



July 16, 2020

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Scott A. Rivkees, M.D.
Florida Surgeon General
Florida Department of Health
4052 Bald Cypress Way, Mail Bin A00
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Dr. Rivkees:

Fedrick C. Ingram
President

On behalf of the Florida Education Association, a union of teachers, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, front office staff and more, we are writing to solicit your expert opinion and firm direction for local health officials and administrators across the state who are tasked with reopening Florida's schools as set forth in the Florida Department of Education's emergency order 2020-E0-06.

Andrew Spar
Vice President

Carole M. Gauronskas
Secretary-Treasurer

Teachers, staff and even students will be called on to potentially expose themselves to a life-threatening virus and there are still many questions left unanswered. School districts are being denied written guidance they solicit as directed by the executive order. Our members want to be back in their schools teaching and working with the students. However, they want to make sure that the reopening of schools protects their health and safety and the health and safety of the students.

Frankly, we are asking you to officially state your expert opinion as the state's top health officer and to provide clear direction to the 67 county health departments under your supervision. This guidance is essential to the clarity needed for local public health officials and school decisionmakers to safely navigating reopening our schools.

At a minimum, these local officials need to know that they can follow your official directive and provide written guidance on questions like:

- What specific recommendations and parameters should county health department officials use to determine the safest course of action for establishing how to re-open schools for in-person instruction?
- What statewide minimum standards should be required of students, staff and building facilities for reopening schools? And, could those standards be dropped if they are too onerous to implement or if students or staff are unwilling to comply?
- What actions should the school take to mitigate exposure and prevent further exposure to the community if a student or staff member is exhibiting symptoms?
- What role does the local health department officer have in the determination that a classroom, building or campus be closed?

We are closely reading the order, the administrative directives and are familiarizing ourselves with the CDC guidelines. Our communities are counting on us to be there for them and your guidance would go a long way helping to achieve these expectations. We must ensure the health and safety of our students, their families and our public school employees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fedrick Ingram", written in a cursive style.

Fedrick Ingram
FEA President