

Island Coast FEA: SPALC/TALC
6830 International Center Boulevard
Fort Myers, FL 33912
239.275.8252
www.islandcoastfea.org



Dr. Kenneth Savage
Interim Superintendent
Lee County School District
2855 Colonial Blvd.
Fort Myers, FL 33966

August 20, 2021

Dr. Savage,

Since the opening of schools, the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to wreak havoc on the students and staff of the School District of Lee County. We are in a situation that we never experienced during the bleakest days of the 2020-2021 School Year. Last school year, extensive measures were taken to ensure a safe and secure environment for staff and students. Those precautions seem to no longer exist.

The health, safety, and security of our students and staff are being negatively impacted each day. Not only is it a moral responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment for students and staff, but also a contractual obligation, as mutually agreed to between the District and the Unions. The specific language is found in Article 6 of the respective Collective Bargaining Agreements.

We have received reports from sites where up to 20 staff members have been quarantined due to COVID-19 exposures and/or symptoms. It leads us to ask, what criteria was used to keep those schools open? Certainly, that many absent staff members negatively impact the delivery of instruction to students. Moreover, combining classes at these locations could lead to more viral transmission among the students who are present. Additionally, we cannot

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ensure an appropriate level of supervision of students with so many absent educators. The refusal to close schools, when necessary, continues to contribute to the negative morale and burnout that all staff members are currently experiencing.

The continuation of COVID-19 through the 2021-2022 School Year was predictable and the District's lack of planning and last minute response continues to contribute to where we are today. If the conditions in schools do not improve, we will have no choice but to use all remedies available to us to protect the safety and security of the staff and students in Lee County. The current working/learning conditions of the students and staff can no longer be tolerated.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Jamie Michael in blue ink.

Jamie Michael, President
Support Personnel Association of Lee County

Handwritten signature of Kevin Daly in blue ink.

Kevin Daly, President
Teachers Association of Lee County

Handwritten signature of Elizabeth Peterson in blue ink.

Elizabeth Peterson
Director, Island Coast-FEA

Handwritten signature of Kerr Fazzone in blue ink.

Kerr Fazzone, Ph.D.
Director, Island Coast-FEA

Cc: Debbie Jordan, Board Chairwoman
Will Rothenberg, Director, Compensation and Labor Relations
Lynn Herrell, Executive Director, Human Resources