

From: Rachel [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, October 11, 2020 9:47 PM
To: SB Members <sb.members@spps.org>
Subject: Concerns Regarding Stage 2 Readiness Targets

Members of the School Board,

This week you have a very important decision to make regarding whether SPPS is ready to return for Stage 2. I wanted to email you and let you know of a couple of concerns that I have as an educator in St. Paul who is being asked to return during Stage 2.

One of the Readiness Targets that is listed is that 95% of the school instructional staff are available for hybrid. As of today (9:45 p.m. on Sunday evening), I have not yet heard back from HR about my need for Accommodations due to a diagnosed medical disability. I originally submitted my request for accommodations in August prior to the decision to start the year in Distance Learning. In early September, I was again asked about my readiness to return for hybrid learning and once again submitted my request for accommodations to HR. On Friday, I sent a **THIRD** request to HR to have accommodations related to returning to work in a hybrid learning model. I can tell you that I am not alone in not having heard back from HR regarding the need for accommodations. I have heard from multiple teachers in different schools that they have not had any communication back from HR regarding next steps in determining if their request will be approved.

A decision is supposed to be made this week about whether 95% of staff are able to return to in-person teaching. If HR has not been able to connect with all of the people who have requested accommodations, I do not know how you will be able to have an accurate representation of this specific readiness target. It also makes me concerned that because this is one of the Readiness Targets and there is a decision to be made in a few days that HR may try to get thru as many accommodation requests as possible in the next few days just to have information for you by the time a decision needs to be made. It is clear to me that HR needs more time to go through the requests for Accommodations if my request that was originally submitted in August has still not been addressed.

A second issue has to do with the Elementary School Calendar and the timing of starting the Hybrid Learning Model for our PreK and ECSE students. The proposed start date for Hybrid Learning is the Week of November 16th. This happens to be when Conferences occur for our Elementary Schools. For our PreK and ECSE students that means it is only a three-day school week. The following week is also a three-day school week because of the Thanksgiving holiday. Finally, the last "week" before Winter Break is only a two-day week.

If you take a closer look at how Hybrid Learning fits in to this calendar, any student who is scheduled for Mon/Tue will receive 12 days of in-person learning. However, any student who is scheduled for Wed/Thur will only receive 8 days of in-person learning. This is clearly very inequitable for our youngest learners. To help you visualize this inequity, here is a chart that shows the inequity in starting the Hybrid model for PreK and ECSE students on November 16th.

Week:	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Nov 16 - 20	One	Two	One	No School	No School
Nov 23 - 27	Three	Four	Two	No School	No School
Nov 30 - Dec 4	Five	Six	Three	Four	
Dec 7 - 11	Seven	Eight	Five	Six	
Dec 14 - 18	Nine	Ten	Seven	Eight	
Dec 21 - 25	Eleven	Twelve	No School	No School	No School

One final thought about how this will impact our very youngest learners, the Governor's Order around schooling this year states that educators should be given planning days when switching between models. This order recommends five days and I have heard the same sentiment echoed by Dr. Gothard. However, those days are planning only and are NON-INSTRUCTIONAL days for our students. It has been hard enough to get our students and families into a daily routine with Distance Learning. We are just at the tipping point of it going really well. If you make the decision to send our youngest learners back to Hybrid Learning, they will have a week of disruption to that schedule as well as the calendar disruptions that go along with the end of November and December in any normal school year.

I ask that you strongly consider and ask questions about the issues that I have addressed in this email. These are just two issues of many that should show you that as a District we are not yet ready to push the dial forward. I beg of you to slow this process down and not transition any more stages until after the first of the year so that ALL of the people involved can feel that it is both safe and equitable.

Thank you,
 Rachel [REDACTED]



Rachel [REDACTED]

ECSE Self-Contained Full Day / Highland Park Elementary
Saint Paul Public Schools • 1700 Saunders Ave, St. Paul, MN,
55116

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
spps.org/highlandel

