



Senator Dianne Feinstein
Washington, D. C.

August 12, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

This is to express my concern over the health of every California child, teacher and school staff member this year.

While returning to school is a goal we all share for our children and grandchildren, public, independent and parochial schools must re-open safely for students, teachers, staff and families. Since the on-set of the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 380,000 child cases have been reported nationally, almost 100,000 of which were reported in the last two weeks of July. Most alarming, since May, 87 children have died.

California is not immune to such tragedies. In our state alone, there have been over 48,500 cases among children under the age of 18, representing nine percent of all cases statewide. Just last month, the state recorded its first COVID-19-related death. We must take more strident measures to ensure this trend does not continue.

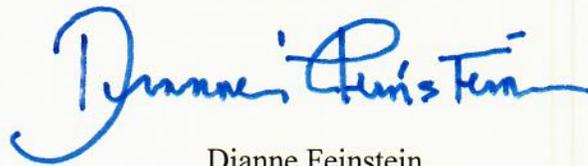
Last week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued two reports suggesting that while most coronavirus symptoms are mild among children, they still face considerable risk. The CDC found that of the 576 children hospitalized due to COVID-19, nearly one out of every three patients were admitted to the ICU. Another study found that a rare multi-system inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C) affected 570 children from April through July. Most children diagnosed with this condition were admitted to the ICU units. Ten patients died.

These reports make clear that opening schools before COVID-19 transmission levels are lower will only put more children, their families, and teachers at risk. We've already seen real-life evidence of this, with reported cases from summer camps and last week's school openings.

As schools around the country have started to re-open, hundreds of students and staff have tested positive, children and families are being placed under quarantine and school buildings are being closed for disinfecting. In communities where there continues to be significant spread of the virus, online learning should replace in-person learning. The longer we refuse to take the steps necessary to get that transmission rate down, the longer this virus will sicken and kill, preventing the full re-opening of our economy, including our educational system.

I support your July 17 order to prevent school openings in counties on the coronavirus watch list and urge you to continue to impose strict guidelines on any re-opening of schools in California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dianne Feinstein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

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