

**WRAC-Recommended Motion – Prioritize Safe School Reopenings
(as modified by PPCC)**

Whereas schools provide “essential academic and social-emotional learning” environments, and a broader array of resources including “physical, mental health, and therapeutic services”¹;

Whereas “school closures impede learning and compound inequities, disproportionately affecting disadvantaged children”²; and particularly disadvantaged are students who are at a young age, have special needs, or are from underprivileged households;

Whereas many states and countries have successfully prioritized the opening of schools over businesses, instead of the other way around;

Whereas Federal, State and local governments can offer stipends, grants, and loans to businesses and employees who may be forced to close, however the same government bodies cannot offer redress to students for lost opportunities and benefits derived from education;

Whereas “safe and consistently open schools are essential for many parents and guardians ... to reenter the workforce”³, and forcing working parents into full time childcare is neither fair nor sustainable;

Whereas the health of all students, staff and teachers must be protected, the federal government and State of California must provide school districts with the resources needed for the safe reopening of schools and to contain outbreaks (should they occur) including the prioritization of school staff and teachers in vaccine distribution;

Therefore, Pacific Palisades Community Council supports prioritizing the many efforts needed to safely reopen elementary schools and special-needs classes for the most vulnerable students in Los Angeles including, but not limited to, daily testing, vaccinations for all qualified students and staff, access to personal protective equipment and the necessary training and signed COVID protocol agreements.

1 Levinson M, Cevik M, Lipsitch M. Reopening primary schools during the pandemic. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2020 Sep 3;383:981-985.

2 Armitage R, Nellums LB. Considering inequalities in the school closure response to COVID-19. *The Lancet Global Health*. 2020 May 1;8(5):e644.

3 Ludvigsson JF. Children are unlikely to be the main drivers of the COVID-19 pandemic – a systematic review. *Acta Paediatrica*. 2020 May 19.

Adopted by PPCC board 1/14/21

Submission to WRAC followed