year virtually.

- Chuck Cochard, Parent

52) I would like to advocate for in-person learning to start on August 17th as planned. We have learned a lot about Covid over the last several months and IPS should be doing everything they can to plan and be creative to figure out ways to make in-person learning work. This is a very diverse district and so many kids will fall behind if they cannot get in person instruction from teachers. Many have both parents working that cannot spend the time the kids need to learn. Plus
the growth and development they get from interacting with peers. We need more creative solutions to get kids back, not a one-size-fits-all approach that is harmful for the kids and families. Please consider all the consequences of not opening schools. Covid is the least of many families worries. And for those that are worried about Covid, your plan for optional remote learning was great. Thank you.
- Carrie Furin, Parent

53) I applaud the care that the IPS administration has taken when considering reopening. I appreciate their ability to be flexible in the face of an ever changing situation. I have three children attending IPS and I'm very thankful that we are waiting to reopen in person classes until the infection rate is under control.

Thank you!
- Micah Bell, IPS Parent

54) Esteemed members of the IPS administration and Board of School Commissioners,
While the decision to move to online learning now may be necessary for a very short time, we must not allow any further time to be spent on digital education. Studies have shown that when students move to online classes they have lower standardized test scores than before and are less likely to pass classes. Moreover, many respected organizations have advocated schools to reopen with in person learning. The American Society of Pediatrics recommends that students come back in person, because of the vast psychological damages that isolation causes, not to mention the increase in abuse and domestic violence. Schools must reopen in person, because online education is not really learning in any way.
On top of this, the rudimentary evidence that has been collected in countries that reopened schools has shown that schools do not actually significantly increase Covid-19 rates in teachers compared to other people who returned to work. Moreover, kids are less likely to transmit the disease than adults.
All these statistics show that the district must reopen schools in person as soon as possible. If not now, than at latest in two weeks. Me and my classmate's education, mental health and well being depend on it.
Yours,
- El'ad Nichols-Kaufman, Shortridge Student

55) If you vote yes will all the schools that stay open be provided with the proper virucide for cleaning? Will the hubs be provided with the proper Virucide for cleaning?
- Jason Harris, George Julian

56) Please consider a virtual return for the safety of students and staff. While this will be a hardship on many, the loss of a student or staff member would be irreplaceable. Our numbers are continuing to increase. We don’t fully know the risks to children. We do know the risks for adults. Many of your staff are high risk! Please think of everyone’s safety during this time.
- Janelle Pierce

57) While I fully understand the need for online classes in order to protect the children, teachers and their families at this time I am concerned about those who are not taking normal classes. Children
in life skills classes are unable to truly participate or learn. I would like to remind the board of the needs of these children and ask for special consideration. In person classes vital for children in life skills classes.
- Abigail Dinh

58) With the move to all e-learning, students need to be able to do work without the need for extensive parental supervision. Expanding the e-learning plan that was proposed that explicitly states extensive parental involvement is required is unacceptable. Parents are struggling to find people to care for children and to work remotely and can’t be especies to be involved with e-learning every 10 minutes as was the case in spring. This is a question of equity - demanding parents provide full time dedicated supervision pushes families with resources to hire someone to do this and leaves families without the same resources to choose between employment and children’s education.
- M. Elizabeth Walker

59) I wanted to acknowledge by COMPLETE support of the recommendation that IPS starts the school year fully virtual until October and that it is my hope that the board will vote to approve this recommendation. I would also ask that the board not vote to go back in person until the following metrics are met: 1) a decline in total number of cases in Marion County for 14 consecutive days 2) a positivity rate of under 5% in Marion County for 14 consecutive days.

Additionally, I ask that the district uses this time to work to acquire desks for all classrooms that need them - plexiglass dividers on table are insufficient.

Thank you!
- Caitlin Lischer, CFI 70

60) I do not support the return to school being 100% virtual through at least October. I ask the school board not to support this and instead support a return to school in accordance with the plan released today by the Marion County Health Department most notably with elementary school returning in-person. Elementary school children are especially vulnerable in a 100% virtual system as they require childcare during the day as well as more assistance with e-learning. This is not possible for many households were parents are working full time and/or outside of the home. The short notice of this change adds additional hardship. Again, I ask the school board not to support the 100% virtual return to school and instead return to school in accordance with the Marion County Health Department plan released today.
- Megan Robinson, IPS Parent

61) Children, especially young children in IPS, need to be IN school, even if extra safety measures need to be put in place. Governor Holcomb announced this morning that elementary-age children should go to school. Perhaps IPS should consider hybrid or virtual for older students, but the social-emotional well-being of young children is at stake—during these unnormal times, please give them normalcy in going to school.
- Kristen Mullins, CFI 84

62) Is the board taking into consideration the results of the survey or simply their personal decision on whether to allow the students the opportunity to go back to school next month?
63) What makes you all to believe that this virus will be leveled out by October when this has been here for almost a year and the number are being inflated to begin with. What about the younger kids who need the in person connections and structure that the in person allows for? What about the parents who are not able to help with online learning because we also have to work not everyone has someone to go to for help not every parent trust other parents with the well-being of their children.

- Tiffany Scott, Parent