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Dear Superintendent,

As Florida considers phases to reopening our state in the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic, we know the issue of how and when to re-open our public schools this fall weighs heavy on your mind as well as the minds of your school board members.

During your consideration of various factors, we ask you to be first mindful of the safety of our students and, of course, the school personnel who work in your county's public schools. We hope that you are also mindful that, as this letter is being written, Florida is no longer experiencing a downward trajectory of new cases. Instead, the state has seen more new cases in the past 7 days than at *any time* since this crisis began, according to the Florida Department of Health.

Please for a moment, let me restate that: we are not in a downward trend but are back at peak numbers of new cases. Florida is now experiencing a second peak wave of cases and what we believed about the trends merely a week ago, no longer hold true.

We hope beyond hope that this trend will soon reverse. Until it does, we ask that you carefully consider the notion of fully re-opening our schools unless and until this dangerous trend reverses course.

We at the Florida Education Association care deeply about the safety of all Floridians and the ramifications of how and when we re-open. And in our quest to better understand how public school parents feel about how the entire public school system has handled the crisis so far, and how we should move forward, we hired a well-respected polling firm and asked them to interview several hundred parents of children in our state's public schools.

First, the good news. Our teachers and education staff professionals get very high marks for their handling of the crisis in very difficult circumstances. Additionally, local superintendents such as yourself similarly score very well. For that we should both be congratulated for a job well done.

These parents reported by and large that:

- Distance learning was well managed.
- Their children did not suffer.
- Teachers remained attentive and responsive, and
- All-in-all, things went generally well with all aspects of how our public schools reacted during this time of crisis.

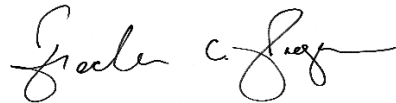
Second, and this is also good news, they overwhelmingly believe that these decisions – on how and when to open – should be left to *local* school districts, local leaders and in consultation and guidance from school administrators themselves.

Finally, as parents considered re-opening, they too felt that safety should be paramount and that districts should move cautiously and carefully forward when schools are re-opened. They feel strongly that schools be properly equipped with personal protection equipment and that employees be trained in proper social distancing and that new cleaning protocols are enacted throughout the system.

Based on the above, we are confident our parents will very much appreciate a cautious, careful, safety-first approach even if it means some inconveniences or delays in re-opening.

We know that you have only a few weeks to make some very difficult decisions and hope this information will be useful in helping guide you in making the very best ones for our children and our school personnel. As a courtesy we have attached relevant questions and response sets from the poll so you can gauge for yourself how our parents feel about this challenging subject.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fedrick C. Ingram". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Fedrick C. Ingram