

As a parent of two high school students, I urge you to mandate all schools open immediately, including middle and high schools. The science provided by the CDC, New England Journal of Medicine, Journal for American Academy of Pediatrics, and many outstanding universities all show the same thing, schools are safe with mitigation strategies even without vaccines. It is inexcusable to allow districts to only deliver CDL when evidence shows it is damaging students mental and physical health, leading to shockingly high failure rates and a growing achievement gap. Private schools and some affluent districts in Oregon are opening yet public schools are dragging their feet and finding excuse after excuse not to open. Our children are being left behind with no one to fight for their education and social emotional needs. Middle and High School students are experiencing the most mental health distress and highest failure rates, yet they have been completely abandoned by many public school districts. We need you to step in and mandate all schools open. Teachers are being vaccinated right now and it has been almost a year, this is urgent!

My children attend a Beaverton high school and they made a plan in August that would allow students to return to campus this year, pandemic conditions permitting. BSD has students on a strict 4x4 schedule with no changes permitted to allow for a return to hybrid learning. Yet last week BSD announced it is impossible for middle and high school students to return this year. I don't understand what has changed? I do understand that teens are experiencing the majority of mental health issues and have the highest rates of failure. I do understand many teens are not attending classes or even taking two minutes to check-in and be marked present. I do understand that teens are capable of following safety protocols and traveling independently and further distances to school. I do understand the 4x4 schedule has been a huge sacrifice and is not allowing students to earn as many college credits. My senior son has been told by his science teacher there is not enough time to cover the IB curriculum so he will be meeting with his students outside of class to try to help them pass their exam. His DC Calculus class will grant half the number of college credits as in the past because they cannot cover the curriculum in 4x4. It is worth noting that my son averages only 1.5 hours of schoolwork a day from his high school classes. It is simply careless to require schools to use the 4x4 schedule if it isn't permitting in-person learning.

Sadly Beaverton students have been given no voice and we need your help. Please step in and mandate ALL schools open immediately, especially middle and high schools.

Sincerely,

Kim & Jason Kennedy