



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DSEA President Stephanie Ingram Statement on Delaware Department of Education Reopening Guidance

“The Delaware State Education Association has followed three guiding principles as our school districts moved into remote learning and now contemplate the reopening of our schools - protecting the health and safety of our students, educators, and the communities they serve; keeping students learning; and minimizing the financial impact on our state, districts, and educators.

We thank the Governor and Secretary of Education for making sure that DSEA had representatives on each of the three reopening work groups. By doing so, they ensured that our members’ voices would be heard during the process. We also want to thank the many DSEA members who viewed the reopening work group meetings, submitted public comment and most importantly provided us with guidance and suggestions throughout the process. We are encouraged to see that the recommendations of these work groups have been included in the guidance released by the Delaware Department of Education. The process turns now to the school districts who must decide whether or not they have the ability to follow this guidance and open safely.

We feel that in order to move forward, this guidance will need to be strictly adhered to by the school districts. They need to take a hard look at what must be done to keep students and staff safe and healthy. They need to make an honest assessment of their ability to do it. We ask that they reach out to the local associations in their district to help make these challenging decisions. If they don’t, we will support our local associations in their demand for a seat at the table. Then, if the districts believe they can move forward, plans can be made to reopen schools. However, if there is even the slightest doubt, the districts need to start the school year in a remote learning environment and continue until they can follow this guidance.

We have no doubt that our members will work with their districts to do what is in the best interests, health and safety of their students and themselves. The process at the district level needs to be bottom up in order to be done safely and correctly. We need honest answers as to what the educators and districts have the ability to do in order to follow this guidance. Let’s be very clear, if there is any question as to whether this can be done, the districts need to commit to remote learning until they can be certain of their ability to safely reopen schools. We applaud districts like Appoquinimink who have already delayed the beginning of their school year in order to prepare for this change in educational environments and suggest that others should consider similar action to allow sufficient time to assess the ability to meet the DOE guidance and prepare for the upcoming school year in whatever form it takes.

DSEA looks forward to working with our local associations during this process to make sure that the health and safety of our members and students is the top priority.”

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