

At this time, we have only gotten one response - from Director Kopp:

"Good morning, Lindsay - hope this note finds you as well as any of us hope to be during this time.

Just wanted to let you know your e-mail has been received and read. I know it took a lot of time and effort to put this together and I thank you and your colleagues for sharing the unique perspective of arts educators. I've noticed the same e-mail coming from other educators but will not have time to reply to everyone, as I am working to hear and engage with many in our community. If you have a moment, I hope you will share with your colleagues that I have read the e-mail and appreciate their efforts for this communication and the good work you all continue to do.

Thanks again for writing. Sending care and good energy to you.

Jessica"

Here was my response back to her:

"Hi Director Kopp:

Thank you so much for your quick response to our email. I have shared your response with all K-5 Arts Educators and do have a couple of follow up questions for you, on behalf of myself and my colleagues.

First, what is the board's stance on sending educators and students back into our buildings during a global pandemic with **no answers** to some of our most urgent questions? Telling us to be flexible and work together to figure it out or sending us back with non-answers to our questions, is not acceptable when lives are at risk. We aren't asking these questions and sharing these concerns because we want to be a pain to the district; these concerns and questions are valid and come from a place of fear that our lives, the lives of our students and their families, and our larger community will be in danger if we go back to school in-person in November. We are not in a place where we feel like we can trust that the district is making decisions with student, staff, and family safety as a priority or considering all voices when determining what safety looks like in this unprecedented time. We also need to know: who will be taking responsibility for lives lost? How many lives lost is an acceptable sacrifice for reopening our buildings?

There is NOTHING that we arts teachers want more than to be back in our classrooms face to face with our students. Even though Distance Learning is going SO MUCH better for the majority of us than it was in the spring, not being able to see our students every day is devastating. That said, we understand that there is a reason we can't see them right now. In order for us to get to a place where we can see them in our classrooms every day, safely, and without losing any of our kids or family members or

community members to this virus first, we need to make the safest choice now. That is why I ask the Board, again: How many lives lost is an acceptable sacrifice for reopening our buildings? Will we be putting a memorial at 360 to all the kids and family members that were lost due to the district's decision to open early? How many kids and community members are we willing to move on without once we do open safely in the future?

We know that this virus is not impacting folks equitably either; our families of color and families who have elderly or high-risk members in their homes will be impacted the hardest by this transition and will suffer the deepest losses. How many of these families are we okay with having to suffer through illness and loss when we have a safer solution: to stay in DL until it is safe?

I noticed in the most recent Board Meeting that the School Board has renewed the power of the Superintendent to continue making decisions on the return to Hybrid learning - What is the Board prepared to do to make sure the district is not putting students, families, and educators in danger by sending them back too quickly or without all concerns addressed? How is the Board prepared to intervene or ensure that the decisions made by the District are grounded in safety, equity, and empathy for everyone involved?

Again, I thank you for your quick response and would appreciate if you have the time to address the abovementioned concerns and questions directly. We are worried. We have never been in this situation before and wish to partner with you, the other Board Members, and the Superintendent to ensure that the decisions being made reflect all voices and are grounded in safety, equity, and empathy for all in our SPSS community first.

Sincerely:

Lindsay [REDACTED]