

Cincinnati Federation of Teachers



Cincinnati Federation of Office Professionals

Local 1520 | AFT | OFT | AFL-CIO

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June 30, 2020

To: Cincinnati Public Schools Board of Education

CC: Superintendent Laura Mitchell

Re: Reopening Plan and CPS Budget

I write today to express my disappointment in the decisions that came out of the June 29, 2020 Board of Education Business Meeting.

Re-Opening Plan: The planning process to reopen schools has been the most non-transparent, rushed, and inadequate process I have ever witnessed. While I was invited to serve on the “Future of Schools” Committee, I was not even afforded the courtesy of receiving the presentation that reportedly came out of our meetings, before it was presented to the public. It is not an exaggeration that this planning process was done almost exclusively behind closed doors, and when it was finally shared, it included none of the most critical details important to parents and teachers.

The way the Administration and Board has been patting their own backs on this process is an injustice to the CPS community, especially when CFT, parents, and citizens spent months offering up best practices and suggestions. The plans were incomplete, missed critically important details, and were voted on at the last minute. It was also concerning that despite my informing you and Superintendent Mitchell that CPS staff were being threatened with layoffs, the behavior continued.

CPS Budget: A ninety-day “Appropriation” budget was passed, but if you didn’t know what to look for you would have certainly missed it. A multi-million, publicly funded budget that relies on the confidence and trust of the community should not be handled in this way. The practice of embedding the CPS Budget in the Treasurer’s Report must stop. There was no explanation of how we went from the Future of Schools report noting these plans will require MORE staff, to the sudden announcement that upon passage of Option 1 726 positions will now be cut. The CPS community deserve a full accounting of their budget, including what the carry-over will be this year.

I have lost all confidence, and I implore you to demand the hundreds of credible, important questions about the Reopening Plan be answered, and that a transparent, accountable budget process is implemented.

Julie Sellers