

Dear friends,

I am a public school educator with more than 33 years of experience here in Oregon-30 at Cascade High School in Turner, Oregon.

I love my job. I love my students. I respect and admire the patrons in my district. And I understand their desire to get their children back in school as soon as possible. I have seen how the distance learning works for some students, and not so well for others. I understand.

I also want to urge caution, and logic.

Educators also want to be understood and respected. In my district we just received the first injection of the Covid vaccine on January 23rd. Our follow up is scheduled for February 20th. It is my understanding that to be fully protected, the vaccine series is effective two weeks after the second injection. Yesterday we received a letter addressed to district patrons from the superintendent stating that we are planning to be back in our hybrid model on February 17th-days before the second vaccine delivery!

This was a shock-we got the information at the same time as the parents. I do not believe their statement that they truly care for staff if this is the case-bringing students back before staff is protected is foolhardy, when waiting two weeks would be easy to accomplish and in the best interest of staff. We really do not want, nor need, to return before the vaccine has the opportunity to do its work! We have waited this long, two more weeks is not too much to ask. We want to open back up when we have the best chance of actually completing the year without having to shut back down or have mass quarantine if staff.

Please understand: teachers and education staff want to go back, but we want to do so safely for all.

Thank you for your consideration of my thoughts.

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