



AFT-West Virginia
AFL-CIO

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AFT, AFL-CIO

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January 6, 2021

The Honorable Jim Justice
Office of the Governor
State Capitol Complex
1900 Kanawha Blvd. E
Charleston, WV 25305

Dear Governor Justice,

While we all can agree that in-person instruction is best for our students, AFT-WV's message since the onset of the pandemic has been clear and consistent: Our members want to return to schools, but ONLY when it is safe for staff and students.

With the arrival of the vaccine, comes the hope for a return to normalcy and a safe return to the classroom. AFT-WV agrees that in-person learning is best for students. However, to achieve a safe return to in-person learning, specific protocols and measures must be in place.

AFT-WV requests the following necessary components to facilitate a safe return to in-person learning:

1. Necessary safety protocols and mitigation strategies as per the CDC must be in place and strictly and consistently adhered to;
2. School re-opening must be aligned with the administration of the vaccine to school staff, preferably by grade level, prior to return as well as to elderly guardians of students;
3. The deployment of rapid testing and robust contact tracing for staff and students in any county that moves into red on the DHHR map or also any school with one case. Schools will have a contingency plan for remote learning in the case of positives and/or outbreaks at the school level;
4. Reasonable accommodation for employees based on the guidelines and recommendations under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**Affiliation of the American
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5. The utilization of CARES Act money to provide academic, social, and emotional interventions to students who need it as well as utilizing future federal assistance to hold harmless employees who are forced to quarantine.

AFT-WV believes these measures are necessary to protect the health and safety of our staff, students, and school community. We urge the implementation of these components to safely return our staff and students to our regular learning environment.

Sincerely,



Fred Albert
President/ AFT-West Virginia