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EDUCATION SUPPORT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION STATEMENT ON CCSD HYBRID RE-OPENING PLAN

(Las Vegas, NV) — On November 9, 2020, the Clark County School District (CCSD) released the hybrid model for the district.

"At this point, the timeline presented by the District in their re-opening plan is not workable with all of the changes that have yet to be made to ensure staff and students are safe in our schools," said Jan Giles, President of the Education Support Employees Association. "Positivity rates must be 5% or lower before putting students and staff at risk, and we demand that the Trustees and administrators acknowledge that Education Support Professionals are crucial to the well-being of students. We are not expendable, but that's the message we are receiving."

While it was known that the District's plan would be released this week, the timeline seems rushed, and it's unclear why. "ESEA has been working with the school district on an FAQ for reopening, yet it has not been finalized," said Lisa Guzman, Executive Director of ESEA. "The hybrid model does not address all of our concerns and how to make parents, students, and staff feel safe returning. We suggest that the District finish the FAQ with ESEA. From there, bring in a leadership team to brief them so that when the Trustees read the plan, it is unified with all bargaining units agreeing that this is the safest way to proceed."

According to the CDC website, a transition to hybrid learning will be moving the district from "low risk" to "medium risk" at a time when Nevada is seeing a spike in COVID cases and hospitalizations. Even within CCSD, per the CCSD's website, 613 student and staff members have tested positive, and our schools are not even open. As such, over the last month, ESEA members have sent hundreds of emails to the Trustees and Dr. Jesus Jara regarding their concerns around returning to buildings. We have members who have approved ADA accommodations, but now, the approved accommodations are no longer "doable" and are considered a hardship. We have members who have medical issues causing them to be at risk, yet 5 minutes of cleaning in a classroom is somehow sufficient. We have members who are already over worked without students returning, yet they will be the first to be blamed for an outbreak at a school. There are a host of other unaddressed issues in the hundreds of emails that have been sent to the district.

In March and April, ESPs were essential. In November and December, it seems we are now expendable. The communication ESEA has witnessed between the Trustees, cabinet, and administrators sends no other message. We would remind everyone that an ESEA member was the very first CCSD casualty from COVID-19. ESEA has been back in the buildings, providing meals, central office services, maintaining transportation and buildings, along with other necessities because we care about our students. We know ESP's are essential, and being essential does not equate to expendable. We hope the District will understand the difference.

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