



PARENTS ACROSS CALIFORNIA OPPOSE LEGISLATURE'S WEAK ATTEMPT AT GETTING KIDS BACK IN SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY

Science and data show schools can safely reopen now, yet Legislature continues to put up roadblocks, pander to special interests

OAKLAND, CA – February 19, 2021 – Yesterday, the California State Legislature introduced AB 86 and SB 86, a weak attempt at reopening public schools. Open Schools California strongly opposes SB 86 and AB 86, as the bills do not prioritize getting children of all ages back in school immediately. For nearly a year, about 80% of kids in California have been forced to learn remotely and classroom doors have been locked. AB 86 and SB 86 add countless new requirements for reopening schools that it is unlikely to allow schools to return to in-person instruction by April.

"The legislative 'deal' underscores the continued failure of Sacramento to get all of our children back into their classrooms", said Ernesto Falcon, Parent Advocate with Open Schools California. "AB 86 and SB 86 are a weak attempt to appease parents across the state. The bills fall short by failing to require 5 days of in person education for all grades, ignoring the science and data that shows it is safe and necessary to reopen schools. It has been 343 days since many schools in California have been shuttered. We hope that Governor Newsom will put children first, and mandate that all students can return to their classrooms before we approach the one-year anniversary of school closures."

Open Schools California opposes AB 86 and SB 86 for the following reasons:

1. The bills ignore students from grades 7-12 by forcing them to continue remote learning. Countless studies from the United States and across the globe have shown it is safe to reopen schools at all ages with proper mitigation measures in place, like hand washing, sanitizing and increased ventilation.
2. The bills do not mandate that schools reopen for all ages irrespective of the community case rates, as recommended by the recent [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) guidance](#) and supported by the [American Academy of](#)

[Pediatrics](#) and [Harvard Global Health Institute](#). As the [CDC Director stated last week](#), “in-person learning in schools has not been associated with a substantial community transmission.”

3. The bills do not require school districts to give parents a choice by offering in-person education 5 days a week, allowing schools to maintain hybrid learning which is a logistical nightmare, expensive and not proven to reduce learning loss any more than distance learning.
4. The bills continue the status quo, allowing middle and high school teachers the option to remain remote even after being vaccinated, requiring school districts to hire a second teacher as a classroom monitor while the first teacher continues to provide remote instruction. As the CDC guidance and Dr. Fauci recommend, teachers are not at risk if mitigation measures are followed and they do not need to be vaccinated prior to a return to the classroom.

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Open Schools California

Open Schools California is a group of parents from across California who are committed to public education and believe their children should have access to safe, in-person education. Open Schools California believes in following the science—and the consensus by public health experts and medical and mental health professionals—which all tell us schools can be safely reopened with measures in place to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Learn more at www.openschoolsca.com.

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