

Oregon Education Association President John Larson shared important insights during the Monday session. He said schools cannot open safely. There can be mitigation but what is required is not occurring. Safety protocols are not followed for numerous reasons. There are rooms without windows and ventilation systems are bad. There has always been a crisis of disrupted learning with bad behaviors. There is biting, kicking, scratching. Now it will be worse as there is a high level of fear and frustration. More Mental health professionals are needed.

John Larson said testimony that has been given in this hearing is contradicted by studies and experiences. That concern should be addressed.

I also appreciated the insights of Lisa Gourley, Oregon School Employees Association and Kristi Dille, President of Oregon Parent-Teacher Association.

A few issues I want considered are: (1) an accounting for the more contagious and likely more dangerous form of the virus (2) the percent of false negatives in testing for whether a person has the virus (3) consideration that persons are contagious prior to test being able to indicate positive (4) the fact that the virus does not stay within a school community boundary (5) the increased burden on medical staff and facilities as hospitalizations, deaths and cases rise and more incur long-term health consequences.

It is clearly unwise to open schools now. Planning should go forward now for a safe and secure school year beginning this fall.

Respectfully,
Carol Scherer
Eugene, Oregon