



Teachers, Parents, Students, and Friends of Public Education,
Come join us for a **Car Rally** this Tuesday, 7/14, at 4 pm

SCPS Educational Support Center Parking Lot

At 5:30 pm, our School Board Members will vote to approve SCPS' August Reopen Plan

Come join us and demand a safe opening plan. Make your voices heard.

July 11, 2020

CONTACT: Dan Smith- President, Seminole Education Association

Educators Want to go Back to School but Want Safety Assurance

Altamonte Springs, FL — The Executive Order issued by Governor DeSantis this week to reopen brick and mortar schools sparked a heated dialogue throughout the state on how schools should be reopened.

Our educators want to get back to school and see their students, but we should only reopen school buildings when it is safe for students and educators to return to the classroom. All current trends in rising numbers of those infected in Florida indicate that there will not be a safe opening of our schools on August 10 at any capacity beyond 25-30%.

Thus far, we have heard nothing out of Tallahassee on how they plan to ensure safety. It is unconscionable that we are weeks from educators being asked to return to campus and there is still no plan in place to ensure our schools have necessities like soap and hand sanitizer.

We are seeing now, more than ever, that decades of underfunding Florida's schools have real consequences. Before the pandemic, schools were already struggling. We know there are schools in every corner of the state that struggled to keep enough soap in restrooms, and that teachers have listed Kleenex and hand sanitizer on all of their back-to-school shopping lists.

The reopening of schools cannot be dependent on parents and community volunteers to supply what is needed. Seminole's children, parents, and employees need assurance that the safety of the students they serve is their only concern. Distancing will require more teachers, more space, more buses, and more guidance counselors.

Further, the reopening of Florida's economy is dependent on the safe reopening of schools. If Seminole opens its schools, then closes its schools again weeks later, public trust will be lost in public education. If schools are reopened too quickly and without a clear and safe plan, our schools will suffer the same fate as restaurants around the state that reopened only to close again a few weeks later.

It is not enough to hope students and staff don't get sick or to suggest low mortality is a risk worth taking. It is not enough to say the economy can't restart until school does, or that kids need a return to normalcy. Students, educators, and parents need a safe plan.

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